

The Stained Glass at Norbury Manor House.

BY GEORGE BAILEY.

SECOND ARTICLE.

BESIDES the six circles representing the Months of which we have already written—Vol. IV., p. 152—there is in one of the windows of the entrance hall another of somewhat larger size, but of entirely different character and workmanship. The subject represented is “The Scourging of our Lord.” It gives evidence of considerable skill on the part of the artist who painted it; though the colouring differs but slightly from the others. The colours used are a grey, one or two shades of brown, yellow, and olive. Unfortunately the glass has been broken, and there is consequently an ugly lead nearly through the centre. In knowledge of anatomy and power of drawing it is a remarkable contrast to the poor and inelegant draughtsmanship of the Months, and there is no doubt at all that, while they are of English manufacture, this came from Holland, and is probably of the middle of the sixteenth century, during which period copies of the works of the great artists of the time were made. The question may arise, “How did glass of this class get to a place so remote as Norbury must have been at that time?” The answer may be supplied by the statement that a certain George Sandys* paid a visit to Rome some time in 1611

* A Relation of a Journey Begun, an. Dom., 1610, in Four Bookes, &c. The Fourth Edition. London: printed for Andrew Crooke, 1637. Dedi. to P. Charles.



ANCIENT PAINTED GLASS IN NORBURY MANOR HOUSE.



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(8 James I.). He there met Nicholas Fitzherbert, of Norbury, who had resided there with Cardinal Allen since 1572. Mr. Sandys says:—"Having stayed there four days (as long as I durst), secured by the faith and care of Master *Nicolas Fitz-Herbert*, who accompanied me in surveying all the antiquities and glories of that City," he then set out on his return journey for England. What more natural than that he should be made the bearer of some such small matters as a pane or two of painted glass? This may have been the case. It is certain Nicholas never returned home; he was drowned in Italy in the year following. It is well known that at this period numerous Flemish and German glass painters visited Italy. There is in "Les Arts au Moyen Age," by Paul Lacroix, at p. 271, an engraving of a circular pane similar in character to the one at Norbury, both in size and style of work, executed by a Flemish artist known as "Dirk de Harlem," in the latter half of the fifteenth century. It is The Crowning with Thorns. A reference to Plate I.—which is given full size—will show that the painter possessed considerable knowledge of the mode of scourging, though he was not quite sure; so he represents the act as being performed by the *lictors* in two ways, so as to save his credit. The whip is a true *horribile flagellum*; but the birch rod! that is certainly a truly Dutch idea, as are also the spectators of the scene. There is the inevitable dog in the background, too. The architecture is decidedly classic, and quite in character with the times in which we believe this was painted, and here again it agrees with that by Dirk de Harlem. This piece of glass also shows that the art of the glass painter was on the wane; it is an attempt at too much, consequently, like all such attempts, a failure. The art of the glass painter was a purely decorative one; and as soon as this fact was forgotten, and the domain of the painter on canvas was invaded, it lost its conventional character in the attempt to produce on glass what that material was not adapted to represent. Then the art died out, and was for centuries a lost art. We have mentioned a broken piece of glass on which is a representation of the "Nativity," executed in the same style

as "The Scourging," but it is so damaged that we have made no copy of it.

To most readers of this journal the heraldic glass still remaining at Norbury Manor will have most interest, and we have given coloured copies of all—with one exception—on the annexed plates. We make no apology for doing so, seeing that in a few more years these fragile things may share the fate of so many that used to be in the windows, but which are there no longer; and we may take this opportunity of suggesting that where possible, all heraldic glass should be copied and placed in some such permanent keeping as the pages of works like this Journal, for the convenience of succeeding genealogists and topographers. Those who have in any way been associated with either of these branches of family or county history know how extremely difficult it has become in many instances to determine what is correct or otherwise in the many careless and blundering lists and blazonings of arms. Great numbers have been broken or stolen which were described and *tricked* by Ashmole and others; and the few that now remain are in a more or less dilapidated condition. How they rattle and creak when the wind blows, so loose are they; what holes there are in them where they have been bobbed through by some brush with a stupid at the other end of the handle! signs, these, that there is no time to lose if the scanty remains are to be placed beyond the reach of suchlike various destructive influences, and preserved for the benefit of those who will come after us.

