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THE CARVINGS OF MEDIAEVAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
IN EXETER CATHEDRAL CHURCH.¹

By EDITH K. PRIDEAUX.

As a record of one section of the decorative detail of Exeter cathedral church, this paper aims at giving a full list of all the musical instruments that appear in the carvings there, with photographs of each; and, as it would seem somewhat incomplete to present them without any reference to the historical developments of such instruments, I have compiled from various sources, especially from the Rev. F. Galpin's comprehensive book,² the notes that follow; and have also added illustrations from other contemporary mediaeval buildings, comparison with which appeared to me to increase the interest of the collection. In this last matter I have been most generously assisted by Mr. F. H. Crossley, who put at my disposal a large number of his splendid photographs from Beverley and Exeter, and other material in his possession, both for reference and reproduction.

Since writing these notes I have also had the immense advantage of thorough criticism from Mr. Galpin, which has not only ensured far greater accuracy than could otherwise have been claimed, but has also added many points of great and uncommon interest.

As far as possible the carvings are noticed in chronological order.

That Exeter cathedral church should display a large number of musicians and their instruments in its decoration is not surprising. It was originally dedicated in honour of the blessed Virgin Mary as well as of St. Peter; and although the former dedication is now disused, the whole decorative scheme, internal and external, centres round the Coronation and Enthronement of the Virgin.³

¹ Read before the Institute, 6th May, 1914.

² *Old English Instruments of Music*, in 'The Antiquary's Books,' Methuen, 2nd edition, 1912.

³ E. K. Prideaux, *Figure-sculpture of the west front of Exeter Cathedral*, *Archaeol. Journ.* l. xix, pp. 8, 9, 25, 28.

With these scenes the angelic quire and minstrels are intimately associated; they have always been represented as the special attendants on the Virgin at her coronation, and all music and musicians appear to have been under her protection.¹

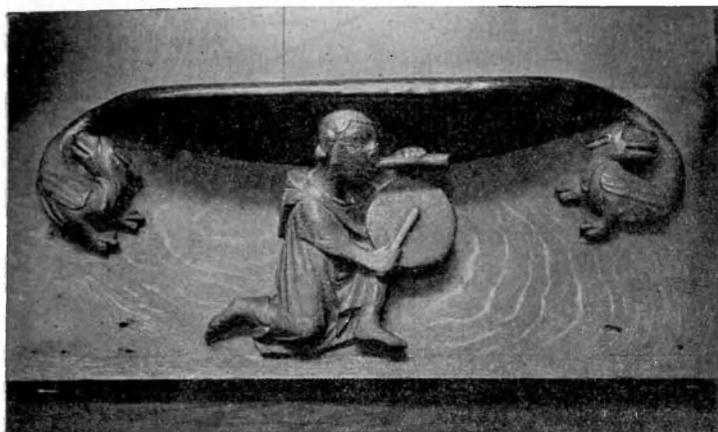
Thus we find the bosses, corbels, and pre-eminently the minstrels' gallery, showing a number and variety of musical instruments hardly equalled even by the sculptures of the minster at Beverley, or those of Manchester collegiate church. And besides these important specimens, belonging to the original decoration of the building itself, there also occur many others on mediaeval monuments there which, though not actually related to its decorative scheme, may appropriately be noticed in the same connexion.

The earliest specimen at Exeter of a musician is a relief carving on one of the misericords (no. 15) representing a man playing the pipe and tabor (plate 1, no. 1). This work is of the thirteenth century, and is the only example of so early a date in the church. In it is shown the most usual position of the two instruments when in use, the pipe being played by the left hand, and the right engaged in beating the tabor which is attached by a string to the neck or shoulder of the performer. In this example the man is kneeling, but that attitude is merely due to the convenience of adapting the carving to the cramped position it occupies. Of this we see a still more emphatic example in another contemporary pipe and tabor player carved in the spandrel of a two-light window in the tower of St. Mary the Virgin at Higham Ferrers, Northants. where the performer is painfully contorted to fit the available space (plate 1, no. 2). In reality the performer always stood.

The pipe and tabor were instruments of but small repute musically, chiefly used by strolling minstrels to accompany rustic dancing, tumbling, and other revelries.² It has been said that we never find them associated with the celestial quires, nor with the musicians attendant upon the enthroned Virgin. Nevertheless in the thirteenth-century 'angel quire' at Lincoln these in-

¹ Mrs. Jameson, *Legends of the Madonna*, p. 50.

² Milton, *Comus*, l. 173, refers to the 'gamesome pipe' in this connexion.



NO. I. THE PIPE AND TABOR ON A MISERICORD AT EXETER.



NO. 2. THE PIPE AND TABOR ON A WINDOW-HEAD AT HIGHAM FERRERS.



NO. 1.



NO. 2.

HARP AND RYBYBE ON BOSSES IN THE PRESBYTERY VAULT AT EXETER.



NO. 3.



NO. 4.

INDETERMINATE BOWED INSTRUMENTS ON CORBELS AT EXETER.

struments appear in the hands of one of the great angels carved in the spandrels, and it may be that their degradation to exclusively baser uses was a later development.

Our thirteenth-century representation of the tabor at Exeter does not show the 'snare' or vibrating cord usually stretched across the parchment of one head, but it is indicated in the Higham Ferrers example, and a tabor on the fourteenth-century stalls of Lincoln minster shows it clearly.

The pipe used with the tabor was necessarily small to facilitate its manipulation by one hand. It had only three holes, two in front and one for the thumb behind; but being over a foot long there could be produced from it, by means of the harmonics, a scale of more than an octave.¹

The kettledrum was nearly allied to the tabor, and plate XIII, no. 7, shows an almost contemporary carving from the nave corbel-table of the church of St. Mary, Adderbury, Oxon. These little drums, called 'nakers' were used in pairs, suspended in front of the performer by a strap round the shoulders or waist, and were beaten with small sticks as are the modern kettledrums. They show the 'snare' referred to above. Here, as with other instruments, they are in an unusual position, simply for the purpose of displaying them within the limits of the frieze in which they occur.² Nakers are believed to have been introduced into England from the east by the Crusaders. In 1304 there is a record of 'Yanino le Nakerer' in the list of king Edward I's minstrels; Edward III also had one, and the band that announced his entry into Calais in 1347 included 'nacaires.'³

The next musicians at Exeter border on the fourteenth century, and occur in the bosses of the presbytery high-vault. This vault was completed before 1304 (in which year the glazing of the east window and clerestory windows of the presbytery is recorded in the fabric rolls),⁴

¹ An ancient pipe and tabor are now in the possession of Mr. Cecil Sharp in sufficiently good condition to allow of their still being used.

² The word *nakers* is a corruption of the

Arabic word *nacareb*, the name of a small eastern hand-drum: see Galpin, *op. cit.* p. 249.

³ Galpin, *op. cit.* p. 250.

⁴ Archdeacon Freeman, *The Architectural History of Exeter Cathedral*, pp. 23, 122.

and it is therefore probable that the actual carving of the bosses had been executed in the workshop a year or two earlier, before they were placed as key-stones in the vault. Among them are two musicians, one with a harp, and the other with an early form of viol.

The harpist is a very graceful seated angel surrounded by foliage and playing on a small harp of five strings (plate II, no. 1). The harp was regarded as specially appropriated to the accompaniment of sacred music, and is found in innumerable illustrations of, and allusions to, the music of the celestial quires. Probably in its position here, in the presbytery vault, the angelic harpist represents the choral angels who are usually shown around the feet of the crowned and enthroned Madonna in heaven, for it is the next figure-subject boss to that of the Coronation of the Virgin which occupies the place of honour over the high altar.¹

The harp, which is of very ancient eastern origin, had been known in Britain, as distinct from the 'rote,' or 'crot,' before the sixth century. The poem *Beowulf*, which dates from that period, refers to it as an established and popular instrument of rejoicing.² In these early days its strings were of untanned hide or twisted horse-hair, and the latter continued in use in Wales even as late as the end of the twelfth century; but in Ireland, where it was enthusiastically adopted and developed in the eleventh century, these were soon changed for metal strings, of gold, silver and a kind of white bronze. In England gut became the ordinary material throughout the middle ages. The number of strings varied at different times, and apparently harps were variously strung at the same time. The English harp of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries usually had from eight to eighteen strings,³ the development being from few to many, from the two five-stringed harps sculptured on the twelfth-century prior's doorway at Ely, to the seventeen strings of the fifteenth-century angel's harp at Manchester. This

¹ Harp is by some derived from a root word *barpan*, to pluck.

² See line 89: 'paer was hearpan sweg' (there was the music of harps). Line 2458: 'Nis paer hearpan sweg' (there was no sound of harp). Line 3023: "Nalles haer-

pan sweg' (not any sound of harps). And in W. J. Sedgefield's glossary to this poem, the word *gamenwuden* (literally 'wood of joy' or 'of rejoicing') is given as meaning harp.

³ Galpin, op. cit. p. 16.

order, however, is not always followed consistently, and in contemporary carvings we find much variety. Thus in Lincoln angel quire, slightly earlier than this Exeter five-stringed example, two harpists occur, one with an instrument of ten strings, and the other with one of sixteen strings. At St. Mary's, Adderbury, Oxon. an example somewhat later than this Exeter boss (plate XIII, no. 10) also shows ten strings, and yet in the nave of Beverley minster there again appears a harp of only five strings.

The other very early fourteenth-century minstrel in Exeter presbytery vault is performing upon a large instrument of the viol order, with a bow of embarrassingly unwieldy proportions (plate II, no. 2). Though wingless this is another angel, as is shown by the bare feet, a feature given in mediaeval art only to the three Persons of the Trinity, the apostles, all angels, and St. John Baptist. The figure and drapery are very graceful and the carving beautifully finished, in which it differs greatly from the later specimens in the church. One feels sure that either the carver was a performer on this instrument himself, or had a living model to work from. The four fine strings of the instrument and the fingers of the stopping hand are perfectly shown. The latter is accurately placed, with the fourth finger stretched to its utmost, and the attitude of the bowing hand indicates the pliant wrist to be seen in a trained violinist at the present day.

The instrument here shown is a 'rybybe,' or 'rubebe,' one of the early forms of the viol family. All of these were precursors, and indeed ancestors, of the modern violin, and all trace back, through the south of Europe, to the east, whence is derived the use of all bowed instruments.

