

THE CAPELLS OF RAYNE HALL, ESSEX :
WITH SOME NOTES ON HELMETS FORMERLY IN RAYNE CHURCH.

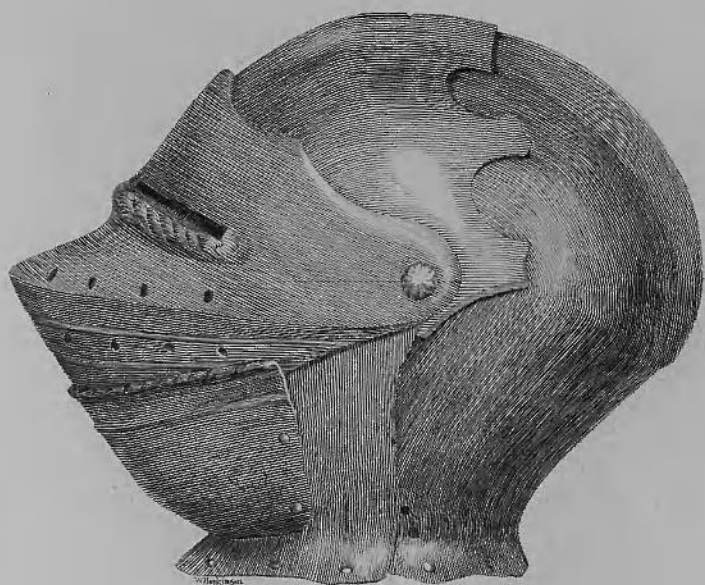
By THE BARON DE COSSON, F.R.G.S.

Some three years ago I unexpectedly became the possessor of an English helmet of great interest and very uncommon form. I had been to the house of a talented and charming lady, who not long before had seen my collection of armour, and as I went away she requested me to carry home with me a remarkably fine tournament helm which hung in her dining-room, that it might, as she expressed it, find a congenial home amongst the other relics of the armament of our forefathers which I possessed. So unusual was the form of the helmet which my generous hostess pressed me to take, that when I first entered the room where it hung, I fancied it must be the reproduction of some rare piece in a foreign museum. I learned however, that when she was quite a little girl, it had attracted her artistic fancy, and that she had bought it of a builder in a country town, in whose yard it lay. She also told me, that it had formerly hung (with another helmet, still in her possession) in a church near where she then lived, but which had been pulled down before her time. I begged her to get me what details she could about the history of this helm, and the builder who had sold it to her informed her that his father had bought it, with the stone-work of the tomb over which it hung and other old materials, from the Building Committee, when the old church of Rayne in Essex was pulled down in 1840, and furthermore, that he remembered that it used to hang on an iron bar over a large and beautiful altar-shaped tomb of the Capells, who lived at Rayne Hall during the early part of the sixteenth century, and who were the ancestors of the present Earl of Essex.

Having obtained this clue, I forthwith sought out who could have been the wearer of my helm, but before I speak of the results of my search, I must mention another strange event in my experience as a collector of armour.

In the summer of 1880 the tournament helm was exhibited at the Royal Archæological Institute, on the occasion of the Exhibition of Helmets and Mail described in the thirty-seventh volume of this *Journal*, and when there, it bore a label stating where it came from, and that I attributed it to Sir Giles Capell, knight. A few months later I was staying at Pampisford Hall, Cambridgeshire, and one morning my host, handed me a note written by a gentleman whom he had met the previous evening, and who had told him he had been seeking to learn my address. It was to the effect that he had in his possession the original war helmet of a Capell which he had obtained from the old church of Rayne in 1837.





I naturally did not leave that part of the country without getting a sight of the helmet, which proved to be an armet of the early part of Henry VIII's reign, of English fashion and make. I also learned that another helmet from the same place was now in Saffron Walden Museum. They had both long lain uncared for in the belfry of the church, until my friend became possessed of them, and as a matter of course I left him no peace until I had induced him to cede me the helmet he had kept, which, although not in very fine preservation, interested me much from its association with the one I already possessed.

It thus became clear that in former days there had been at least four helmets in Rayne church; firstly, my large tournament helm dating from the early part of the sixteenth century; secondly, my armet of the same period; thirdly, the Saffron Walden helmet, a close one of about 1550 to 1560; fourthly, the helmet still in the possession of the lady who had so generously given me the tournament helm, and which seems to date from the time of Elizabeth. My friend, Mr. William Hopkinson, having most kindly engraved for me on steel the two helmets in my collection, I begged him to allow impressions from the plates to accompany this paper, and it is to him that the readers of the *Journal* owe the beautiful representations of two interesting examples of English armour which precede these notes.

The tournament helm has been fully described in the "Catalogue of Ancient Helmets and Examples of Mail," published by the Institute, and which was reprinted in the thirty-seventh volume of this *Journal*, so it is needless to repeat what is there said about it. The armet much resembles in type the No. 41, Fig. 37 in the same catalogue, which also came out of an English church. It has not, however, the rosette on the reinforcing piece, which characterises that helmet. The tournament helm weighs 13 lbs. 11 oz., the armet 7 lbs. 3 oz. It is apparent in the engraving of the armet that it originally had gorget plates at its neck. One of these is in my possession; the other is lost.

I must now turn to the results of my search into the history of the occupants of Rayne Hall at the time when my helmets might have been in use; a search which led me to learn much of the lives of two men, who, if they did not leave a great name in history, still took an active part in some of the principal events of their time, and were men of great note in their day.

"I ask not the store of Cosmus or Capell" says a poet of the reign of Henry the Eighth, and the man whom Alexander Barclay in his fourth Eclogue thus likens to the great Florentine merchant and magistrate, was a noted citizen of London, the only monument to whose well-nigh forgotten fame is now perhaps to be found in the name of a small court leading out of that busy street Bartholomew Lane.