In the entrance hall are two circles, one of which is represented on Plate II.; of the other we give no plate, because it contains only the same arms as those on the dexter side of this plate. Referring to it, we see it contains on the dexter half the arms of Sir Thomas, eldest son of Sir Anthony Fitzherbert, who appears to have had two wives; his first wife was Ann Eyre, heiress of Padley; of his second wife we can learn nothing, either from existing records or from the arms here emblazoned. It consists of four grand quarterings, each of which is quarterly of four. The first and fourth contains the arms of Fitzherbert,

FIG 1.

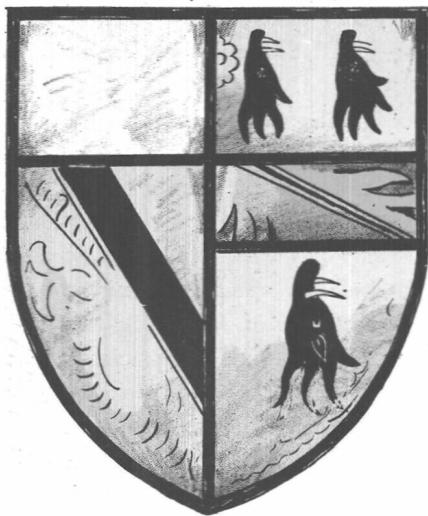


FIG 2.

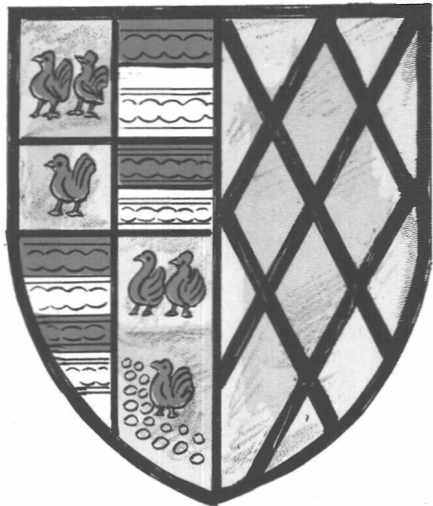


FIG 3.