The two main branches of this large family are distinguished from one another by some very marked characteristics. One of these is the shape of the back.

In the class to which the 'rybybe' belongs there were no separate sides, or ribs as they are properly called; but the convex back fitted right on to the oval front. The little rebec and the 'geige' also had this convex back, but they were more pear-shaped than oval in outline, their

necks being merely narrowed elongations of the body, whereas the 'rybybe' had a distinct, separate neck joined into the body. All these three also had no incurvation of the sides, which must have greatly limited the freedom of the bowing.

The other chief branch of the viol family had flat backs, and consequently side ribs, and were incurved in outline somewhere near the middle, sometimes only slightly, and sometimes with a very pronounced waist. This class is found illustrated quite as early as the convex-backed class, examples of both being given by Mr. Galpin from twelfth-century sources in England. Therefore, although the flat-backed and waisted type is that to which the modern violin is most obviously allied, it would be an error to suppose that this form succeeded to that of the rybybe and rebec, or was developed from it. Evidently both kinds were in use at the same time, and the angelic rybybe-player in the Exeter boss is contemporary with many examples that could be quoted of the waisted, flat-backed form. One rybybe, very similar to this specimen, is carved in the hands of an angel in the angel quire at Lincoln, slightly earlier in date than the Exeter boss.

It seems probable that there were rather indeterminate forms, intermediate between the two, simultaneously in use. This we may infer from the specimens surviving in sculpture, such as we find later at Exeter in the minstrels' gallery (plate VII, no. 4), and at Beverley minster on the reredos staircase (plate VIII, no. 1), and at the back of the reredos (plate VIII, no. 2) also fourteenth-century work, and again in the nave of the same minster. In all of these the ribs and flat back are seen, but the waist is either absent, or so slightly developed as to be a mere suggestion of such a feature. The outline assumed by the front or table of the instrument also was variable; for, as these illustrations show, an oval-faced outline and one almost square are represented contemporaneously, while among the fifteenth-century angel-musicians at Manchester is one playing on a viol perfectly square in shape, constructed with sides and a flat back.

The more common and popular little rebec, which was a smaller three-stringed instrument of the same convex-

backed class as the rybybe, ran a much longer career. Its larger relative disappeared in favour of the waisted and ribbed instruments, probably in consequence of the greater facility in bowing which they afforded.

We have no rebec at Exeter of so early a date as the rybybe in the vault, but the mutilated remains of one are still visible in the hands of an angel on the west front dating from some fifty or more years later on in the fourteenth century. Again, a very late version is seen on the canopy of bishop Bronescombe's tomb, far on in the fifteenth century (plate xviii, no. 1).

In the fourteenth-century corbel-table of St. Mary's, Adderbury, Oxfordshire, a true rebec is shown, with the pear-shaped body and well-marked sound holes (plate xiii, no. 5). Of course, in this case, the performer is holding it in so elevated a position only to afford a complete view of the instrument in the limited space at the sculptor's disposal, for it never was and never could be played when held in that fashion.

Our next Exeter musicians are two minstrels on the vaulting-shaft corbels, dating between 1315 and 1325, both playing bowed instruments of the indeterminate kind mentioned above. Either faulty carving, or the existence of several varieties, gives these two instruments a vagueness that forbids their definite classification. They are hardly as small and tapering as the typical rebec, nor have they the incurved sides of the viol proper; the shape of their backs is not discernible since they are carved in such slight relief that they are not detached from the garments of the performers.¹

The earlier, by a few years only (plate ii, no. 3), is in the hands of an angel, again wingless, who occupies the lower part of a corbel in the quire on which the Coronation of the Virgin is represented above; the bare feet of the figure again identify it as one of the celestial minstrels. It is not uncommon in mediaeval art to find angels thus represented as wingless.

The other corbel musician in the nave (plate ii, no. 4) is no angel, but a very mundane strolling minstrel, duly shod, and wearing a spangled gown, and with a humorous and

¹ Mr. Galpin classifies these as offshoots of the rybybe.

merry face ; he is accompanying on his instrument the feats of the tumbler shown above. This pair have been described as 'St. Cecilia playing the crwth with a grotesque listener,'¹ as St. Cicely drawing down the angels from heaven by the sweetness of her performance, and by another author as Salome dancing (i.e. tumbling) before Herod. These imaginative descriptions seem quite unsupported by the figures themselves. Such a pair were very familiar at all merry-makings in the middle ages ; but their appearance here leads one to suspect a reference to some more ecclesiastical subject, a suspicion strengthened when we recall that in the series of twelve musicians shown in the late twelfth-century bas-reliefs formerly in the cloisters of the abbey of Saint-Georges-de-Boscherville, a similar pair are included. The legend which is most vividly called to mind by them is a charming twelfth-century metrical French version transcribed into English prose by the Rev. P. H. Wicksteed.²

There is one other musician to be noted on a boss in the high-vault of the cathedral nave. It is later than those just described, and earlier than those of the minstrels' gallery, this part of the vault having been finished about 1343 or 1345. It is again a harpist (plate III, no. 1), but this time a priest instead of an angel ; and there are good reasons for believing that it represents St. Dunstan, whose skill on the harp is a well-known feature in the traditions connected with him.³ The harp on which he is performing is much larger than that of the angel in the presbytery vault, but the number of its strings is not indicated.

The next step chronologically in the study of Exeter's musical instruments is to the minstrels' gallery (plate IV), which there is good reason to believe was erected in 1353, some twenty-five or thirty years later than the corbels we have been considering.⁴ There is structural evidence that it was an afterthought, the church having been completed, excepting the west-front sculpture, under

¹ Wm. Cotton, *Bosses and Corbels of the Cathedral Church of St. Peter's, Exeter*.

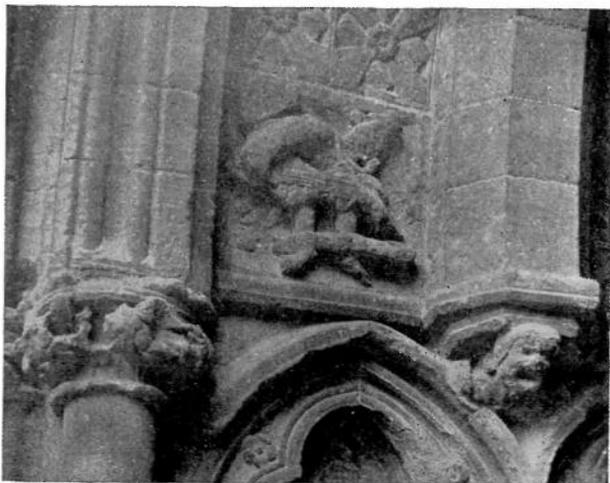
³ E. K. Prideaux and G. R. Holt Shafto, *Bosses and Corbels of Exeter Cathedral*, p. 176.

² *Our Lady's Tumbler*, Dent, 1900.

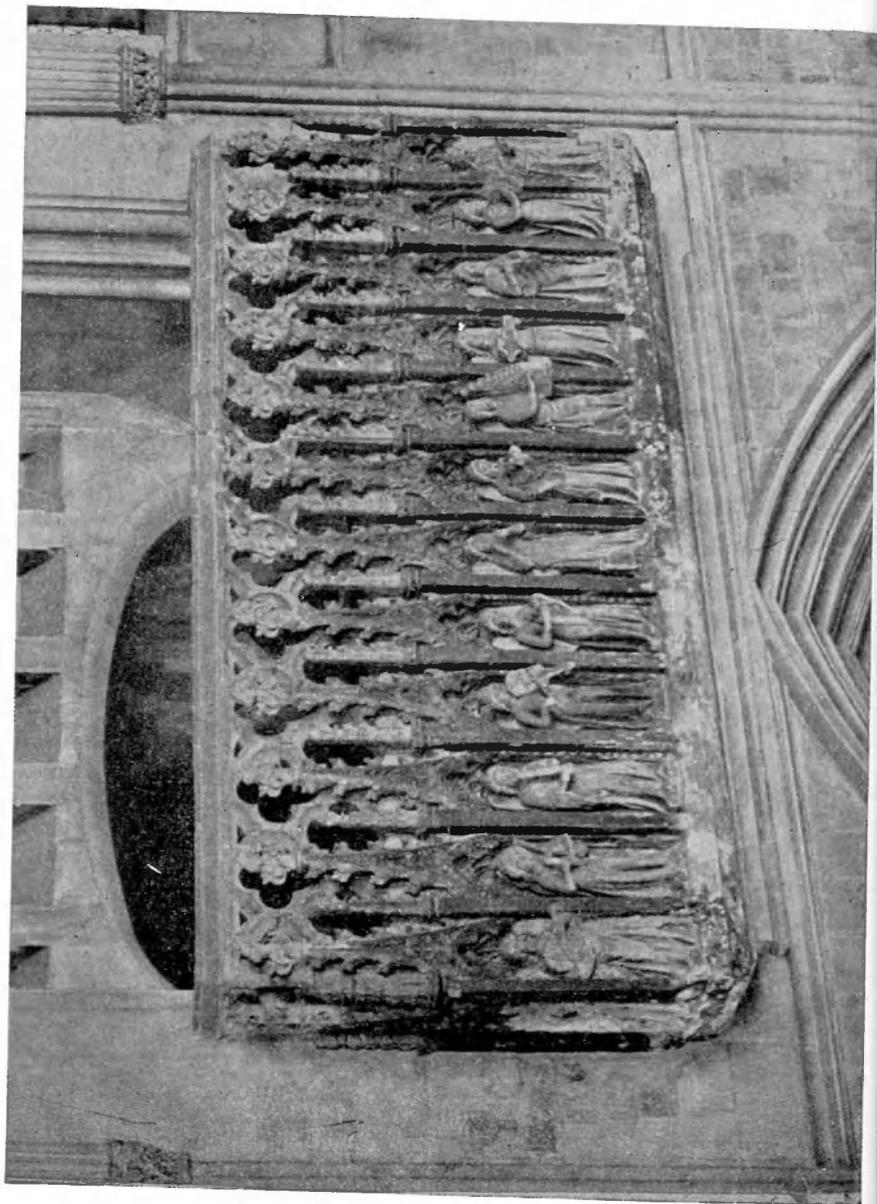
⁴ Archdeacon Freeman, *Architectural History of Exeter Cathedral*, pp. 77 and 78.