The Capells, his ancestors, had for centuries been lords of a manor, from which they took their name, near Stoke-by-Neyland in Suffolk.¹ When John Capell died in 1449, he left three sons and one daughter, all in their minority. John, the eldest, succeeded in due course to the manor of Capell, and is not again heard of. The second son, William, less advantaged by inheritance than by dame fortune, turned his thoughts

¹ Morant, "History of Essex"; Clut-terbuck, "History of Herts"; Salmon, "History of Herts"; Berry, "Hertford-

shire Genealogies"; Collins's "Peerage," &c.

to commerce, went to London, and in course of time amassed wealth so vast that it became proverbial with his contemporaries as that of the Rothschilds is in these days, and he ultimately came to be regarded as the most eminent merchant in London. When the Earl of Richmond, victorious at Bosworth, marched on his newly gained capital, he was welcomed at Shoreditch by the Mayor and City Companies.¹ It is probable that William Capell, *Draper*, was then present, but it is certain that at the coronation of the king on the 30th October, 1485, he received the honour of knighthood at his Sovereign's hand. Nor is it to be marvelled at that Henry, with his well known love of money, should have sought to attach to his person a man who was already well noted for his store of wealth. Next year, doubtless with the desire properly to maintain his newly gained dignity, Sir William Capell purchased of Richard Tournant (or Turvant) gentleman, the ancient manor of Rayne in Essex, together with its hall, and the presentation to Rayne Church, a venerable building dedicated to All Saints, and said to date from the days of Henry II or Richard I.²

This manor of Rayne had formerly belonged to the de Welles family, but for several generations previous to its purchase by Sir William Capell had passed through the female line. In 1770 we are told that "the ancient mansion house of Rayne Hall seems to have been built at two separate times; the old part by some of the de Welles family, and the new by Sir Giles Capel sometime between the year 1510 and 1520."³

To the church of Rayne, Sir William Capell added a lofty and substantial steeple, with a peal of four bells, It was of brickwork, with a small shingled spire at the top, and near the base on either side of the belfry door was an escutcheon, on one of which was embossed an anchor, Sir William Capell's arms, and on the other a lion rampant.⁴

In 1489, Sir William was one of the Sheriffs of London, and two years later he sat in Parliament for the same city. In 1493 we find him holding the manor of Arnolds in the Hundred of Chelmsford; and his wealth had, no doubt, been waxing during these years, for he was one of the first who was troubled by Empson and Dudley, later so infamous as the king's extortioners. Here is Lord Bacon's account of the affair: "The first noted case of this kind was that of Sir William Capell, Alderman of London; who upon sundry penal laws was condemned in the sum of seven and twenty hundred pounds, and compounded for sixteen hundred; and yet Empson would have cut another chop out of him, if the king had not died in the instant."⁵ Stow gives the exact sums, saying he was condemned in £2,743 for the breach of certain statutes made before times and that he compounded for £1615 5s. 8d., which he paid.⁶

And yet if the stories told of Capell may be believed, Henry VII had had no cause to complain of his want of liberality. We are told how at

¹ Lord Bacon, "History of the Reign of Henry VII."

² Morant's "Essex," &c.

³ A new and complete history of Essex by a gentleman. 6 vols. 8vo, Chelmsford, 1770-2.

⁴ Morant's Essex; "History of Essex," by a gentleman. The lion rampant is

still part of the Capell arms. The anchor would seem to have been a special device of Sir William and his son Sir Giles. See the account of Sir Giles's standard and arms, page 76.

⁵ "History of the Reign of Henry VII"

⁶ Stow, "Annales," Ann. 1495.

one feast which he gave in honour of his royal master, he threw into the fire several bonds for money which the king had borrowed of him ; and how at another, rivalling Cleopatra's folly, he drank in a frolic, to his sovereign's health, a dissolved pearl of great worth.¹ It is likely, indeed, that some of the many large sums which appear in the king's accounts as having been "delivered and payd by the kinges commandment for diverse precious stones and other juells that com from beyonde the see," may have passed from the coffers of the great city merchant into those of the "Lambardes" who figure as the sellers of these costly luxuries.²

In 1501 Sir William bought the manor of Walkern in Hertfordshire, with the advowson of the Church of Datchworth,³ and in 1503-4, he for the first time filled the high office of Mayor of London, and "caused in every ward in London a cage with a paire of stocks therein to punish vagabonds" to be set up ; and what perhaps was more noteworthy because a more lasting work, he "caused all Hunsditch to be overpaved which many yeares before lay full noiouslie and perillouslie for all travellers that way."⁴ Next year, 1505, he purchased Little Hadham Hall and manor in Hertfordshire of Lord Darcy. This estate had belonged to the Baud family since the reign of Henry III. Later it appears that Sir William stood trial on the point of paying Castle guard to the Bishop of London, when his castle of Stortford was demolished. The judges determined it a sort of quit rent, and the money due in lieu of those services to which the manor was liable.⁵ I have found no record of Sir William from 1505 to 1508, when Empson and Dudley attempted to "cut their other chop."

"The same three and twentieth year, was there a sharp prosecution against Sir William Capell, now the second time, and this was for matters of misgovernment in his mayoralty ; the great matter being that in some payments he had taken knowledge of false moneys, and did not his diligence to examine and beat it out who were the offenders. For this and some other things laid to his charge, he was condemned to pay two thousand pounds : and being a man of stomach, and hardened by his former troubles, refused to pay a mite ; and belike, used some untoward speeches of the proceedings ; for which he was sent to the Tower, and there remained till the king's death."⁶ Stow says, "This yeare Sir William Caple was commanded to ward by Empson and Dudley, put in sute by the king for things by him done in his maioralte, for that (he was charged) false money had come to his sight, and had not done due punishment upon the partie that to him was accused to be the coynor of it ; but were this true or not, for that he would fall to no agreement, he was by Darby and Symson and other of their company, whereof there was a jurie (bound to the girdles of Dudley and Empson), indited, and after by Dudley put in prison some while in the counter, sometime in the shrives house while William Butler was shrive, and then delivered to Thomas Exmew, and for so much as he would not agree to pay unto the king £2,000 was commanded to the Tower."⁷

¹ Morant's "Essex."

² "Privy Purse Expenses of Henry VII," Bentley's "Excerpta Historica," Lond., 1831.

³ Cussans's "Hertfordshire."

⁴ Holinshed "Chronicles."

⁵ Clutterbuck's "Herts" ; Salmon's "Herts."

⁶ Lord Bacon, "History of the Reign of Henry VII."

⁷ Stow, "Summarie of the English Chronicle."