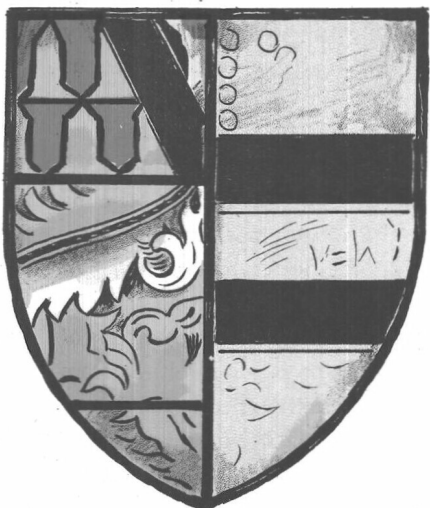
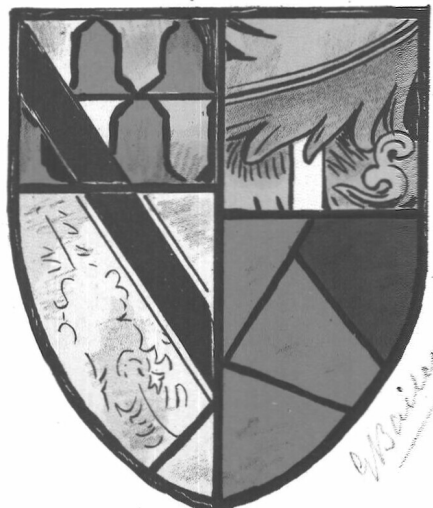
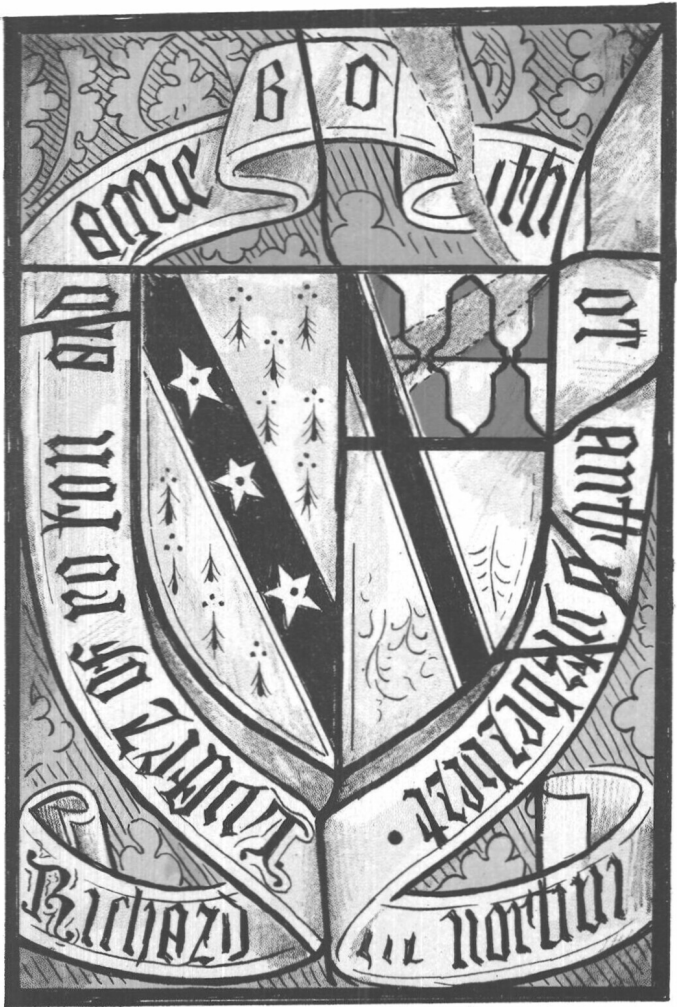


FIG 4.



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REYNOLDS & SON, LONDON & LEICESTER.

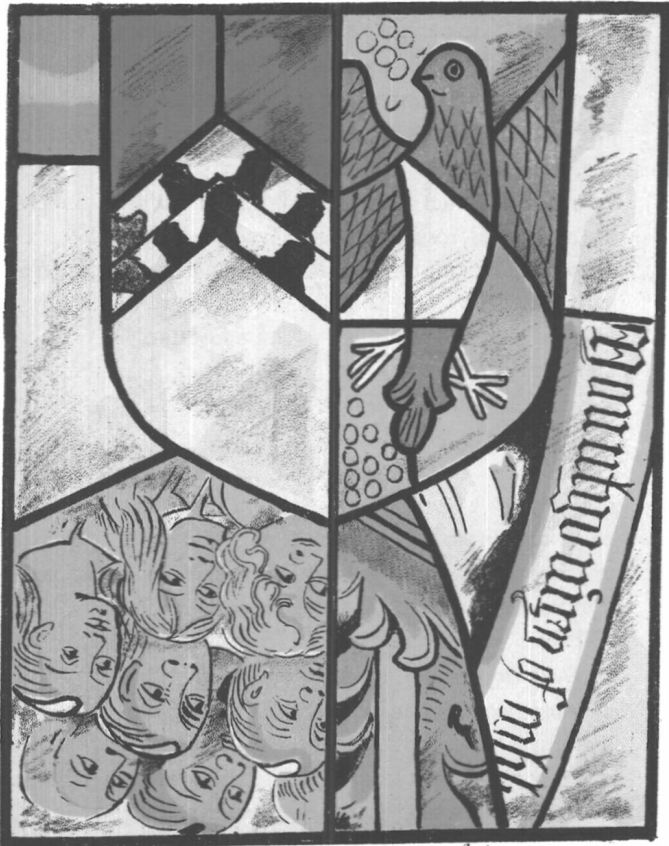
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The arms on Plate VI. have been so much broken that we are unable to say anything certain about them. We cannot find any connexions of the Swinnertons or Fitzherberts who bore arms that in any way agree with these fragments. There remains nothing of the charge on the dexter side, except the upper arm of a cross flory, which appears to have been debruised by a fesse ; it can scarcely be intended for Swinnerton, *argent*, a cross formée flory *sable*, debruised with a fesse *gules*, because the portion of the cross is *argent* ; besides, what appears like a fesse may only be a hole mended as we see it ; and if so, then the charge would be simply a cross flory, or more correctly, *azure* ; a cross flory *argent*. The sinister side is quite as perplexing. What remains is *gules* ; a cross crosslet, *or*. There may have been a chief, or two more crosses crosslet. The names on the ribbon appear to be Henry Fulham, or Fuljam, Elton Oughton, and perhaps Rebekah Douley, of Elford ; but the glass has been so often broken and mended that it is difficult to say that there are not portions of several names. It will be as well to state that the shield (Plate V.) is inverted in the window, we suppose in order to place the fragment with which one corner is patched the right way up. It will also have been observed that in Fig. 3 (Plate III.) the Fitzherbert chief is inverted.