NO. I. HARP ON A BOSS IN THE NAVE VAULT AT EXETER.



NO. 2. CITOLE ON THE WEST PORCH OF ST. MARY'S, HIGHAM FERRERS.



bishop Graunson about four years previously. The gallery occupies the place of the triforium arcade in the fifth bay of the north side of the nave, and its name describes the scheme of its decoration no less than the purpose for which it was built.

Primarily, the purpose of this gallery, and of similar galleries in other cathedral and parish churches, as at Westminster, Malmesbury, and Winchester, seems to have been specially connected with the once important ceremony of the blessing of palms on Palm Sunday, when the Sacrament was carried in procession, and passed outside the church. When the procession returned, it paused by the closed door, while one half of the quire within, and the other half without, sang in antiphon. Those inside were usually stationed above the entrance, either on a temporary platform or in a gallery erected for such purposes. The position of the Exeter gallery, above the north nave entrance, points to its having been specially devoted to this ceremonial use.¹ In an age such as the fourteenth century, when decorative sculpture was so prominent a feature in English architecture, and more especially in a church dedicated in honour of the blessed Virgin Mary, it is very natural that the decoration of the gallery should take the appropriate form of a series of typical celestial minstrels such as we have here. The now empty niches of the vaulting-shaft corbels on either side of the gallery originally held images of the Virgin and St. Peter, and the connexion between the Virgin and quires of angels and minstrels was no doubt borne in mind in choosing the subject for its decoration.

It should be observed by the way that the sculpture of these figures is very inferior to most of that with which the church is enriched. Any one who compares the original figures on the west front, some of which must be actually contemporary with these, will be struck by the contrast. There is, it is true, much grace and vigour in the action of some of these minstrels,² but the detail is very careless and sketchy in comparison to that

¹ Francis Bond, *Westminster Abbey*, p. 53.

² Prof. E. S. Prior remarks concerning the figures of this gallery that they 'preserved more of early mediæval restraint and beauty than much contemporary sculpture in other parts of England' (*English Mediæval Figure Sculpture*).

still left to us in the west-front figures. Whether the reason for this was want of funds we can hardly tell. If archdeacon Freeman's conclusions from the fabric rolls are correct, the sum spent upon this piece of work was £46, equivalent to more than £400 of our money, a price which seems rather low for the production of fourteen large figures and fourteen very rich canopies (including colouring and gilding), besides the structural work of building the gallery in a place not originally designed for it. So, very possibly, such small and troublesome details as fingers, strings, sound-holes, etc. were scarcely covered by the sum to be expended, and consequently were occasionally omitted.

It must not be supposed that this assemblage of musicians carved on the front of the Exeter minstrels' gallery represents in any way a mediaeval *orchestra* or band, who united to play in concert those instruments on which they were performers. At the time to which these figures belong such combinations of instruments were unknown. When concerted music was in its infancy, and bands, or *noises* as they were then termed, were first formed of several instruments, these combined instruments were all of one kind, either all strings, or all shawms (as we should say nowadays 'wood-wind'), or all trumpets and drums.¹ Even as late as 1561, an orchestra performing interludes in the first English tragedy *Gorboduc* was divided into five distinct sections, of violins, cornetts, flutes, hautboys, and drums and fifes, each section performing separately. The only exception we note to this divided use of instruments in combined performance was the common and popular union of the pipe and tabor, of which some account has already been given.

Of these distinct groups of instruments the brass and drums were dedicated to military and royal purposes.² On the other hand, the stringed class was accepted as worthy of performing *sacred* music together, though, as time went on, the church admitted small gong-like cymbals

¹ See Galpin, *op. cit.* chapter 15. on *The Consort*.

² Milton, in *Paradise Lost*, i, 540, refers to these distinctive characteristics where he

describes, 'All the while, sonorous metal blowing martial sounds,' and again (*ibid.* ii, 515) 'With trumpets' regal sound.'

into their stringed accompaniments of religious worship, as a help in marking the time of the plain-song.¹

Each group of instruments playing together was called 'a consort,' and when in later times the combination of instruments from two or more of the distinct groups began to be used, this was called 'a broken consort,' in contradistinction to the combination of instruments belonging to one group only, which were known as 'whole consorts.' The earliest record we have of 'a broken consort' (a nearer approach to an orchestra than 'a whole consort') is in an early fifteenth-century manuscript where strings (i.e. the viol) are combined with wind (i.e. the recorder), in playing at a feast.

Consequently, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries such a series of musicians and instruments as those we have here merely represented all, or nearly all, the *kinds* of instruments then available for music of every description.

The two figures on the east and west returns of the gallery have no instruments; therefore the musical series includes twelve angels only.² Two illustrations of each are given, one from the eastward and the other from the westward, so that no details may be lost.

Beginning at the westernmost end, the first figure is the angel of the citole³ (plate v, no. 1). This instrument, often also called the citterne, must not be confounded with the gittern, which also occurs in this gallery series (plate ix, no. 9). Although both are held in much the

¹ It is interesting to read in some extracts from an old MS. diary of c. 1634 (*Gentleman's Magazine*, 58, part 1, pp. 479-487) in which a certain lieutenant of Norwich records the sights and sounds that strike him on a walking tour through England, how at Exeter he finds that 'viols and other sweet instruments' were still in use in the cathedral besides the organ; and he also remarks that these, 'with the tunable voices and the rare organist together made a melodious and heavenly harmony able to ravish the hearer's ears.' He had previously described the 'delicate, rich and lofty organ which had more addition than any other, as fair pipes of an extraordinary length, and of the bigness of a man's thigh.'

² Contrary to the earlier and more usual mediaeval custom of representing angels as sexless beings, in this series they are undoubtedly intended for female minstrels, their wings and bare feet being the only characteristics that mark them unquestionably as angelic beings.

³ The name citole has hitherto generally been applied to a different kind of stringed instrument, of the psaltery class, but Mr. Galpin considers this to have been an error, and he brings evidence to show that the citole and the citterne were identical instruments, but that *citole* was the earlier form of the name only: *Old English Instruments of Music*, p. 26.

same position, and both are played with a plectrum held in the right hand, there were essential differences between the two instruments at all times and in all stages of their developments. One of these main differences was that in the gittern (at any rate when it first appeared in England), the strings were of gut, while those of the citole were of wire. And also the form of the bodies of the two instruments was dissimilar in one striking particular. Both had flat backs, and necks flush with the front of the body running out from its centre, and ending in the peg-box where the strings were fastened and tuned. In the citole this neck was, as in stringed instruments of the present day, what is called 'free,' that is to say, it did not continue flush from the back as it did from the front, but was reduced to scarcely one third of the thickness of the body; while in the gittern the neck was practically one with the body both back and front, of equal depth, though reduced in width.

The citole had four strings, and the peg-box generally ended in a quaint little carved head, as does this one here, though the stone is too worn to show this distinctly.¹ The strings were stopped by the fingers of the left hand, while the right hand used the plectrum to pluck them. This little contrivance was a small rod of ivory, horn, quill, or metal, and, where the strings were of wire, as in the citole, it saved the fingers a great deal of painful friction. It is still employed with the modern zither, and was used also for the psaltery, and, later, for the spinet and harpsichord, although in these two last its action was regulated by keys and it was no longer held and worked directly in the hand. The tone of strings vibrated by the use of the plectrum is always thinner and more metallic than when either the fingers for plucking (as in the harp), or the hammers for striking (as in the pianoforte), or a bow (as in a great number of stringed instruments), are used for setting them in vibration.

The citole, as also the gittern, was apparently first brought into England some time in the thirteenth century, and both seem to have originated among the eastern

¹ Carter gives a drawing, in his *Specimens of Sculpture* of one from Great Malvern priory in which the carved human head is

very well shown. This specimen would be later than our Exeter example by at least fifty years.

nations of Asia Minor, whence, under the generic name of cithara, the Greeks and Romans adopted these and other instruments of the same class. Then in mediæval times, through the wandering minstrels and troubadours from Italy and Provence, they were introduced into England and there rapidly became popular. The citole was an instrument considered worthy of the court bands, and is also frequently found, as at Exeter, in ecclesiastical carvings. There is a mutilated thirteenth-century carving of a citole in the west porch of Higham Ferrers church, where the performer's feet are in the stocks, but he is allowed to retain his instrument as a consolation during his punishment (plate III, no. 2). Examples of the fourteenth century, contemporary with the Exeter specimen, are to be seen at Worcester and Hereford, and on the fourteenth-century Brauche brass in the church of St. Margaret, King's Lynn, Norfolk.¹ Two also occur in the nave of Beverley minster, and on the misericords of rather late date at Carlisle and Chester also citoles are carved in the hands of angels. In later years the citole took a less honoured position, as an instrument for the entertainment of customers and guests in barbers' shops and taverns.

The lute, an instrument popular at a later date, is distinguished from the citole, or citterne, by having a more or less convex back, gut strings, and, usually, the head turned *backwards*; also it was played with the fingers only.²

The second celestial minstrel is valiantly performing upon the homely and somewhat intractable bagpipes (plate v, no. 2). Nowadays we are apt to consider this instrument as exclusively a native of Scotland, but this is quite a mistake as regards its early history. The most remote traces discovered of it are among the eastern tribes of Asia, whose early westward movement (commonly known as the Celtic migration) brought the use of the bagpipes to Europe, through Greece and Rome. It is not certain by what route it came to these islands, whether by the more northern branch of the same Celtic

¹ Illustrated in Carter's *Specimens of Painting, etc.* plate lxxii.

² See p. 30.

migration direct to Britain and Gaul, or whether by the Roman occupation of Britain.¹ Once arrived, it seems to have maintained a firm popularity in this country for many centuries. We find it illustrated in numerous English manuscripts of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, usually in rather humble and popular connexions; but that it was also esteemed worthy of a place among royal instruments is shown by the records of bagpipers being amongst the court musicians in the reigns of Edward II, Edward III, and Henry VIII, and by four sets of bagpipes being included in the collection of musical instruments belonging to Henry VIII.² In France also they were included among the instruments of the band of the 'Grande Écurie' in the time of Louis XIV, and used in the court performances.