Thomas Knesworth, likewise lately mayor, and both his sheriffs, were heavily mulcted. Hawis an alderman died before his trial came to an end; and another ex-mayor, Sir Lawrence Ailmer and his sheriffs were fined £1,000; but like Capel, Sir Lawrence preferred prison to the payment of these iniquitous fines.¹

Stow's account throws sufficient light on the method adopted by Empson and Dudley; Lord Bacon adds, "it is no marvel if the faults were so high and the rates so heavy, that the king's treasure of store that he left at his death, most of it in secret places, under his own key and keeping, at Richmond, amounted, as by tradition it is reported to have done, unto the sum of near £1,800,000, a huge mass of money even for these times."²

At the death of Henry VII, Empson and Dudley were arrested, and afterwards executed, whilst a general pardon was granted by the new king to many of those in prison; but by a document still in existence dated 30th April, 1509, containing "the names of persons exempted from the king's general pardon,"³ it appears that Capell was not released from the Tower immediately on the king's coronation, for his name is comprised in it, and in another document he figures in a list of "debtors to the late king."⁴ Letters of general pardon to Sir William Capell were however sent to Warham Archbishop of Canterbury, then Chancellor, early in 1510;⁵ and on the 12th January of that year Sir William was for the second time elected Mayor of London.⁶

It was during his second mayoralty that Capell published a curious judgment on certain women convicted of disorderly practises, the text of which has been preserved by Stow. It concludes thus: "therefore it ys adjudged by the Mair and Aldermen of this Citie after the laudable laws and ancient customs of the same, that the seyd Elyn Davy, Elizabeth Eden, Johan⁷ Michel, Agnes White, Marian Beckworth, and Johan Westhede shall be brought to Newgate, and the same day in the market season to be ladde from thens, with basons and pannes afore theym,⁸ ray-hoods⁹ on their hedes, and white rods in their hands to the pillory in Cornhil, and there the cause to be proclaymed; and so from thens to Algate, and from Algate to be conveid to and through Candlewick strete, Watling strete, and Flete strete to the Temple Barre, and there to be voided out of the Citie for ever. And yf the seyd Elyn, Elizabeth, Johan, Agnes, Marian, and Johan, or any of them hereafter may be found within this citie, they or she so found to be set on the pillory aforesaid three market days next following, every day for the space of an hour, and furthermore to have imprisonment by the space of an yeare and a day."¹⁰

¹ Lord Bacon, "History of the Reign of Henry VII."

² As a point of comparison the following may be quoted from Stow—

"It was enacted that butchers should sell their beafe and mutton by waight, beef for an halfe penie the pound, and mutton at three farthings, at that time oxen were solde for 26 sh 8d the peece, fat calves the like price, a fatte lambe for twelve pence."—Summarie of the English Chronicle, ann. 1533.

³ "Calendar of State Papers, Reign Henry VIII," vol. i (12).

⁴ "Cal. of State Papers, Hen. VIII," vol. i (777).

⁵ "Cal. of State Papers, Hen. VIII,"

vol. i (815).

⁶ Stow's "Summarie."

⁷ Joan

⁸ These were to make a mocking noise.

When widows marry a second time in Spanish villages, they are often serenaded with instruments of this kind, the performance being called a "cencerada."

⁹ Striped hoods, the distinctive head-dress of women of disorderly character. In 1439, many "were set on the pillory and banished the city, except they ware their ray hoods." Stow, Summarie.

¹⁰ Stow's Survey of London, Ed. by Strype 1755, "Wardmote Laws," vol. ii, p. 420.

In 1512 and 1514 Capell again sat in Parliament; and on the 6th September, 1515, he died. What his age was at this time I have not found, but as he had survived his father sixty-six years and was not the youngest of the children at his father's death, he had probably well passed three score and ten.

He was buried in a fair chapel which he himself had built, on the south side of the Church of St Bartholomew near the Exchange,¹ and on his monument Weever in 1631 read the words—*HIC.....WILLEMVVS CAPEL.....MAIOR LOND.....FIL IOHANNIS CAPEL.....NEYLAND IN COM.....OB.....1509.*²

This parish church stood in Bartholomew Lane, and had been rebuilt about the year 1438 by Thomas Pike, Alderman, and Nicholas Yoo, Sheriff in that year, both of whom lay buried in it; and in the chapel of his founding lay Sir William, at least until the great fire in 1666, after which the church had to be rebuilt by Wren. Whether any remains of Capell's tomb were in existence when Wren's church was pulled down in 1840 to make room for the new Royal Exchange, I know not, but it is strange that the church in which Sir William Capell had been buried should have disappeared just at the same time when the church at Rayne, the steeple of which he had built, and in which lay his son Sir Giles and many of his descendants, was being destroyed, and the monuments of the Capells were being sold as old rubbish by an enlightened building committee. The fact that Sir William Capell was a benefactor to this church of St. Bartholomew would seem to indicate that he lived in the parish, and this idea is confirmed by a "Verdict of the inquest of wardmote in the ward of Bradstrete, held on the feast of St. Thomas 1523," where amongst the "presentments" we find "St. Bartylmew's. Defective pavement before Sir Gylys Capell's"³ for Sir Giles no doubt owned his father's house in the city. Now close to where stood the church of St. Bartholomew, there is still a place known as Capel Court, and I would venture to suggest that it was here that the house of the great city merchant stood, and from him that it takes its present name.

Sir William had married, but at what date does not appear, Margaret, daughter of Sir Thomas Arundel of Lanhern in Cornwall;⁴ and by her left a son, Giles, and two daughters,—Elizabeth, married to Sir William Paulet of Hinton St. George, afterwards first Marquess of Winchester; and Dorothy, married to John Lord Zouch of Harringworth.

¹ Some writers say *north* side but Stow who wrote when the chapel still existed has *south* side. He however erroneously says, that Sir Giles Capell was also buried there. "Survey," vol. i, p. 448. See also Dugdale, "Baronage," Lond. 1675, vol. ii, p. 466.

² Weever's "Ancient Funeral Monuments," p. 417. He read the date incorrectly. There is no doubt about the date 1515 for Sir William's death, and John Capel died in 1449.

³ "Calendar of State Papers. Hen. VIII," vol. iii, (3657).

⁴ She survived him, for in 1519 a license was granted to Margaret Capell, widow, to alienate one messuage and two shops in the parish of St. Sepulchre

without the Bars, held of the king in socage by the rent of 10 pence a year. "Cal. of State Papers, Hen VIII," vol. iii (405). There is also in the British Museum a deed (Add. chant. 6212) by which Sir Giles Capell, Kt., grants to Dame Margaret his mother, widow of Sir William Capell, Kt., some property in Little Hadham. Cussans, who quotes this deed in his "History of Herts," says it is dated 24th Feb. 1515, or some months before the time assigned to Sir W. Capel's death, but an examination of the deed itself proves it dated 24 Feb. of the *seventh* year of Henry VIII, and that only ended on the 22nd April 1516, in the Feb. of which year this deed was executed.