These are all the Heraldic glass at this time in the windows of Norbury Manor House. They form but a very small remnant of what were formerly there, judging from some accounts still existing. It is useless now to bemoan their loss ; much of it was destroyed in the civil wars, and perhaps quite as much by the indifference of owners and carelessness of servants.

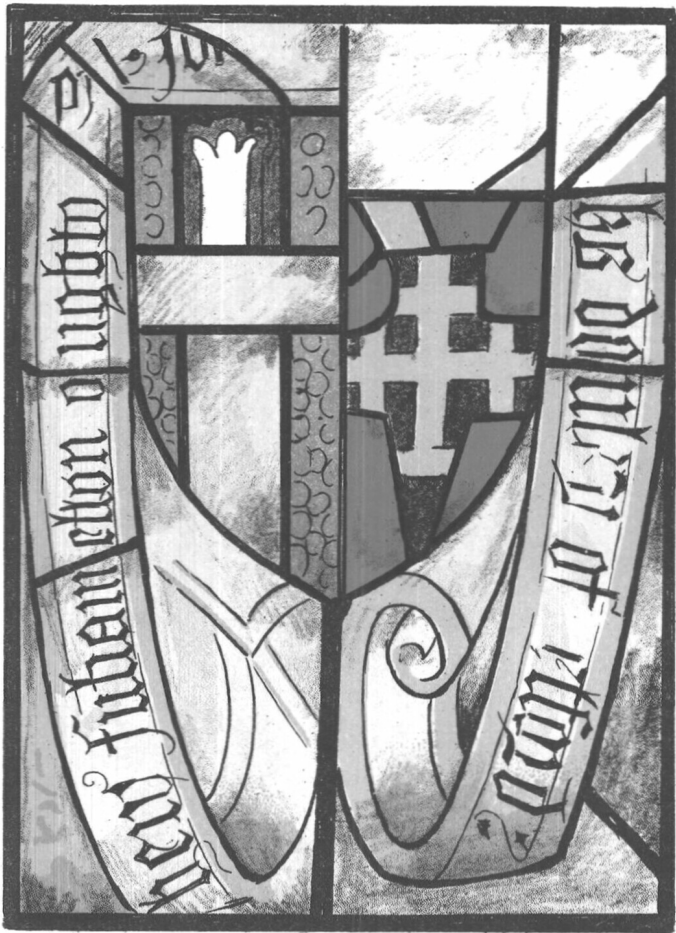
A good deal of stained and painted glass still remains both in churches and private mansions, many pieces being of great antiquity, and having interesting histories attached to them ; and it would be a good thing if members of the various societies which now exist for the preservation of ancient objects would make use of the printer's art for their preservation, so that these things which are often the only connecting links with the men and women of the past, may be preserved to interest and inform those of the future.



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