There were several kinds of bagpipes, the two main classes being generally known to us as the Irish and the Scotch. The essential difference between these is that in the Irish instrument the wind-bag is supplied with wind by means of small bellows worked under the performer's arm, whence they are known in Erse as 'uilleann,' or elbow pipes; while in the Scotch variety a short pipe from the mouth of the performer supplies the wind to the wind-bag. The bagpipes carried by the celestial minstrel here are of the latter class, and of the type in common use in the fourteenth century, having the drone-pipe added, which previously to that time had not been a part of this instrument. In a representation of several musicians in the Loutrell psalter, belonging to the first half of the fourteenth century, the bagpipe is almost exactly similar to that at Exeter, carrying a flag attached to the drone-pipe. At various stages of its later history a second and third drone-pipe were added, all being carried over the shoulder. The wind-bag was often made of the whole skin of a kid.

Contemporary with the Exeter specimen are two carvings of bagpipers in Beverley minster, one on the reredos (plate vi, no. 1), and the other on the Percy tomb (plate vi, no. 2). In the latter the wind-bag is made of

¹ It was in use in the Roman army, and a bronze figure of a bagpiper was discovered in the excavations of the old Roman station

of Richborough in Kent. Galpin, *op. cit.* p. 174.

² Galpin, *op. cit.* p. 175.



INDIVIDUAL FIGURES FROM THE MINSTRELS' GALLERY, EXETER, SHOWN FROM EITHER SIDE.

NO. 1. CITOLE.

NO. 2. BAGPIPES.

NO. 3. WHISTLE-FLUTE OR SINGLE RECORDER.



[F. H. Crossley, phot.]

NO. 1. BAGPIPES FROM THE REREDOS, BEVERLEY MINSTER.



[F. H. Crossley, phot.]

NO. 2. BAGPIPES FROM THE PERCY TOMB, BEVERLEY MINSTER.

a small, entire pig-skin with the head used for the insertion of the mouth-pipe, and the forelegs and feet left intact. Another contemporary specimen is seen among the musicians of the Adderbury frieze (plate XII, no. 3 and fig. 1).

This frieze affords valuable material for comparison with the minstrels' gallery at Exeter, not only as being contemporary with it, but also as including so many of the same instruments. Hitherto it does not seem to have been used to illustrate the many valuable works on musical instruments that we possess (plates XII and XIII). The frieze takes the place architecturally of the usual corbel-table, and runs on both sides of the nave. The series of musicians appears on the north side, the rest being filled with more ordinary grotesques. Of a very different type from the angelic series in the minstrels' gallery, this company at first sight looks more like revellers at a 'church ale,' such as are represented on a somewhat similar frieze carved outside the church of St. John, Cirencester,¹ though these latter are about a century later in date. The Adderbury musicians, however, though secular in appearance, and rough in execution, probably represent the 'universal praise' offered to the Creator through the Church. They occur in an order which can be classified; it embraces all kinds of music, and was doubtless adopted to carry out this idea of universal praise. Thus, church music comes first in the frieze (i.e. the most eastward portion) with the portative organ; dance music next, with the timbrel, bagpipes, symphony, and rebec; then comes military music, indicated by two kinds of trumpets and the nakers or kettledrums; and, lastly, minstrelsy, as represented by psaltery and harp, the recognised accompaniments of the voice.

This frieze is in fact a somewhat homely, mediaeval translation into sculpture of the 150th psalm; and it is quite consistent with the aim of the Church in the middle ages of bringing under her supervision and patronage the whole life of the people, including their recreations, that such a crude and literal rendering of the Psalmist's exhortations should be found in such a position.

¹ Illustrated in Carter, *Specimens of Ancient Sculpture and Painting in England* (1792).

It is among the group of dance-music instruments that we here meet the bagpiper in full blast, labouring hard, with cheeks much distended and head bent to the task. As far as we can see, his instrument has neither drone-pipe nor flag.

In these very mundane-looking musicians of Adderbury it is specially observable that the attitudes are often most unnatural, governed as they are both by the cramped space allotted to the figures, and by the carver's conscientious determination to exhibit as much as possible of the figure and his instrument, regardless of perspective. Thus, here, the left arm of the piper would in reality be by his side,



Fig. 1. (See plate xii.)

BAGPIPES AT ADDERBURY.

with elbow dropped, and its exalted and very awkward position is adopted merely to afford an opportunity of showing that the musician used the left hand for one part of the stopping of the holes of the 'chanter' pipe. In other cases, as in the rebec, nakers, and psaltery players, the instrument also is similarly misplaced, and for the same reason.

There is a bagpiper among the nine enamels of musicians represented on the crook of William of Wykeham's crozier,¹ a beautiful specimen of fourteenth-century work; and throughout this and later centuries also bagpipes frequently occur in ecclesiastical carvings.²

¹ Now in New College, Oxford.

² As in the nave of Beverley minster; at Manchester, both the Irish and Scotch varieties; again in Exeter in the fifteenth century; and on the frieze of St. John's

church, Cirencester, in the fifteenth century. At Ripon a fifteenth-century misericord shows a well-carved group of a pig playing the bagpipes, to which two piglets are dancing.

The next angel in the minstrels' gallery (plate v, no. 3) is performing on the whistle-flute, or fipple-flute, which became known some fifty years later as the single recorder. It is also called the 'vertical flute' to distinguish it from the transverse, or German flute.¹

This instrument was much in vogue during the fourteenth century, though, indeed, it was known and illustrated as early as the twelfth,² and is seen in its double form, in the thirteenth century, in the hands of one of the spandrel angels in the angel quire at Lincoln. It continued in use on into the eighteenth century, when, however, its form was much altered and developed. Originally it consisted of a tube slightly graduated from the small upper end for the mouth to the lower extremity, which sometimes opened out into more or less of a bell. This tube, or pipe, was not furnished with a reed, like a hautboy, but had a whistle-mouth, very imperfectly shown here, which is still, in modern times, represented by the familiar flageolet. It had a varying number of holes for the fingering, but in this specimen and in other early ones they are not many. Double recorders, or whistle-flutes, were also very popular, and must have been rather difficult to play, as the two pipes, sometimes uniting in one mouth-piece, and sometimes furnished with two, had to be fingered simultaneously, one hand for each. Presumably the results were agreeable, as Milton speaks with praise of 'flutes and soft recorders.'³

Our next instrument (plate vii, no. 4) is probably intended for the viol, that later development already described⁴ in which the flat back, ribs, and imperfect waist, has superseded the convex back and oval form of the rybybe and rebec. The specimen here shown have unfortunately been in the hands of an ignorant restorer and thereby received characteristics belonging to no other instrument of its class. It is, I believe, the only one of the minstrel gallery series that has so suffered,

¹ The recorder in its more modern form was often known as the 'flute-a-bec,' the mouthpiece being the *beak*, and also as the 'English flute,' from its great popularity in this country. An example of a fifteenth-

century single recorder is seen at Manchester.

² Galpin, *op. cit.*, pp. 139, 140.

³ *Paradise Lost*, i, 551.

⁴ See p. 6.

and as far as is visible the body is still left untouched; but at the end of an unduly elongated neck,¹ there has been supplied a ridiculously massive scroll turned backwards, a unique invention of the repairing sculptor. Apart from this mistake, which leaves the original form of the head a matter of conjecture, this viol would seem to belong to the indeterminate class already referred to,² for it possesses the flat back and ribs, distinctive features of the viol, without, however, the incurvation, or waist, which was universally adopted for it at a slightly later period. The omission of the sound-holes noticeable here can only be due to the inaccuracy of the carver, as they were essential to all varieties of this class of instrument. Four strings only are shown, but the early viols usually had five, whilst rebecs had only three, and the rybybe four, arranged in pairs. Two contemporary examples of viols from the reredos and Percy tomb in Beverley minster show, on one, four strings only (plate VIII, no. 2), and five on the other (plate VIII, no. 1); and there is a rather later one in Lincoln quire stalls (c. 1370) which seems also to have only four strings, though otherwise quite orthodox, with waist, ribs and flat back. In these cases the fifth string, which was only a 'bourdon,' or drone-string, may merely be invisible owing to its position beneath the others, where it was often placed.

Of the harp, which occupies the fifth place among the angelic minstrels' instruments (plate VII, no. 5) there is not much to add to what has already been said.³ The carving here is too rough and imperfect to show the strings; but slight indications of the pegs show it to have been intended for one with eight strings.

The harpist in the contemporary Adderbury frieze (plate XIII, no. 10) is a far more animated figure, and though

¹ The unusual length of this neck does not seem to be without parallel, for we see an instance of it in a drawing of the brass in the church of St. Margaret, King's Lynn, Norfolk, to the memory of Robert Braunche (died 1364) and his two wives, in which the viol is strikingly similar in appearance to that in the hands of our

minstrels' gallery angel, even to the length of the neck which is fully two-thirds the length of the body; the absurdly heavy, turned-back scroll of course does not appear in the brass.

² See above, p. 6.

³ See above, pp. 4, 5.



[F. H. Crossley, phot.]

NO. 1. VIOL ON THE STAIRCASE, PERCY TOMB, BEVERLEY MINSTER.



[F. H. Crossley, phot.]

NO. 2. VIOL AT THE BACK OF THE REREDOS, BEVERLEY MINSTER.

he holds up his ten-stringed harp in an unnatural position to ensure the whole of it being visible, the attitude of his right hand is full of real vigour, and compares very favourably with the stiff and cramped hands of the Exeter minstrel.¹

The sixth minstrel in the Exeter gallery (plate VII, no. 6) for some unknown reason is taller than the rest. This is certainly not on account of the size or importance of the instrument, for, although it has now entirely disappeared, there is no doubt whatever, from the action of the hands, that it was a Jews' harp!

Belonging, under somewhat varied forms, to most nations and most periods, this very primitive instrument can yet scarcely claim, one would think, to be more than a mere toy, and is hardly worthy of a place among the angelic instruments. But this is not the only instance of its appearance in such good company, for Mr. Galpin tells us that it is seen in the hands of an angel-performer in the rich French enamels with which the crozier of William of Wykeham is decorated.