His landed estates were very considerable at the date of his death, and comprised besides the manor of Rayne Hall, those of Berwick Berners, in Roding Abesse, Hundred of Ongar, which he held of the king as of his castle of Plashy or Pleceye; of Goldingtons in Colne-Engaine, Lexden Hundred, which he held of Sir John de Broughton; of Russals in the Hundred of Winstree, which he held of Sir William Finden, as of his manor of East Mersey; of Bacons in Mountneysing, Hundred of Chelmsford, which he held of Sir John de Mountney;¹ of Blake Hall² in the Hundred of Ongar, which he held of Catherine, Queen of England, as of the honour of Clare, and a capital messuage in St. Rumbald's (Runwald's?) in Colchester, &c.³

Besides these estates all in Essex, he owned Little Hadham Manor, an important estate in the Hundred of Edwinstree in Hertfordshire, not far from the Essex border, and the Manor of Walkern in the same county but somewhat further east,⁴ and several considerable estates in Norfolk.⁵

The few scattered notices which remain to us of Sir William Capell when brought together, enable us to discern in him a fine example of the great London citizen and merchant of the end of the fifteenth century. Industrious, thrifty, diligent in the affairs of the great city of which he was an active magistrate, a devout benefactor to his church, princely and magnificent in his relations with his royal master when need was to maintain his dignity, but at the same time one who went to the Tower (for what might have been an indefinite period had the king not died) rather than submit to exaction or compound with injustice.

His son and successor, Sir Giles, was a man of a different stamp, but also one who made his mark in the days when he lived. A doughty soldier by land and by sea, a hardy joustier, an assiduous courtier and accomplished gentleman, he was well fitted to take a prominent part in the brilliant feasts and warlike enterprises which characterised the early part of the reign of Henry VIII, and wherever the names of those who figured in the jousts, the masks and revels, the warlike expeditions of the young king, have been preserved, there are we almost sure to find that of Giles Capell.

When he was born does not appear, but as his eldest son was born in 1507 and he himself lived until 1556,⁶ it was probably somewhere about the time when his father purchased Rayne Hall, that is to say, about 1486. It may have been before that date, but could scarcely have been later.

Already in 1509 he is found at the coronation of the king, taking part in the festivities with which the monarch of eighteen began his reign. Great jousts were held at Westminster, and we read—"Next to them came on horseback eight persons, whose names were Sir John Pechie, Sir Edward Neville, Sir Edward Guildeford, Sir John Carre, Sir William

¹ The manor of Arnolds belonged to this estate, for Henry Elvedon, Esq., died holding it of W. Capell, and in 1504, Dionysia Spark held this manor of Sir William Capell as of his manor of Bacon's by fealty. Morant's "Essex."

² Called Blachall in Inquis. 7th Hen. VIII. Morant's "Essex."

³ Morant's "Essex" (Inquis. 7th Hen.

VIII), "Hist. of Essex," by a gentleman, &c.

⁴ Clutterbuck's "Herts.;" Salmon's "Herts.," &c.

⁵ "Collectanea Topographica," vol. vii, p. 200; and Blomfield's "History of Norfolk."

⁶ Morant says that the son was 49 when he succeeded his father in 1556.

Parre, Sir Giles Capell,¹ Sir Griffith Dun, and Sir Rouland, armed also at all points with shields of their own arms, with rich plumes and devices on their head pieces, their basses and trappers of tissue, cloth of gold, silver and velvet." These eight champions were brought forward by a knight, who announced "how he had been informed that Dame Pallas had presented six of her scholars to the king, but whether they had come to learn or to teach feats of arms he knew not; any way his knights were come to do feats of arms for love of the ladies, wherefore he besought her grace's" (the queen's) "licence for them to prove their skill against Dame Pallas's scholars." These disciples of Pallas were the "emprisers" or holders of the jousts, the "tenans" as they are called in French accounts of tournaments. They were Thomas Lord Howard, Sir Edward Howard his brother, the Lord Richmond, brother to the Marquess of Dorset, Sir Thomas Knevet² and Charles Brandon, Esquire. On the second day of the joust the leader of the eight knights who on the first day fought without announcing who they were, declared themselves the servants of the goddess Diana.³

In January, 1510, the birth of the King's first son was celebrated with brilliant feasts and jousts. On one side was the King and his aids, on the other Sir Charles Brandon, Henry Guilford, the Marquess of Dorset, and Thomas Bullen, who appeared dressed as pilgrims, and we read "then entered Sir Giles Capell, Sir Rouland with many other knights armed and apparelled."⁴

This same year amongst the king's payments there appears "Giles Capell for a spear and two month's wages £10 3s. 4d."⁵ Stow says that shortly after his coronation "the king ordayned fiftie gentlemen to be speares, every one of them to have an archer, a demilaunce and a cistrall,⁶ and every speare to have three great horses to be attendant on his person, to which band the Earl of Essex was lieutenant and Sir John Pechie captaine, which ordinance continued not long, the charges was so great; for there were none of them, but they and their horses were apparelled and trapped in cloth of gold, silver, and goldsmiths worke."⁷ No doubt Sir Giles served in this very brilliant band.

In 1512 he is mentioned in a list of "names of them which be appointed to go in their own persons with the number of men which they have granted to bring with them to serve the king's grace by land."⁸ Whether he accompanied any expedition in that year is not shown, but next year he took an active and honourable part in the war against Louis

¹ He was not knighted until 1513.

² Afterwards drowned with 700 men of his ship, the Regent, in a fight off the coast of Brittany, when the Breton ship *la Cordeliere*, built at Morlaix by Anne of Brittany, grappling the Regent, both ships were burnt and went to the bottom with their entire crews. Stow's "Summarie," Ann. 1512, and du Bellay's *Memoires*, who gives 1513 as the date, and is probably right, as he relates the event very circumstantially.

³ Hall, "The Union of the two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancastre and York," and Holinshed, whose text is here followed.

⁴ Hall, "The Union, &c.," Holinshed, "Chronicles."

⁵ "Calendar of State Papers, Henry VIII.," vol. iii. "The king's book of payments."

⁶ A coustirl, or horseman armed with a coustirl or kind of vouge, in French called coustiller.

⁷ At the rate at which Sir Giles was paid, the fifty men would have cost £3,050 a-year, a large sum at that day, besides which the captain and lieutenant would receive higher pay.

⁸ Stow, "Annales."

⁹ "Calendar of State Papers, Henry VIII.," vol. i (3231.)

XII of France which ended in the capture of Théroouanne and Tournay and of which the Battle of the Spurs is the most memorable incident.

