

SEPULCHRAL BRASSES.

NOTICE OF INTERESTING MEMORIALS IN NORFOLK AND OTHER COUNTIES.

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THE Eastern counties contain more numerous examples of sepulchral brasses than any other district of the kingdom, and this fact has often been quoted to warrant the opinion that they were of foreign manufacture, and imported from Germany or Flanders in readiness to be laid down. There are, however, many objections to be urged against this conclusion, and the fact itself may be more satisfactorily explained if it be considered that these memorials were only within the reach of the wealthy, and that the Eastern counties were, in the days when sepulchral brasses were in fashion, the scene of manufacturing wealth and activity: Ipswich, Norwich, Lynn, and Lincoln were great and important cities, when Birmingham and Liverpool were as yet country villages. In Norfolk, especially, the effigies of civilians abound, and Norwich with its numerous churches even now (sadly reduced as the number is) exhibits a collection of sepulchral brasses which attests the wealth of its ancient merchants and the splendour of their civic dress. Many of these have been made known in Cotman's elaborate work on the Sepulchral Brasses of Norfolk, but unhappily, as it would seem, in more than one case only with the effect of inviting the cupidity of the spoiler, since many which Cotman engraved, so lately as 1815, have now disappeared^a. Among others we may mention two from St. Stephen's, of great interest, figured in plates 17 and 104, and the curious figure of Faith, bearing the brazen bed, from the brass of Galfridus Langley, in the church of St. Lawrence, plate 97. To these may be added the effigy of John Clarke, stolen from St. Andrew's in the memory of the present incumbent, and brasses formerly to be seen in the churches of St. Edmund and St. Mary, now no longer to be found. It is to be hoped that the newly-awakened interest in regard to these ancient relics will reach "the most Catholic

^a Cotman has given an etching of the fine figure of Robert Attelath, mayor of Lynn, 1370, formerly to be seen in the church of St. Margaret, in that town. Stothard relates that previously to his visit to Lynn in 1813, it had been disposed of

by the churchwardens to a person who sold it for five shillings. *Memoirs*, p. 93. An inscription of this brass is preserved in the collection formed by Sir John Cullum, now to be seen in the print room at the British Museum.

city" in England, and prevent any further additions to this disgraceful list of sacrilegious robbery.

It is a very common error with ignorant persons to ascribe most of the mischiefs from which churches have suffered in the defacement of monuments, or the abstraction of brasses, to the period of the Great Rebellion. Scarce a parish clerk is to be found, who, in pointing out some mutilated figure or some slab robbed of its effigy, does not lay the blame on Cromwell's soldiers. The puritan faction, who overthrew for a time altar and throne, have sins enough to answer for without the addition of those which belong to a later period, nor is it just that the neglect of the sacred memorials of the dead, which has marked an age even now not passed away, should be lost sight of in a general reference of all offences against the sanctity of God's house, to an earlier generation of unholy spoilers.

These reflections are very forcibly confirmed by the present state of the little chapel of St. Andrew at Frenze, near Diss, in Norfolk, which was long the burial place, and still retains many interesting memorials, of the knightly family of Blenerhaysett, so named from Blenerseta, in Cumberland, where the elder branch long resided. To the secluded situation and unpretending simplicity of the church at Frenze the old historian of the county ascribed the safety of those effigies which it contained, while more stately edifices in the neighbourhood had been unsparingly stripped and plundered. The publicity given to its treasures by Cotman's book has been the signal for commencing the work of spoliation, and the effigy of Sir Thomas Blenerhaysett, represented as clad in an armorial tabard, has disappeared^b. Of those which remain the following is a brief account. On entering the south door of the church, the first slab bears a female effigy, exhibiting the pedimental head-dress of the sixteenth century; the sleeves have furred cuffs, and round the waist is a rich girdle, from which hangs a chain and pendant, of goldsmith's work^c. The legend, in old English letters, runs thus:—

pray for the soule of Jane Blen'haysett wedow late wyfe onto John Blen'haysett
esquer whiche Jane departed oute of this p'sent lyl y^e VI day of October
the yere of our lord god M^cXXX on whose soule Ihu haue mercy. Amen.

^b Cotman, Pl. lxiii. A beautifully illuminated plate, representing this interesting figure, is given as the frontispiece of the new edition of Cotman's Brasses, London,

H. Bohn, 1839.

^c Blomef. Norf., vol. i. p. 142. Cotman, Appendix, Pl. v.