It is not a harp in any sense but that of the *plucking* of the single vibrating tongue with the finger, its variety of notes depending entirely on the variation in size and shape of the performer's mouth behind the vibrator. It was formerly known as the 'Jews' *trumpe*,' and this title probably refers to the facts that, as in the open notes of the trumpet, the notes produced are harmonics, i.e. the natural series of sounds resultant from any given note.²

It is surprising to read that there was once a great performer on the Jews' harp; but in Grove's *Dictionary of Music*³ there is an account of how, in 1827 and 1828, a

¹ In connexion with harps and other *plucked*, not *bowed*, stringed instruments, the most interesting study of their varieties can be made from the magnificent sculptures above the main doorway of the great Romanesque church of Santiago de Compostela in Spain, of which a fine cast may be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum at Kensington. Although of so early a date as 1188, the grace and beauty of the figures of the four-and-twenty elders seated 'round about the throne' are wonderful; and the

number of different plucked instruments in their hands, to carry out the idea of their having 'every one of them harps' (Rev. iv and v) is astonishing. The true harp occurs only four times.

² As to the distinctive word *Jews'* in both cases, there is no reason to imagine that it has any connexion with the Hebrew nation, and the most reasonable derivation seems to be a corruption of the Dutch word *Jeudgtrompe*, meaning a child's trumpet.

³ Articles *Jews' Harp* and *Eulenstein*.

talented Saxon, Charles Eulenstein, gave concerts in London and Scotland at which no instrument but the Jews' harp was heard, and he the sole performer. He used sixteen of them, of various sizes and pitches, by which means he obtained a compass of four octaves; and sometimes he performed skilfully on two at a time, thus adding harmonies to the extensive melodies he rendered. This ingenious musician, to counteract the painful effects on his teeth of the metal vibrations, had eventually to call to his aid the equal ingenuity of a dentist, who, by devising a glutinous covering for the teeth, restored to the performer the full and painless use of his extraordinary powers.

The next instrument of our Exeter series is the only example of the brass family appearing here (plate ix, no. 7). It is a trumpet of the early straight type, common before the form more distinctively known as the clarion was introduced, in which latter the tube is crooked and folded upwards and again downwards. Its illustration in English manuscripts begins in the thirteenth century, but it is referred to long before that in the eleventh century, and a carving of this early straight form appears on the twelfth-century prior's doorway at Ely, and another in Lincoln's angel quire of the thirteenth century. As of course everyone is aware, in many forms it is still indispensable in every full orchestra. From this old straight form all modern folded trumpets have been evolved.

Undoubtedly the mutilated instrument in the hands of the Adderbury musician (plate xiii, no. 6) is a short, straight trumpet of the same kind as the Exeter specimen. We may note in both examples the characteristic puffing out of the cheeks, which in those days was considered indispensable to the production of trumpet notes.

Contemporary with this short straight trumpet was a much longer instrument of the same class, known as the buzine, of which a somewhat mutilated specimen occurs in the Adderbury frieze (plate xiii, no. 8), but Exeter does not provide an example. It is, however, so intimately connected with the short straight trumpet of the minstrels' gallery that a few words on its chief characteristics will

not be out of place here. It is believed to have been introduced from the east by the Crusaders, and an interesting confirmation of this is found in the device on the banner seen depending from the one at Adderbury. It bears a coat of arms consisting apparently of a cross pommée in the centre and four smaller ones in the four corners. This device, argent, five crosses pommée or, was borne by the crusader kings of Jerusalem in the twelfth century, 'a solitary violation of the heraldic law that metal cannot be placed upon metal.'¹

Banners thus hung from trumpets were commonly in use in the middle ages, and are illustrated in Spanish fourteenth-century and French fifteenth-century manuscripts. The tube of this long buzine, as also of some extended forms of the small straight trumpet, was made in several portions jointed together, each joint being covered by a ferule, as is clearly seen here, although the portion nearest to the mouth of the performer is missing.

The old French buzines or 'buisines' of the Trouvères were often made of wood, of leather, and brass, and are illustrated on old French manuscripts.² Many illustrations of it also occur in Italian works of art, and in the enamels of William of Wykeham's crozier it is twice seen in the hands of angels. The buzine was the forerunner of the modern trombone, which first appeared among us before the fourteenth century as the sackbut, now one of the most important and perfect instruments in the orchestra.³

The next neighbour to the trumpet in the Exeter gallery is one of even deeper interest (plate ix, no. 8) belonging to the great family of instruments ranging from this modest portable specimen to the vast modern organ with its overwhelming combinations of sound, the development of which forms one of the most

¹ Boutell's *Heraldry* (1890), with additions by S. T. Aveling, ch. vii, pp. 38, 42, 43.

² The name in France seems to be traceable back to the Roman *buccina*, or military trumpet.

³ The sliding-tube principle on which it is constructed is expressed in the old name sackbut, which, Mr. Galpin tells us, was derived from the Spanish *sacar*, to draw, and *bucbe*, a tube or bag.

fascinating chapters in musical history. It would be quite out of the question to enter upon so large a subject here, but the distinctive features of this fourteenth-century portative organ must be described.

Small, *keyed* organs of various construction are known, from the existence of specimens, to have been in use among the Greeks and Romans as early as the second century B.C. One of this period, from the ruins of Carthage, had moreover a system of *continuous* wind-supply which in principle is similar to that now in use, though not produced by the same means. And in the Talmud, which dates from the second century A.D. an organ is mentioned (the *magrepha*) which was played upon by means of a key-board. But the keyboard for organs in England, and in fact in Europe generally, was not known until re-invented, or re-discovered, in the twelfth century; and it was in the humble form we see here that the discovery was first applied.

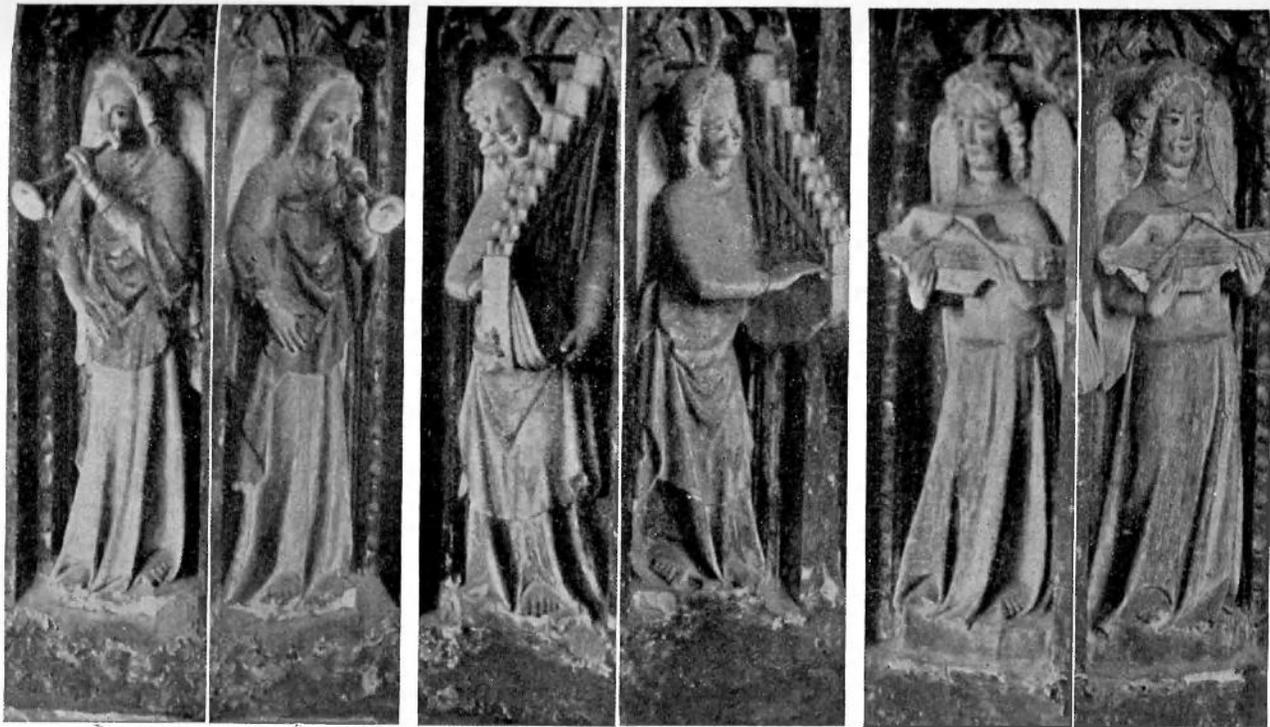
Church organs of considerable size, but without key-boards, were in use in England as early as the seventh century, but these were all very complicated, noisy and clumsy, and in the records of the great Winchester instrument, made in the tenth century, we find that the labour of two organists simultaneously, and 'seventy strong men' for the very numerous bellows, was required to produce a performance on this elaborate instrument.

The simple construction, portability, and modest tone of the little organ shown at Exeter in a short time made it a very popular instrument, and in its keyboard is found the principle, developed later into such wonderful results, by which one performer could control the vast instruments now so familiar. The action of this early keyboard was applied somewhat later, on a larger scale, to the positive organ,¹ a larger instrument, thus named on account of its being placed, or 'posed,' on the ground, and this keyboard action remained in use in these larger organs till the seventeenth century.²

¹ See plate xix.

² As a matter of some interest to Exeter people, it may here be mentioned that, according to Mr. Galpin, a fine specimen of an English regal (a more fully developed portative organ) exists at Atholl castle

dated 1650. On the bellows are painted the initials J. L. in all probability those of John Loosemore, of Exeter, who constructed the great cathedral organ of that day, famous for its double diapasons.



INDIVIDUAL FIGURES FROM THE MINSTRELS' GALLERY, EXETER, SHOWN FROM EITHER SIDE.

NO. 7. TRUMPET.

NO. 8. PORTATIVE ORGAN.

NO. 9. GITTERN.

As regards the little portative organ, we may notice that, although here the minstrel uses the right hand for the keyboard and the left for the bellows at the back, which is the most usual position, it is not always so portrayed; in several instances the position is reversed.¹ Generally the bellows were single, but sometimes, as in this case and in that seen among the fifteenth-century Manchester carvings, they were divided into two, so that by working them alternately the supply of air might be uninterrupted. The row of pipes was sometimes single, sometimes double, and the number seems to have varied considerably, ranging from eight to sixteen. This Exeter specimen has a double row, but it is not in reference to this detail that the organ is termed either 'single' or 'double.'²

The portative organ must have been heavy and fatiguing to use. Its weight was partly borne by a strap passed round the performer's neck; occasionally also it is shown as resting on the knees of a seated player, as in the fourteenth-century manuscript at Trinity College already referred to, and in the sixteenth-century paintings of the heavenly quire by Gaudenzio Ferrari, in the dome of the church at Saronno, near Milan.