It is well-known that Henry, having joined the Holy Alliance, undertook to land in Picardy with a force of 5,000 horse and 40,000 foot, the Emperor Maximilian joining the expedition as a simple captain under Henry's orders, with a wage of 100 crowns a day for himself and his men. The army landed at Calais in June 1513, and on the 17th July sat down before Théroouanne. On the 16th August was fought the battle at Guinegate which, the French men-at-arms making more use of their spurs than of their lances, came to be known as the Battle of the Spurs.

"Th' Englishemen folowed the chace three myle long from the felde to a water in a valey, and there a Frenchman sayde to Sir Giles Capell that one daye they would have a daye, which answered hym agayne in Frenche, that was a bragge of Fraunce; and so th' Englyshemen returned to the king which was comyng forward, who gave them thanks with greate praisynges for their valiantness."¹ Sir Giles's repartee was, perhaps, less keen than his sword, but the record of his speech by Hall shows that he was already a noted soldier.²

Bayard, with fourteen chosen companions, setting at nought the orders of his chief, made a stand for a while on a bridge, seemingly over the very "water in a valey" mentioned above, and for a brief space, held the English in check, but he and his men were soon taken prisoners. It was after this, that Maximilian rallying the "bon chevalier sans peur et sans reproche," laughingly remarked that he understood that Bayard never fled. "Sire, had I fled, I had not been here," was the quick answer.³

Théroaunne fell, and was burnt with the exception of the churches and other holy buildings, and for the valour he had displayed during the siege and at the Battle of the Spurs, we find Sir Giles Capell named amongst "the knights made-at Tourayne" (Théroouanne) "in the church after the king came from mass under his banner in the church."⁴ There is also a record in 1513 of "£55. 3s. 4d. paid to Sir Giles Capell for one month, as captain of the Mary George of Hull, 120 tons, and the Antony of Lynne, 80 tons, with 158 men, these being the ships which he commanded in the expedition."⁵

Peace was soon concluded with Louis XII, and to cement it a marriage was arranged between that king and the Princess Mary, Henry's sister, which took place in October 1514. The coronation of the youthful Queen of France was to take place on the 1st November, and to celebrate it the "Lord Dolphin of France, Lord Francis Duke de Valois,"⁶ proclaimed jousts to be held at that date, "Namelie, that he with his nine aids should answer all commers being gentlemen of name and of armes. First to run five courses at the tilt with pieces of advantage,⁷ and also five courses at random with sharpe speares and twelve strokes with sharpe swords; and that done he and his aids to fight at the barriers with all

¹ Hall, "The Union &c."

² A fine contemporary picture of this battle is at Hampton Court and affords valuable studies of the armour worn at the time.

³ Loyal Serviteur, "Histoire du Gentil Seigneur de Bayard."

⁴ "Calendar of State Papers, Henry VIII," vol. i (4468.)

⁵ "Calendar of State Papers, Henry VIII," vol. i (3980.)

⁶ Afterwards Francis the First, King of France.

⁷ The extra or reinforcing pieces used for tilting are probably meant.

gentlemen of name and armes; First six foines¹ with hand speares, and after that eight strokes to the most advantage if the speare so long held;² and after that twelve strokes with the sword. And if anie man be unhorsed, or felled with fighting on foot, then his horse and armour to be rendered to the officers of armes; and everie man of this chalenge must set up his armes and name upon an arch triumphant, which shalbe made at the place where the justs shalbe, and further shall write to what point he will answer to one or to all."³

"When this proclamation was reported in England by the noble men that returned from the marriage, the Duke of Suffolke, the Marquisse Dorset and his foure bretheren, the lord Clinton, Sir Edward Nevill, Sir Giles Capell, Sir Thomas Chenie, and other, sued the king to be at the chalenge which request he gratuslie granted."⁴

They speedily shipped their horses and armour, landed at Calais "all in greene coates and hoods because they would not be known," and by the end of October they reached Paris where they were heartily welcomed by the Dauphin, "but most of all by the Queen," who was at St. Denis awaiting her coronation and entry into Paris. She was sixteen, her royal husband fifty-three, and Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, was foremost amongst those who came to answer the challenge.

The "Loyal Serviteur" has left a pathetic picture of the married life of the king. "He had no wish to marry again and on account of his wife he had to change all his manner of life, for where he used to dine at eight in the morning now it behoved him to dine at noon, where he used to get to bed at six, now he often could not get there before midnight."⁵ In view of these hardships it is not to be marvelled at, that two months, day for day, after her coronation the girl queen was a widow, and that in the merry month of May following, her first love, Charles Brandon, became her husband.

For the entry of the queen into Paris, there "was erected an arch of widness at the tornels beside the street of Saint Anthonie directly before the bastell, on which were set four targets or scutchions, the one of silver, and he that set his name under that shield to run at tilt according to the articles. He that put his name under the golden target should run with the sharpe spears and fight with sharpe swords. They that put their names to the black shield should fight on foot with spears and swords for the one hand. And he that touched the tawnie shield should cast a speare on foot with a target on his arme, and after to fight with a two-hand sword. On this arch above, stood the arms of the King and Queen, and beneath them stood the names of the Dolphin and his aids, and underneath stood the foure scutchions that you have heard of, and under them all, the arms and names of such as set their names to any of the said foure scutchions."⁷

The joust, the back-ground of which is thus described, began the day

¹ Thrusts.

² If it did not break.

³ That is to say in which of the above modes he would wish to fight.

⁴ Hall, "The Union &c.," and Holinshed "Chronicles."

Marc Wulson de la Colombiere, "Vray Théâtre d'Honneur et de Chevalrie," gives a detailed account of this tourna-

ment and mentions "Cappel. Anglois" several times.

⁵ "Histoire du Gentil Seigneur de Bayard."

⁶ By the towers of the Porte St. Antoine and facing the Bastille.

⁷ Hall "The Union &c.," and Holinshed "Chronicles."

after the coronation and lasted three days, and Hall and Holinshead relate many of the episodes adding "but the Englishmen had ever on their apparell red crosses to be knowne for love of their countrie."¹ After gaining great honour they departed, reaching England before Christmas.