Opposite to the door, on the northern side of the nave, and near the font, is a small brass figure in a shroud with the hands raised in prayer. It has not been given by Cotman. The legend is as follows :—

Pray for ye soule of your charite
of Thomas Robson to ye trauyte.

Going eastward, we find, towards the centre of the chapel, a large stone with a brass, in very good preservation, of a female clad in a long mantle, with a veil and barbe, in a religious dress; she had devoted herself, after the decease of her husband, to the service of God. Her name is recorded in the following legend :—

Hic jacet tumulata dn'a Johanna Braham vidua ac deo dicata
olim uxor Johis Braham Armigeri que obiit xiiij^o die Nobe'bris
A^o dni mill^{mo} CCCC^o lxx^o ejus a'te p'picietur deus. Amen.

Below this legend are three coats of arms^d. The next slab in the pavement is the old altar-stone, marked with five crosses. Still eastward, and in front of the communion-table, is the effigy of a knight in armour, having a skirt of chain mail under plate armour with taces, and tuilles; the hands are raised in prayer, the sword is suspended by a baldric, and hangs down straight in front of the figure. The legend is in old English character :—

Hic jacet ven'abilis vir Joh'es Blen'havset Armig' q' obiit vicesimo vij^o die me's
nobe'b' A^o dni M^oCC^o lxx^o ej' a'te p'piciet' de'.

There was a shield in each corner of this stone, but two are lost, and the other two nearly obliterated^e. In the north-eastern corner of the chancel is another knightly effigy, with legend and four shields in better preservation. The hair in this figure is not flowing, but erect; the armour is of plate; the right arm covered by a succession of plates to give greater freedom to its movements; on the right side hangs a dagger, on the left a sword suspended by a baldric, buckled in front. At the feet is a lion couchant, regardant^f. The legend runs thus :—

Hic jacet venerabilis vir Radulphus Blen'havsett armiger qui obiit xviii^o die
mensis Novembris A^o dni M^oCCCC^o lxx^o Cuj' a'te p'picietur deus. Amen.

^d Blomef. Norf., vol. i. p. 145. Cotman, Pl. liii.

^e Cotman, Pl. I.

^f Cotman has given no representation of this figure, which bears much resemblance to those of Sir Miles Stapleton, 1466, at

Ingham, and Sir John Curzon, 1471, at Belaugh. An etching of it was executed by Mrs. Hayles, from a drawing by the late Rev. Thomas Kerrich, Librarian of the University of Cambridge.

Between the two knights is a large stone with heraldic bearings, and the following legend in small Roman character :—

MARIÆ FILIÆ ET HEREDI UNICE GEORGII BLENERHAISET ARMIGERI
FILII PRIMOGENITI THOMÆ BLENERHAISET MILITIS INAURATI NUPTÆ PRIMO
THOMÆ CULPEPER ARMIGERO QUI HIC : POSTEA FRANCISCO BACON ARMI-
GERO QUI PETISTRLE IN COMITAT: SUFF: TUMULATUR SINE P'LE DE-
FUNCTE XVII SEPTEMB 1587, ÆTATIS SUÆ 70.

VIDUÆ PIÆ CASTÆ HOSPITALI BENIGNÆ

JOHANNES CORNWALLIS ET JOANNES BLENERHAISET

MEMORIE ET AMORIS ERGO POSUERUNT.

There are some brass plates of the Blenerhaisets on the east wall. Just below these, and partly under the communion-table, is a large stone, from which a small male figure has been removed. A female figure remains, but it is imperfect and loose. It has the pedimental head-dress, the head resting on a square cushion : the dress is long-waisted, the sleeves are tight, terminating in cuffs which cover the hand ; a rich girdle which passes just over the hips supports an aulmonière and a rosary. The legend is as follows :—

Heare vnder lveith George Duke Esqpyre
who marved Anne the dawghter of Syr thom^s
Blenerhaysett knyght the wyche George
dyed the xxv daye of July In the yere
Of oure lordie god A. MCCCCC.Li
whose Soule God pardon. Amen.