Notwithstanding its unwieldiness, it became a great favourite with travelling minstrels, and was even used at rustic dances and revels. It is, however, probably as the representative of church music that it appears in the Adderbury corbel-table, though the specimen is rather a small one, and from its position it is not possible to determine whether it has the single or the double row of pipes (plate XII, no. 1). In the specimen from the fourteenth-century vault of the Percy tomb in Beverley minster (plate XI, no. 1) it is evidently being used as an accompaniment to the performer's voice. It was in

¹ As in the fourteenth-century Loutrell psalter, and in a group on the fourteenth-century Percy tomb in Beverley minster, and also in a fourteenth-century MS. at Trinity College, Cambridge.

² The explanation of these terms has been a matter of much uncertainty and discussion, and will be found exhaustively dealt with in the appendix of Mr. Galpin's

book. Also it appears, the familiar old expression, 'a *payre* of organs' did not refer to the double row of pipes, nor to any specific part of the mechanism, but was simply intended as a translation of the Latin word *organa*, the plural of *organum*, and was applied specially to this musical instrument on account of the complexity of its machinery.

use also at the higher-class merry-makings at court, and several 'payre' are mentioned among the musical instruments in the inventory of Henry VIII's 'household stuffe and other implements.' It is represented among the angels enamelled on Wykeham's crozier, we shall meet with it again in Exeter,¹ and a still later example occurs on the fifteenth-century frieze of St. John's church, Cirencester.

The ninth angel is performing on the gittern (plate ix, no. 9), the precursor of the modern guitar. Mention has already been made of this in connexion with the citole or citterne,² from which it must be carefully distinguished. In the gittern, the neck is a continuation of the body of *equal thickness* throughout its whole length, though narrower. For this reason a large round hole was bored in the massive neck about halfway down its length, for the insertion of the thumb, which thus steadied the hand while leaving it free to stop the strings. The plectrum in the right hand, for plucking the gut strings, is also very clearly visible here, but the sound-hole, or holes, are omitted merely from inaccuracy in the carving, as in the case of the viol.

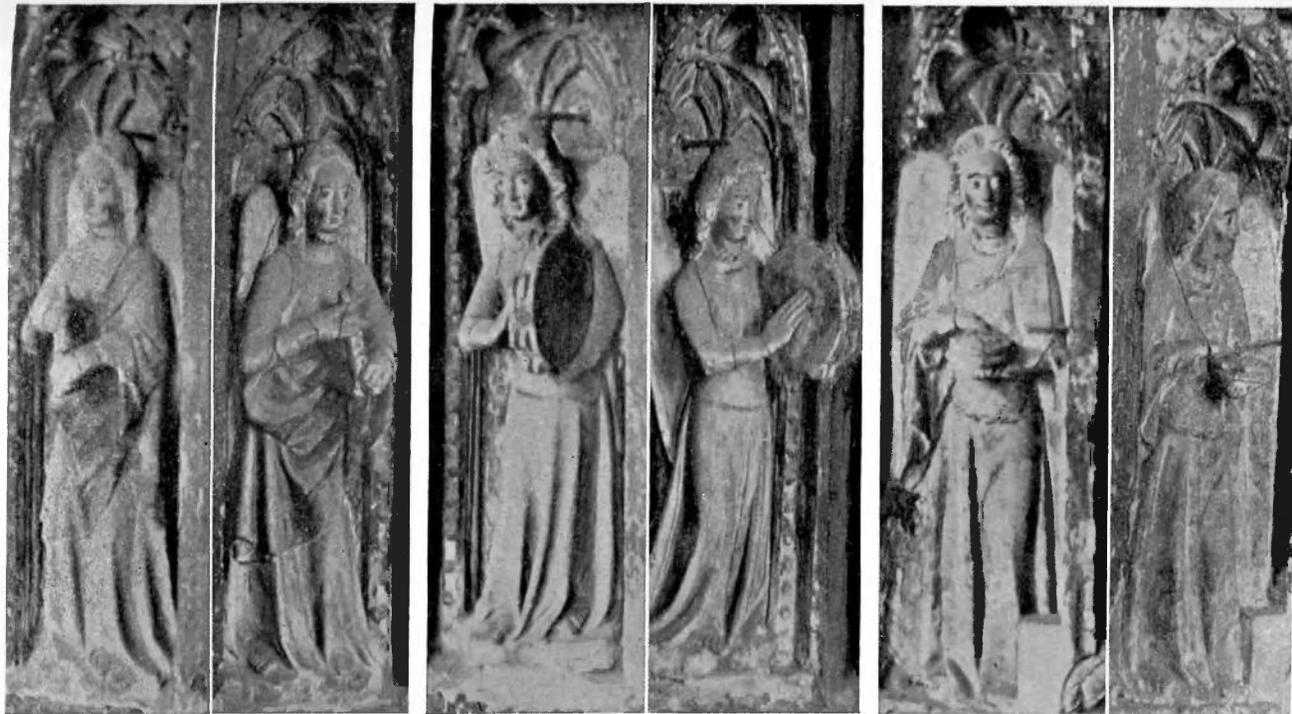
Mr. Galpin illustrates an actual specimen of a fourteenth-century gittern preserved at Warwick castle,³ of which a facsimile may be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum. It is about two feet long, has four strings, and is very richly decorated with carving. The Exeter gittern seems also to have four strings, though they are not very clear. The six strings we associate with the guitar were introduced into England with the Spanish guitar in the sixteenth century, and this instrument, in which the plectrum was discarded for the fingers, in time entirely superseded the mediaeval gittern. The gittern in its day had been a most popular instrument among both high and low, especially as an accompaniment to the voice, before the lute became the fashionable instrument for that purpose.

There is a fine example of an early gittern in the hands

¹ plate xvii, no. 2.

² see above, pp. 11, 12.

³ op. cit. plate vii.



INDIVIDUAL FIGURES FROM THE MINSTRELS' GALLERY, EXETER, SHOWN FROM EITHER SIDE.

NO. 10. SHAWM.

NO. 11. TIMBREL.

NO. 12. CYMBALS.



[F. H. Crossley, phot.]

NO. 1. PORTATIVE ORGAN AND PSALTERY FROM
THE VAULT OF THE PERCY TOMB,
BEVERLEY MINSTER,



[*F. H. Crossley, phot.*

NO. 2. DOUBLE-TUBED WIND-INSTRUMENT
ON A BOSS OF THE REREDOS,
BEVERLEY MINSTER.

of one of the angels in the late thirteenth-century carvings of the angel quire at Lincoln.

The next Exeter minstrel carries a shawm (plate x, no. 10),¹ a wooden wind instrument in which the sound was produced by the vibration of a double reed in the mouthpiece.

In England a pipe of this nature appears in carvings as early as the twelfth century, in Canterbury crypt, Barfreton church, and the prior's doorway at Ely. By the fourteenth century it was fully developed and in constant use, and appears in numerous illustrations of that period, sometimes in the hands of female performers. From it in queen Elizabeth's reign was developed the hautboy, which derived its new name from the fact that shawms of various pitches were used, and the one of the highest pitch was consequently called the *haut bois* or 'high wood' instrument.²

The tube of the shawm had an expanded termination, sometimes even widened to a bell-mouth like that of a clarion, but more usually of much less expansion. The lower end of this specimen has evidently been broken off, which makes it seem unusually short and rather indeterminate in form, but the characteristic mouthpiece is quite clear, and also the holes for the finger-stopping.

A later example is also found at Exeter (plate xvii, no. 1). A fifteenth-century shawm is one of the instruments in the hands of the five musicians on the 'minstrel-pillar' in St. Mary's church, Beverley, while another very large one, known as a 'bumbarde,' occurs in the nave of Beverley minster.³ There is an angel performing on a double-tubed wind instrument on a fourteenth-century boss of the reredos in Beverley minster, but from its position it is difficult to determine whether it is intended for a double recorder or a double shawm: the mouth

¹ The name shawm is a corruption of, or derivation from, the Latin *calamus*, a reed, or *calamula*, a reed pipe which became first *cbalemelle*, and hence *schalm* or shawm.

² Our modern name oboe is, of course, merely another form of the same word.

³ Galpin, op. cit. p. 163.

certainly resembles that of a shawm more nearly than that of a recorder (plate XI, no. 2).

The two last of the gallery minstrels are performers on instruments of percussion, which are among the most ancient and most universal that exist (plate X, nos. 11 and 12). No. 11 is a timbrel player, and the instrument seems scarcely distinguishable from the modern tambourine, except that it is a good deal larger.¹ The coupled jingles inserted in the frame-work and the action of the right hand are quite after the modern pattern. The origin of this merry little rhythm-marker is absolutely prehistoric, for it was, under somewhat varying forms, common to early Assyrian, Egyptian, Chinese, Indian, and Peruvian civilisations, as well as to Greeks and Romans, Celts and Gauls.

Considering its simple construction, and man's craving for a rhythmic accompaniment to the dance, the widespread appearance of such an instrument is not surprising; but it is rather remarkable that it has changed so little, or rather that, notwithstanding the varied family of drums that have developed from it, it should have held its place in its primitive form throughout all ages.

In mediaeval ecclesiastical carvings, such as this, the timbrel would be thought quite fitting for, and specially appropriate to, the use of an angel, on account of its having been the instrument on which Miriam and her maidens accompanied their hymn of triumph after the passage of the Red sea.² In the middle ages the performers on timbrels were called 'tymbestres,' and on occasions of merriment the tymbester often performed feats of dancing and tumbling at the same time as throwing and catching his instrument.

A tymbester appears among the Adderbury musicians (plate XII, no. 2), and presents no essential differences in detail from that at Exeter. Mr. Galpin gives an illustration of another fourteenth-century specimen from a manuscript in the British Museum³; while on an earlier fourteenth-

¹ The name 'tambourine,' which originated in France or Italy, was generally substituted for that of 'timbrel' in the eighteenth century.

² Exodus, xv, 20, 21.

³ *op. cit.* fig. 43, p. 241.