On the 24th May, 1516, Thomas Alen writing, to the Earl of Shrewsbury, says, "Great jousting at Greenwich, on Monday and Tuesday last. The King, the Lords Suffolk and Essex, Sir Geo. Carewe, were challengers; Sir Will. Kingston, Sir Giles Capell, John Sedley, and others defenders." The King either was not, or affected not to be satisfied with the skill of his opponents, for Alen adds, "The King hath promised never to joust again except it be with as good a man as himself."² But this promise was not likely to be kept for long and was probably broken before 1519, when we find the King greatly distinguishing himself in a joust where five hundred and six spears were broken, and wearing on his head a lady's sleeve full of diamonds;³ and 1520 he did not disdain again to encounter Sir Giles, for on the 19th February he "answered the challenge of Sir Rich. Jerningham, Mr. Ant. Brown, Sir Giles Capell, and Mr. Norris, in garments from his store."⁴

In 1516, Sir Giles is mentioned as one of the knights of the body to the King and he attends his master at a banquet at Greenwich on the 7th July, 1517.⁵ The next year he was again in France, for in September he appears as one of the "Pensioners of the French Embassy," and in November receives £40 for diets in France.⁶

The summer of 1520 is memorable for one of the most famous knightly pageants ever seen, the Field of Cloth of Gold, and here again Sir Giles is to be found amongst those knights who, with the kings of England and France at their head, undertook to hold the lists for thirty days against all comers.⁷ Each king had seven gentlemen as companions in this feat of arms, the English being the Duke of Suffolk, the Marquis of Dorset, Sir William Kingston, Sir Giles Capell, Sir Nicholas Carew and Sir Anthony Knevet. The French king headed an equal number of well tried lances. His appearance at this time is strikingly drawn by Hall. "A goodlie prince, statlie of countenance, merrie of cheere, brown coloured, great eies, high nosed, big lipped, faire brested, broad shoulders, small legs and long feet."⁸ The portrait of him as a youth, in the Louvre, by Clouet, and his suit of armour at the Musée d'Artillerie, exactly tally with and complete this description.

King Henry and Monsieur de Graudeville opened the tilting on the 11th June, and at the second stroke the king "gave the said Monsieur Grandevile such a stroke that the charnell of his head piece, although the same was very strong, was broken." Later we learn that "the king's noble grace never disvisored nor breathed until he ran the five courses."⁹

¹ These crosses will be seen on the breasts of the English knights in the picture of the Battle of the Spurs at Hampton Court.

² "Cal. of State Papers, Hen. VIII," vol. ii (1935).

³ Hollinshead "Chronicles."

⁴ "Cal. of State Papers, Hen. VIII," vol. iii, p. 1553.

⁵ *Ib.*, vol. ii, (2735) & (3446).

⁶ *Ib.*, vol. ii (4409), and the "King's book of payments," 10th Hen. VIII.

⁷ "Cal. State Papers, Henry VIII,"

vol. ii (870), also under "Revels," where the dresses of attendants on Sir Giles and other knights mentioned. Stow "Annales:" Hall "the Union &c.," and Holinshead "Chronicles;" Marc Wulson de la Colombiere, "Vray Théâtre d'Honneur et de Chevalerie;" also Fleuranges "Mémoires;" and du Bellay "Mémoires;" for accounts of this pageant.

⁸ This is Holinshead's text, but copied from Hall.

⁹ Holinshead "Chronicles."

On the 20th June began the "tournies," they ended on the next day, and on the 22nd they did "batell on foot at the barriers," which ended "all the justs, tournies and batells on foot at the barriers by the said two kings and their aids." On leaving Guines King Henry went to Gravelines, where he met the Emperor Charles V, who in no way rivalled the pomp and splendour of his brethren of France and England, but with a small retinue, accompanied Henry as far as Calais. Here again, in a list of "noblemen and others appointed to attend upon the king at Gravelines"¹ for his meeting with Charles V, 10th July 1520, we find the name of Sir Giles Capell.

Two years later the Emperor came to England to visit King Henry, and a document of the time says, "At the emperor's arrival at Dover the Cardinal and the following gentlemen shall meet him,"² Sir Giles Capell being amongst those named to form Wolsey's suite. A treaty was signed at Windsor by the English king now won over by the Emperor from the friendship with Francis sworn to on the Field of Cloth of Gold, and its results were soon apparent. "They," the Emperor and the King, "departed out of Windsore, and by easy journeys came to Wynchester the 22nd day of June, and in the way thither the Emperor hunted the hart. Before the Emperor was come to Wynchester, th' erle of Surray Admyrall of England with all the king's navy was come to Hampton,³ and with him the Lord Fitzwater, the Baron Curson, Sir Gyles Capell, Sir Nicholas Carew, Sir Francis Bryan, Anthony Brown, John Russell, of which many were of the king's prevy chamber. These with many more departed from Hampton with XXX shippes well manned and ordinauced, in the end of June, noysying that they should only skoure the sea for safeguard of the Emperor and his navye, but they had privy instructions to go to another place, as you shall see."⁴

There still exists in Surrey's handwriting a list of that portion of the fleet commanded by Admiral Lord Fitzwalter on the Maglory 300 tons, and amongst the ships is "the Spaniard Maria Gadalope 140 tons, Sir Gyles Capell," the total of that fleet being "11 ships, 1400 men."⁵

Instead of safeguarding the Emperor, this expedition landed 7,000 men near to Morlaix in Brittany, who marched on that town, which they took, and "the souldiers fell to pillage and rifled the chestes and ware houses of marchantes, for the toune of Morles was very rich, and specially of lynnens cloth; the gentlemen suffered the souldiers to do what they would. When the souldiers had taken their pleasure of the toune, as much for a trueth or more than they could beare away, the Lord Admiral commanded the trumpettes to blow, and commanded all men to set fyer in all places of the toune (the holy places only except); the fayre market-place was set on fyer and the subburbes brent ardantly. Wherefore all men were commanded to their standardes, and at about six of the clock the army retyred, and as they passed they brent the villages and places, and next day with honour they took to their shippes." After this *honourable* exploit, unsuccessful attempts were made to treat Saint-Pol de Léon and Brest in the same fashion, and they then took themselves off to Picardy, where they burnt divers towns and castles.⁶

¹ "Cal. of State Papers, Henry VIII," vol. iii (906).

² *Ib.*, vol. iii (2288).

³ Southampton.

⁴ The "Union, &c.," Hall.

⁵ "Cal. of State Papers Hen. VIII," vol. iii (2480).

⁶ Hall, "The Union &c."

According to the Breton account of this affair, the English having been apprised by a traitor that the nobility of the neighbourhood had been convoked to an assembly at Guingamp, and that the principal townspeople would at the same time be at the fair at Noyal Pontivy; their fleet of 60 sail entered the river of Morlaix on the evening of the 4th July, 1522, and having reached the place called Hantevallen, the English landed, some disguised as merchants, some as peasants. A portion marched towards the suburbs and the castle, but the greater part remained hidden in the wood of Stivel.