Anne Duke subsequently married Peter Rede, Esq. ; she survived him nine years, and was buried in St. Margaret's church, Norwich, where her effigy appears on an altar-tomb on the north side of the chancel with the following legends :—

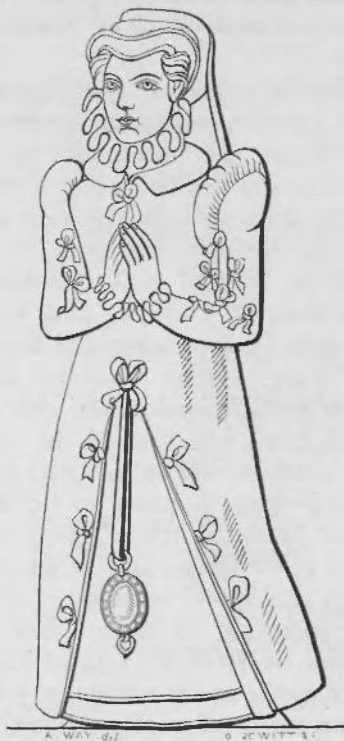
Here vnder lieith buried y^e body of Anne Rede y^e Daughter of S^r Thomas Blener-
haysset Knyght and first y^e wyfe of George Duke late of Brampton Esqpyre & the
after y^e wyfe of Peter Rede of Gymyng^{am} Esqpyre y^e w^{ch} Anne Departed y^s lyfe
ye xvj day of Aprill in yere from Christies incarnation 1577.

She is represented, not as a widow, but with the French hood ; a small ruff appears round her neck, and little frilled wrist-bands under her sleeves, which fit closely to the arms, and are tied with a number of small bows of riband : they are also padded and high-shouldered, according to an ungraceful fashion of the times of Elizabeth ; and in front, as if appended to her girdle, appears an oval ornament of rather

disproportionate size, which was either one of those portable mirrors, termed Venice steel glasses, or a box of goldsmith's work, intended to contain a pomander, or other perfumes.



No. 1. Anne Rede.



No. 2. Anne Rede.

The difference in costume caused by a lapse of twenty-six years between the first and second effigy, is very remarkable, and is a proof how closely the artist in such case followed the fashion of the period at which the brass was executed. Perhaps this is the only instance in which the same person has been twice represented by this sort of monument, in different churches and at different periods. We have much reason to regret that the figure of George Duke is lost, because that of Peter Rede is still preserved, and without it the completeness of the group is destroyed. Peter Rede is represented in armour of the fifteenth century, with a visord salade, and the following legend is in Roman character :—

HERE UNDER LYETHE Y^e CORPS OF PETER REDE ESQUIER WHO HATH WORTHELY SERVED NOT ONLY HYS PRYNCE AND CVNTREY BVT ALLSO THE EMPEROR CHARLES THE 5 BOTHE AT THE CONQVESTE OF BARBARIA AND AT THE SIEGE OF TVNIS AS ALSO IN OTHER PLACES WHO HAD GIVEN HYM BY THE SAYD EMPEROVR FOR HYS VALIAVNT DEDES THE ORDER OF BARBARIA WHO DYED THE 29 OF DECEMBER IN THE YEAR OF OVRE LORD GOD 1568.

This brass is in the north chancel-aisle of St. Peter's Mancroft in Norwich^h. It is an instance of a practice which seems to have been not uncommon in the later days of the use of monumental brasses, when a new legend was united to an old effigy, probably with the view of saving expense. The effigy of Peter Rede is in armour, of the fashion of 1480, much resembling that of Ralf Blenerhayset, but his death did not take place till 1568, so that we can only account for the discrepancy by supposing that a new legend was attached to an old figure. Other instances of this occur at Laughton, near Gainsborough, where the date of the figure and canopy is about 1400, but that of the legend 1543; and at Howden, in Yorkshire, where the real date of the effigy attributed to Peter Dolman appears to be about the year 1500, but the legend is dated 1691. This legend is engraved on a portion of an older brass, and is an instance of what Mr. Way has styled palimpsest brassesⁱ.

In addition to these observations relating to sepulchral brasses in Norfolk, I must mention an example which has lately come under my notice; it seems indeed to be unique. It is a small effigy of a civilian, by his side is a sort of crutch or walking-stick; the legend refers to this:

Pray for the soule of Wylm Palmer with y^e Stylt,
whych he decesid on holy Rode Day in y^e yere of our lord
God A.MCCCCXX^o on whose soule Ehu have mercy.

I do not remember any similar commemoration of a bodily infirmity, such as William Palmer's lameness, in monumental brasses. The situation of this brass in the church of Ingoldmells, on the eastern coast of Lincolnshire, has prevented its being earlier noticed.