GROTESQUE.

MERMAN.

GROTESQUE.

NO. I. PORTATIVE ORGAN.



NO. 2. TIMBREL.

NO. 3. BAGPIPES.



THE LEGEND OF ST. GILES.

MONSTER.

NO. 4. SYMPHONY.

FRIEZE ON THE NAVE OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH, ADDERBURY, OXON.



NO. 5. REBEC.

GROTESQUE.

NO. 6. TRUMPET.



NO. 7. NAKERS.

NO. 8. BUZINE.



NO. 9. PSALTERY.

MONSTER.

NO. 10. HARP.

FRIEZE ON THE NAVE OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH, ADDESBURY, OXON.

century misericord at Chichester one is shown in the hands of an indescribable monster (plate xiv, no. 1). Later examples are seen in the nave of Beverley minster and on the outside of St. John's church, Cirencester (fifteenth century).

The timbrel differed from the tabor in having a skin stretched on one side of the hoop only, and in being struck with the hand, while the tabor had a skin on both sides, more like the small 'side-drums' of modern times, and was played with a little rod. The timbrel sometimes had a 'snare' or vibrating cord stretched across it, in the same way as the tabor.

The twelfth, and last, minstrel of the gallery is sounding the cymbals, or 'clash-pans' (plate x, no. 12), in which one metal plate is held face upwards by a short stem in the right hand, and with the other hand another metal plate is dashed upon it. This rhythm-marking instrument like the timbrel, is of very ancient origin. It was used by eastern nations for military music, and by the ancient Egyptians in their religious ceremonies. From its use among the Jews it descended to the early Christian church, and is often seen in ecclesiastical carvings and in illustrated manuscripts representing sacred subjects. In England, its employment in military music only dates from some time in the eighteenth century; it is now in much favour in the modern orchestra.

There is one instrument in the Adderbury corbel-table (plate xii, no. 4) which is not even allied to any of those which appear at Exeter; but it is of interest, and was very popular in the fourteenth century. This is a symphony consisting at this stage of its development, roughly speaking, of a long box in which were stretched two, three, or four strings. One or two of these were 'stopped' with one hand (usually the left) by means of mechanism controlled from *outside* the box, while the other turned a handle. The handle actuated a small, rosined wheel, which revolved against the strings, set them in vibration, and in fact acted as a bow. In consequence of this wheel action, and to

distinguish the symphony from the bowed viols, it was in later times often called the 'vielle-à-roue.'

Mr. G. C. Druce has kindly given me the following contemporary description of the symphony, extracted from a fourteenth-century manuscript in the British Museum.¹

Le Livre des propriétés des choses.

Cy parle de la Cymphonie.

Lauteur de ce livre dist que Cymphonie est un Instrument de musique qui est fait de bois creux couvert de pel de deux pars et le fiert on de vergettes deca et dela et rent un moult doulx son sicomme dist Ysidore. Mais on appelle en france cymphonie un Instrument dont les aveugles jouent en chantant les chancons de gestes et a cest Instrument un doulx son et plaisant a oyr se ce ne fust pour lestat de ceulx qui en jouent.

The symphony originated in a far more clumsy and unmanageable form of instrument known as the 'organistrum,' which generally required two performers, and was greatly in use for the accompaniment of church music until superseded by the portative organ. There is an admirable specimen among the instruments over the twelfth-century 'gloria' doorway at Santiago de Compostela, with two elders playing upon it. By a reduction in size and other improvements it became not only very portable, but also suited for the use of one performer alone, and was widely adopted by wandering musicians, taking a large part in country merry-makings. It remained in use under the name of symphony (which indicated the characteristic simultaneous sounding of all the strings) till well on in the sixteenth century, and we find even Milton referring to it in *Paradise Lost*² as 'dulcet symphonies.' After this it seems to have sunk out of favour, till in the eighteenth century it again appeared in the hands of travelling musicians as the hurdy-gurdy. Less than fifty years ago these queer little instruments might have been seen and heard in the streets of England, generally played by Italians or Savoyards.

For the next representations of musical instruments

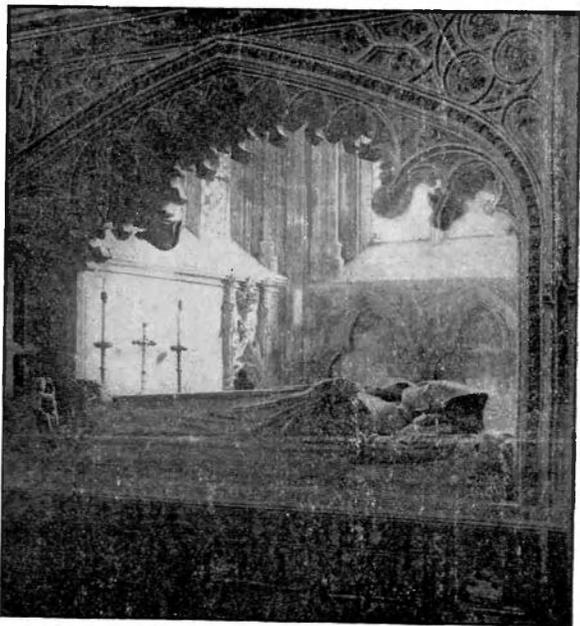
¹ Cotton MS. Aug. A. vi, fo. 463.

² book i, line 712.

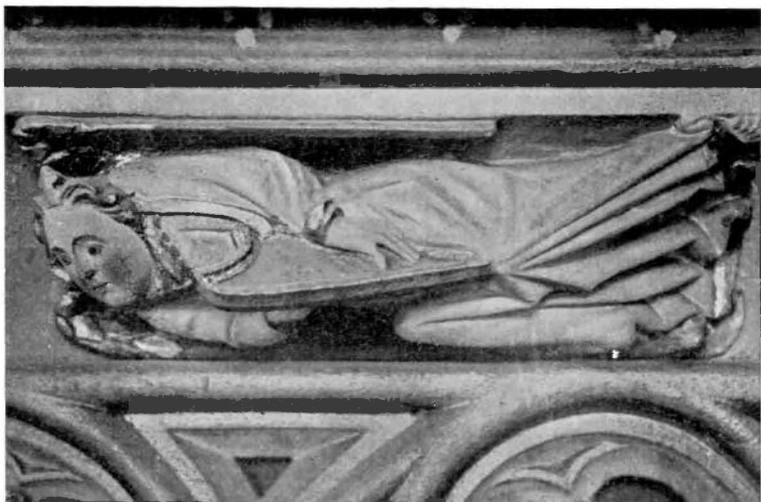


P. M. Johnston, phot.

NO. I. TIMBREL ON A MISERICORD AT CHICHESTER.



NO. 2. TOMB OF BISHOP BRONSCOMBE AT EXETER.



[F. H. Crossley, phot.]

NO. 1. HARP FROM CANOPY OF BISHOP BRONSCOMBE'S TOMB, EXETER.



[F. H. Crossley, phot.]

NO. 2. MANDORE OR SMALL LUTE FROM CANOPY OF BISHOP BRONSCOMBE'S TOMB, EXETER.

at Exeter we have to skip a whole century, and pass from these fourteenth-century carvings of the minstrels' gallery, which are more or less graceful in general contour though not excellent in detail, to a piece of work of a most debased style belonging to the fifteenth century. This is the canopy surmounting the tomb and effigy of bishop Bronescombe, which occupies the archway between the lady-chapel and the chapel of St. Gabriel. The canopy probably dates from the years within 1420 and 1455, as the arms of several of the Exeter bishops are blazoned upon it, and the latest are those of bishop Lacy, whose episcopate covered that period. Of the great beauty and refinement of this late thirteenth-century effigy it is not here the place to speak (plate xiv, no. 2), except to note the deplorable contrast between such an artistic masterpiece, and the later work of the canopy added to the tomb by persons whose piety and devotion was not equalled by their artistic taste. Other carvings of the same date, such as those at Manchester, show great superiority both in accuracy and artistic skill, and it is obvious that such productions as the canopy of Bronescombe's tomb, notwithstanding its rich colouring and elaborate detail, do not by any means represent the highest level of the work of the period.

In a hollow moulding of the cornice appears the series of eight angel-musicians, which is here illustrated¹ (plates xv to xviii). They occur in the following order from west to east :

North face : harp, lute, psaltery, and a second psaltery.

South face : shawm, portative, rebec or kit, and bagpipes.

Like the figures in whose hands they appear, these objects are so ill-carved that they cannot be taken as really accurate models of the instruments they represent ; but they serve at least to show what were the types of musical instruments then chiefly in vogue, and we can note some distinct differences and developments in comparing them with those of the same family of about a century earlier that have been already considered.

¹ These illustrations are from Mr. F. Crossley's photographs.

No. 1, plate xv, the harp, is not one of those that exhibits any marked change in either its size or construction. As far as can be judged from the very rough indications of the tuning pegs, it had ten strings.

No. 2, plate xv, however, has not been met with before in this church. It is a mandore, or small lute, an instrument of much popularity at the time at which these carvings were executed. It was of the citterne family,¹ but, unlike that instrument, its head was turned backwards, a characteristic belonging to all varieties of lutes. The strings were of cat-gut, and usually in pairs; they varied in number according to the size of the instrument, which was often not more than twenty inches long. It had a convex back, and a fretted finger-board, and the strings were vibrated with both a plectrum and the fingers. In this example the fingers only seem to be employed. The mandore and lute, both of which, with their names, were of eastern origin, were popular on the continent long before they appeared in Britain; but by the middle of the fifteenth century we find many representations of them in English manuscripts and carvings, though mostly of the larger form of the instrument, as, for instance, at Manchester, and on the 'musicians' pillar' in St. Mary's, Beverley. In this last-named example, by the way, the instrument is held in a reversed position to that usually seen, the body being turned to the *left* of the performer, whose left hand is plucking the strings while the right hand is stopping them on the finger-board.

The neck of the lute became more and more elongated and the number of strings multiplied as time went on and its use among all classes increased. Specimens of them more than a century later, when they were at the highest pitch of their popularity, are seen in plate xix.

The next figure (plate xvi, no. 1) is playing on a psaltery of 'the shape known in Italy as *strumento di porco* from its

¹ See above, p. 13.



[F. H. Crossley, phot.]