Towards midnight, when all in the town were in their beds, the English rushed forward, forced the gates and spread such an alarm amongst the inhabitants that they fled on all sides without thinking of defence. Two people only kept their wits about them. The Chaplain of Our Lady of the Wall raised the drawbridge of the gate of Our Lady, and mounting the gate-tower shot down several of the enemy with an arquebus, but was himself at length killed. A maid-of-all-work in the High Street seeing all had fled from the house, got some other women to join her, raised the trap-door of a cellar just inside the doorway, and opening a sluice which communicated with the river, filled the cellar with water. Then leaving the house door ajar, she shut herself up with the other women at the top of the house.

One after another the pillagers tried the house, and in the darkness straightway fell into the cellar, where full four score were drowned. At length, however, the trick was discovered, the house forced, and the brave maid, hunted from room to room by the soldiers, was caught and flung from the top of the house down on to the pavement of the street.

About daybreak most of the enemy retired with plunder and prisoners to their ships; but from six to seven hundred still tarried drinking in the cellars of the houses called "of the Lances," on the Tréguier quay. These, when they departed, haked in the Stivel wood, not far from the town, to sleep off their liquor.

The Lord of Laval, who had called the meeting of nobles at Guingamp, having heard from fugitives what had happened, was hastening to succour the town when he fell across the tipsy pillagers, whom he easily cut to pieces, recovering the booty. A spring near the spot is to this day called in the language of the country, "*Feunteun ar Saozon*;" or fountain of the English," for, says Albert le Grand, "its waters were reddened with their blood on that day," and it was then that Morlaix took its punning device "*S'ils mordent, mors-les*"; "If they bite, bite them." But after this the town languished, for many of its noble men were long kept prisoners in England.

With this expedition Sir Giles Capell's feats of arms seem to have ended, but nine years later, that is in 1532, he again went with his sovereign to Calais, and Boulogne,¹ when Henry, once more, the ally of Francis I against Charles V, endeavoured to win over the French king to his contention that the lady who for twenty-three years had been Queen of England, was not, and never had been, his wife.

In 1544, Sir Giles was charged with providing twelve men for his Majesty's service in his wars.² Henry was again the ally of the Emperor against the King of France, and besieged and took Boulogne; but it is not stated whether Sir Giles accompanied the expedition.

¹ Stow, "*Annales*."

- Cotton MS., quoted by Collins, "*Peerage*," 5th ed.

We may know what the standard under which Sir Giles and his men fought was like, for it is emblazoned with his arms in a roll preserved at the College of Arms.¹ It is thus described by Bentley in his "*Excerpta Historica* :—"Syr Gyles Capell de Stebbing in com. Essex, Or, (A) an anchor erect Gules bezanty, the ring Or, between in the dexter chief and sinister base, two jessamine slips proper, in (B) one, in (C) three similar slips.—*Motto*, POVR ENTRE TENIR. *Arms*: Gules a lion rampant, between three cross crosslets fitche Or; a label of three points."² The standard was shaped like what is now called a pennant, and was forked at its end. As a knight Sir Giles's standard would be four yards long.

The domestic life of Sir Giles has as yet been left aside, so as not to interrupt the narrative of his exploits as a man at arms, but it is now time to turn to it.

All the genealogies of the Capell family, all the histories of Essex and Hertfordshire, all the peerages,³ repeat the statement that he first married Mary, daughter of Sir Richard Roos, younger son of William Lord Roos of Belvoir, and secondly Isabel, daughter and co-heir of Sir John Newton of Wake, in Somersetshire. In this statement they are all in error, as two documents quoted in the "*Calendar of State Papers*" will prove conclusively. Here are the documents—"10 July 1516, For Sir Giles Capell. Livery of lands of his deceased wife Isabella, a daughter and heir of Ric. Newton and Eleanor his wife; Henry being son and heir of the said Sir Giles and Isabella. The other daughter and heir is Joan, wife of John Gryffyne." Next—10th March, 1530, "Sir Giles Capell and Mary his wife" are mentioned in an indenture concerning lands in Middlesex.⁵ No further proof is needed: Isabel was the first wife and Mary the second.

Most of the historians and genealogists above referred to rightly make Henry the son of Isabel, but Phillip Morant erroneously calls him the son of Mary, and adds that the children of the second wife Isabel were Margaret (married to William Ward of Brooks, Esquire),⁶ and Edward. All three children were probably born of the first wife Isabel, for most authorities state that Mary died without issue.

Sir Giles added to the considerable estates already enumerated which he inherited from his father, and his additions were mostly made with a view of rendering his possessions more compact. Just to the north of Rayne Hall lay the Priory of Pantfield and the park of Bocking. The Priory, until the suppression of religious houses, had belonged to the Prior of Canterbury, but on the 12th March, 1538, it was granted by Henry VIII,

¹ The fact that Sir Giles is called of Stebbing, shows that this roll was compiled after 1545, when that manor was granted to him, and not about 1520 as Bentley thinks.

² The letters A, B, C, refer to the parts of the standard, which, roughly speaking, was divided into four parts. That nearest the staff was occupied by the cross of St. George, Gules, on a field Argent. Next to that was the portion called A, then B, and at the forked extremity was C. Two Capel crests are given in the Harleian MS. described in the "*Collectanea Topographica*," vol. iii, dating from the reign of Henry VIII.

The first (p. 70) is—On a wreath a demi lion rampant holding in the sinister paw a cross crosslet botonée Or; the second (p. 75)—An anchor Sable, the beam and rings Or.

³ Berry's "*Hertfordshire Genealogies*"; Clutterbuck's "*Herts*"; Salmon's "*Herts*"; Morant's "*Essex*"; Collins's and Burke's "*Peerages*," &c.

⁴ "*Cal. of State Papers*, Hen. VIII," vol. ii. (2158.)

⁵ "*Cal. of State Papers*, Hen. VIII," vol. iv. (6264.)

⁶ Collins mentions a daughter, and says she married Robert Ward of Kirkby Beeton, Norfolk, Esq., "*Peerage*," 5th ed.

together with Bocking Park and 400 acres of wood, to Sir Giles Capell, to hold in capite to him and his heirs for ever, for the service of the tenth part of a knight's fee and the yearly rent of 54sh. 8d. at Michaelmas, with frank pledge, waifes, estrayes, &c., as fully as the late Prior held the same.¹ In 1549, however, Sir Giles obtained a license to alienate the Priory to John Gooday of Braintree, clothier.