NO. 1. PSALTERY FROM CANOPY OF BISHOP BRONESCOMBE'S TOMB, EXETER.



[F. H. Crossley, phot.]

NO. 2. DOUBLE PSALTERY FROM CANOPY OF BISHOP BRONESCOMBE'S TOMB, EXETER.



[F. H. Crossley, phot.]

NO. 1. SHAWM FROM CANOPY OF BISHOP BRONSCOMBE'S TOMB, EXETER.



[F. H. Crossley, phot.]

NO. 2. PORTATIVE ORGAN FROM CANOPY OF BISHOP BRONSCOMBE'S TOMB, EXETER.

supposed likeness to the face of a pig,'¹ which is the form most familiar to us.

And no. 2, plate xvi, also has an instrument of the psaltery class, but one much less common in mediaeval representations: in fact Mr. Galpin tells me that he has not before met with any representation of this form in England. There is one very similar shown in the sixteenth-century paintings of the heavenly quire in the church at Saronno.

Of our Exeter example Mr. Galpin writes, 'it is a specimen of the canon or micanon, which were both derived from the eastern *kanoon*, an instrument strung with gut or twisted hair strings, and played with the fingers or a small plectrum; . . . and it shows how the form of the harpsichord or clavicymbal was obtained.'² When strung and played on both sides of the sound-board, as in our Exeter specimen, it was called the double psaltery.

The psaltery, with its sister the dulcimer, played a large part in mediaeval music. The essential difference between the two is merely that in the psaltery the fingers vibrated the strings with a little plectrum, while in the dulcimer small rods were employed to *strike* the strings. Both were in use at the same time, and indeed the term psaltery is often used to include both instruments.

As with so many of the stringed instruments, their origin was Asiatic. The blunt-angled form of the shallow box over which the numerous strings are stretched, shown here in no. 1, plate xvi, was an improvement on the earlier rectangular English form, which was often held upright something like a harp, instead of being laid flat on the knee, or laid upon a table, as was this later form. It appears thus in the contemporary glass of the Beauchamp chapel, Warwick (1447), where an angel stands by the table to play on it; and a pair of angels, in another of these interesting windows, have a large psaltery between them, the one holding it out horizontally while the other plays

¹ Galpin, *op. cit.* p. 59.

² The German name was *Spitzbarfe*.

upon it with both hands, apparently with fingers only.¹

The psaltery was specially popular as an accompaniment to the voice, both in church music and among the numerous wandering minstrels; but by the sixteenth century, except in very remote places, it was quite superseded in England by the dulcimer with its little hammer rods. In Spain and in the Canary isles the psaltery is still in use.

From the psaltery with its *plucked* strings, and, of course, with the addition of a keyboard and its special mechanism, sprang the spinet, virginal, and harpsichord, all of which are plucked-string instruments; while from the dulcimer and its *hammered* strings rose the whole of the great pianoforte family.

Examples of the common triangular psaltery of the fourteenth century, showing no features distinctive from that at Exeter, are seen in the Adderbury corbel-table (plate XIII, no. 9) and in the vaulting of the Percy tomb in Beverley minster (plate XI, no. 1). Contemporary specimens are at Manchester,² where a good dulcimer also appears; and in the nave of Beverley minster.³ As before mentioned, no other examples of the double psaltery can be quoted from English sources.

The next figure (plate XVII, no. 1) is the shawm-player previously referred to,⁴ who offers no fresh details for comment.

The next (plate XVII, no. 2) gives us a very inferior representation of the portative organ, practically unaltered from the fourteenth-century type seen in the minstrels'

¹ Mr. G. C. Druce, has kindly furnished me with the following contemporary description of a psaltery, extracted from the fourteenth-century Cotton MS. Augustus, A vi, fo. 463 (Brit. Mus.), livre xx, sect. xxix:

'Cy parle du psalterion.

'Le psalterion est dit de chanter pour ce que jadis le cuer respondoit au psalterion en chantant. Le psalterion ressemble a une guiterne de barbarie qui est faite comme un triangle. Mais il y a difference en ce

que le psalterion est plat et la guiterne est bossue dessous. Les juys [Jews] soloient avoir dix cordes ou psalterion selon le nombre des dix commandemens de la loy. Les meilleurs cordes qui soient pour le psalterion sont de fil d'archal [brass wire] ou de fil d'argent.'

² Galpin, *op. cit.* figs. 9 and 10, p. 65.

³ Illustrated by Carter in *Specimens of Sculpture and Painting*.

⁴ See above, p. 25.



[F. H. Crossley, phot.]

NO. 1. REBEC FROM CANOPY OF BISHOP BRONESCOMBE'S TOMB, EXETER.



[F. H. Crossley, phot.]

NO. 2. BAGPIPES FROM CANOPY OF BISHOP BRONESCOMBE'S TOMB, EXETER.



WALL-TABLET TO YOUNG MUSICIAN, EXETER.

gallery; only, in this case, the ill-formed *left* hand appears to have the keyboard work allotted to it, which is unusual though not unprecedented,¹ and scarcely proves that such was really ever the case. The pipes here appear to be set in a triple row, but this also is a detail in which, in such a carving, inaccuracy may have been shown.

No. 1, plate xviii, may probably be classed as a rebec, or kit, although scarcely any of its detail is correctly given. The bow is in the wrong hand, the instrument is held on the wrong shoulder; neither pegs, strings, nor bridge appear, and the shape of the body is very dubious. However, it suggests nothing else in the way of a musical instrument, and is scarcely of any value as a record, unless it be of the inaccuracy and inferiority of some of these fifteenth-century sculptures.²

The last (plate xviii, no. 2) has more general accuracy, and detail. It shows the bagpipes, still in favour, with the chanter, drone-pipe, and an ornamental treatment of the upper part of the skin of the wind-bag. No radical changes in it appear.

The only remaining illustration of mediæval musical instruments at Exeter is from a mural tablet, now on the western wall of the north transept (plate xix). Its date is 1586, and the inscription is as follows:³

Matthei Godwin
adolescentis pii mitis
ingeniosi musicae bacchalauii
dignissimi scientissimi ecclesiarum
cathedæ Cantuarî et Exon archimusicî
aeternae memoriae posuit G. M. Fr.
vixit annos xvii menses v.
Hinc ad caelos migravit
xii Januarii 1586.

¹ See above, p. 23.

² Excellent examples of the same century are seen in Beverley St. Mary and in the windows of the Beauchamp chapel, Warwick.

³ The sixth line may possibly be expanded as 'aeternae memoriae posuit genio monumentum frater.'

The material is Purbeck marble, and in low relief upon the background is shown the figure of this remarkable youthful genius kneeling before his organ, while a number of sympathetic cherubs are awaiting with due eagerness his 'migration' to the celestial orchestra.

The most important and interesting instrument that appears as part of his terrestrial outfit is this positive organ, some reference to which was made when describing the portative.¹ Here is seen the successor to that earliest form of keyboard organ, the keyboard being now applied to a large instrument standing on the ground, and probably blown either by a pair of bellows at the back, or by two cords running through the right side of the case, and raising a pair of bellows concealed within the lower part of the instrument. This specimen has only one keyboard, composed of twelve keys, five of which are raised. Only seven vertical pipes are shown, but the rest would doubtless be hidden behind within the organ-case.

Then, leaning against the wall, there are two lutes of different sizes, unmistakably recognisable by their shape and turned-back heads.

There is also a long folded trumpet with the usual cords and banner wrapped round it in the upper part. Its presence here may very probably indicate that Godwin was one of the city state-trumpeters.

The other instrument, seen leaning against the wall behind the smaller lute, is one very rarely met with in illustrations of English work, although it was originally of English invention and very popular in this country during the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. It is the curved cornett, which was a long, slender horn, or curved tube, bored with six finger holes in front and one at the back for the thumb. In the sixteenth-century paintings in the church at Saronno, by G. Ferrari, already referred to, it occurs several times, and it was very popular on the continent long after it had ceased to be used in English orchestras.² This specimen is a treble, or ordinary,

¹ See above, p. 22.

² 'Duoi cornetti' are among the thirty-six instruments used by Monteverde in the accompaniment of the voices in his opera

of *Orfeo*, produced in 1608, which is one of the earliest examples of a musical drama in which the instrumental accompaniment forms an important part.

cornett, and was probably played by young Godwin in the cathedral as a leading instrument with the organ and sackbut to support the voices of the singers, as was usual at this time. There were two other sizes: the great, or tenor, cornett, and the high treble cornett, the latter having a compass a fifth higher than that of the ordinary treble. 'All the cornetts,' says Mr. Galpin,¹ 'are sounded by means of a small cup-shaped mouthpiece having a very thin edge; they are not reed instruments as sometimes stated.' The only bass instrument of the cornett type was the serpent, the tube of which took a snake-like form instead of a simple curve. It was much and worthily in use from the end of the sixteenth century to nearly the middle of the nineteenth, long after the other cornetts had been discarded. There were also straight cornetts, generally known as mute cornetts from their special softness of tone; but the curved variety was that chiefly used in England. The whole family, known in Germany as *Zincke*, was very largely in vogue there.

The modern brass cornet, a valved instrument, is but a very distant relative of the mediaeval cornett family. The curved cornett of our example was made of either wood or ivory, and covered with black leather.

It is interesting to read in Mr. Galpin's book² how, in 1532, there were, among the list of officers appointed at Canterbury, two 'cornetters' and two 'sackbutters.' Doubtless it was to the first of these offices that young Godwin had succeeded before he came to Exeter.

These instruments on his memorial tablet are rather imperfectly carved, or have been blunted by time, but they are interesting as indicating the kinds that would at that date have been considered essential to a musician's outfit.

With this monument there ends all representation of musical instruments at Exeter. In reviewing the whole collection, the fact comes out with striking force that those from the presbytery vault, the earliest in date with the exception of the wooden misericord taborist, are incom-

¹ op. cit. p. 194.

² op. cit. p. 191.

parably the best from an artistic point of view, as well as being the most detailed and faithful records of the several characteristics.

In these qualities they fully correspond with the exquisite realistic foliage-carvings of the corbels below, which belong to the same years; both present some of the finest examples of early fourteenth-century decorative art that are anywhere to be seen. What this period may have lost in boldness, grandeur, and scale in its decorative work, was not a little compensated by the beauty and refinement of design and execution which are its conspicuous features.