To the west of Rayne was the manor of Stebbing Hall, which had belonged to Henry Grey Marquess of Dorset, the father of the Lady Jane Grey. He sold it to Sir Robert Southwell from whom it was purchased by the king, who, in 1545 granted it Sir Giles Capell in exchange for the manors of Honeylands and Pentriches, the moiety of the manor of Russals, and the manor of Ditton Vallaunce.² Honeylands was in Herts, Pentriches adjoined it in Middlesex, Ditton Vallaunce was in Cambridgeshire, and Russals was on the estuary of the Blackwater in Essex. All were far from Rayne, so that Sir Giles gained greatly by exchanging them for Stebbing. Porter's Hall, another manor in the parish of Stebbing was also held by Sir Giles at the time of his death, with appertenances in Stebbing, Dunmow Priory, Little Saling and Great Saling, of Queen Mary, as of the Castle of Plashey, but whether he acquired it with Stebbing Hall does not appear. Besides these estates and those which he had inherited from his father, he held the manor of Purley in Dengey Hundred, parish of Snoreham, south of the Blackwater estuary, and the presentations to the church show that he held it in right of his first wife Mary.³

Sir Giles was Sheriff of Essex and Herts in 1528-9, and on the Commission of the Peace in 1525-6, 1530 and 1532.⁴ In 1529 he is mentioned in a list of debtors to Thomas Cromwell, and in the same year in King Henry's privy purse payments is an entry—"to a servant of Sir Giles Capell for bringing cheeses to the King 5 sh.,"⁵ and again in 1530, "Reward to a servant of Sir Giles Capell for bringing a doe 10 sh."

In 1533 we read that "the Earls of Oxford and Sussex and Sir Sir Giles Capell dined with the Princess Mary,"⁶ and again "Tuesday 2 Sept., came to supper Sir Giles and Henry Capell and their wives and servants, and remained three days." This took place at Beaulieu where the Princess was then staying. Henry Capell, Sir Giles's eldest son, had been knighted on Trinity Sunday of this same year, when a number of knights were made to celebrate the coronation of Anne Bullen,⁷ and it is curious that so shortly after that event he should be found with his father on apparently intimate terms with the daughter of the Queen who had been divorced to make way for her own maid of honour, for the Princess Mary was now completely estranged from her father, who even deprived her of her title the Princess of Wales.⁸

¹ Morant's "Essex."

² *Ib.*

³ *Ib.*

⁴ "Cal. of State Papers, Hen. VIII," vol. iv, (1136) (2002) (4914) (6803), vol. v. (1694).

⁵ "Cal. of State Papers, Hen. VIII," vol. v, p. 747.

⁶ "Cal. of State Papers, Hen. VIII," vol. v, (1540), Princess Mary's household account.

⁷ "Cal. of State Papers, Hen. VIII,"

vol. v, (601).

⁸ It is however to be remembered that just before the coronation of Anne Bullen, all men of £40 lands were commanded to receive knighthood or pay the fines. "The assessment was appointment to Thomas Cromwell who so used the matter that a great sum of money was levied to the King's use by those fines." Stow, "Annales." Sir Henry therefore may only have received knighthood as a matter of necessity.

It is not clear whether Sir Giles adhered to the old faith of his fathers or espoused the ideas of the German reformers then in favour at court, but his attendance on the king on his journey to France in 1523, proves that he did not openly side with the partizans of Queen Katherine.

He lived three-and-twenty years after the family supper with the Princess Mary recorded above, but that is the last notice which I have found of him.

He died on the 29th May, 1556,¹ and was succeeded by his son Sir Henry,² then forty-nine years old, who, dying without issue four years later, was succeeded by Sir Edward his brother, knighted that same year 1560,³ who lived until 1577.

The history of the later Capells is well-known:—How Arthur Capell a devoted adherent to the cause of Charles I, was created Baron Capell of Hadham, raised considerable force at his own expense, fought for his king with untiring valour, and at length after holding out in Colchester to the last extremity, was taken prisoner, condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, but ultimately beheaded on Tower Hill, his tomb in Hadham Church bearing the inscription—"Here under lieth interred the body of Arthur Lord Capell, Baron of Hadham, who was murdered for his Loyalty to King Charles 1st March 9th 1648"—and how his son, created Viscount Maldon and Earl of Essex by Charles II, was accused of complicity in the Rye House Plot, sent to the Tower, and a few days later found with his throat cut.

My task ends with Sir Giles Capell, who was buried with his wife in the chancel of Rayne Church, seemingly in the very tomb over which for well nigh three centuries hung the tournament helm which was the motive of this paper; for may we not fairly assume that the wearer of that interesting relic was the doughty man at arms who was in every joust, who was face to face with Bayard at the battle of the Spurs, at his king's side on the Field of Cloth of Gold, and whose standard was raised in all the warlike enterprises of his day.

¹ Some authors have 29th March but this appears to be an error.

² Berry, "Hertfordshire Genealogies," entirely omits to mention Sir Henry Capell and makes his younger brother Edward succeed!

³ I owe to Mr. Probert of Bishop's Stortford, a copy of the inscription on a brass in old Rayne Church, of which he possesses a rubbing. "Heare lyeth buried y^e lady Katherin one of the daughters of y^e right honoable Sr Thomas Manners Knight late lorde Roos Earle of Rutlande and of the lady Elizabeth his wief daughter of Sr William Paston decessed and late wife of Henry Capell Esquier son'e & heier aparant of Sir Edward Capell Knight & Anne his wief daughter of Sir William Pellam Knight w^h said Henry Capell & lady Kathryn had issue of their bodies thes x children sixe son'es and iiij daughters whose names w^t y^e

dies of their birthes hereafter foloweth, viz., William borne 14 Septebris 1556 and died Arthur 9 Januarii 1557 Edward 4 Martii 1558 John 5 Junii 1560 Gamalell v Jauuarii 1561 Agnes i Januarii 1562 Fraunces 18 Martii 1564 Anne 8 Junii 1566 Robert 19 Februarii 1567 Mary 26 Januarii 1569 w^{che} Lady Katheryn dyed 9 Martii 1572. Heare lyeth also buried the sayd Henry Capell Esquire who died the daye of " date not filled in, as this brass was made before he died. The Saffron Walden helmet may very possibly have belonged to one of the sons of Sir Giles, Henry or Edward, and the helmet, still in the possession of the lady who gave me the tournament helm, to his grandson, Henry Capell, Sir Edward and his son Sir Henry, who died in 1588, having both been buried in Rayne Church. See Wright's "History of Essex."