W. D.

^h Blomef. Norf., vol. iv. p. 200. Cotman, Pl. lxxvii. p. 41. There was formerly an escutcheon at each corner of the slab, displaying the bearings of Rede, with the honourable augmentation conferred by the emperor; a canton sinister parted per pale, on the first part two ragged staves in saltire; on the second a man holding a ca-

duceus in his right hand, pointed downwards; on his sinister side, a sword in pale, with the point downwards, piercing a Moor's head.

ⁱ Notice of the memorial of Thomas Totyngton, abbot of Bury, now existing in Hedgerley church, Bucks. Archæol., vol. xxx. p. 121.

The architectural and monumental antiquities of many parts of England still remain almost unknown: the counties of Lincoln and Huntingdon especially appear to have been overlooked; few notices of the interesting remains preserved in the parish churches of those and other districts of our island have hitherto been published. A favourable occasion presents itself through the assistance of the numerous correspondents of the Archæological Institute, to form collections which might supply a complete index of monumental effigies, sepulchral brasses, paintings, painted glass, and examples of sculpture in wood or stone, existing in the churches of each county of England. Such a compilation would be highly serviceable to the student of ancient art and costume; to the herald or the genealogist. As a contribution towards an index of this nature, the subjoined enumeration of sepulchral brasses and incised slabs, which exist in Warwickshire, is offered to the readers of the Archæological Journal.

Warwick. St. Mary's. Thomas Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, and his wife, Margaret Ferrers. Representations are given in Dugdale's Hist. Warw., Gough's Sep. Mon., and Waller's Sep. Brasses. A.D. 1401.

Merevale Abbey Church. Chancel. Fine brasses of a knight and lady, probably Robert, lord Ferrers of Chartley, and his wife Margaret. Dugdale has given only the inscription, which is now lost. By the inventory taken at the dissolution there appear to have been here six grave-stones with brasses, valued at five shillings. Dugd. Mon. Ang. new edit. V. 484. The figures measure in length 5 ft. 8 in., and are now placed north and south, on the step before the altar-table. A.D. 1407.

Baginton. Sir William Bagot, the favourite of Richard II., and his wife Margaret. Dugdale gives representations of these interesting figures in their perfect state. A.D. 1407.

Wixford. Thomas de Crewe (ob. 1418) and his wife Juliana, (ob. 1411.) Their memorial, highly interesting on account of its fine design and preservation, consists of a large table-monument in the chantry of St. Milburga, founded by Thomas de Crewe on the south side of the nave. A representation of the brasses has been published by the Cambridge Camden Society. A.D. 1411.

Wellesbourne Hastang. Chancel. Sir Thomas le Straunge, lord treasurer of Ireland, and as entitled in the inscription given by Dugdale, constable of Henry V. in that island. A.D. 1426.

Hampton in Arden. Richard Brokes, bailiff of Hampton. (Dugd.; Gent. Mag. 1795, p. 988.) Date about A.D. 1430.

Wroxhall. In the church adjoining to the residence of the Wren family a brass has been placed, formerly to be seen in the church of Brailes, and

afterwards in the possession of the late William Hamper, Esq., at the sale of whose collections it was purchased. Date about A.D. 1430.

Middleton. Chancel. Sir Richard Bingham, justice of the King's Bench, and his wife, Margaret Frevill. He is represented in judicial robes.

A.D. 1476.

Charlecote. Edmund, son of Thomas Wykeham. Date about A.D. 1480?

John Marskre, "quondam capellanus istius ecclesie." Not mentioned by Dugdale.

Coleshill. Chancel. William Abelle, vicar. A.D. 1500.

Alice Clifton. A.D. 1506.

Compton Verney. Anne Odyngsale, daughter of Richard Verney.

A.D. 1523.

Richard Verney, and his wife Anne.

A.D. 1526.

Whitnash. Richard Bennet, vicar. Small figures of a man in a secular habit, and his wife, which lay in the chancel detached from the matrices, have been carefully affixed to the wall. They represent, possibly, Benedict Medley (ob. 1503) and his wife. Dugd.

A.D. 1531.

Aston. Thomas Holte, Esq., justice of North Wales. A.D. 1545.

Coleshill. "Syr" John Fenton, vicar, and official of Coventry. A.D. 1566.

Haseley. Clement Throckmorton, Esq., and his wife Catherine. Altar-tomb on south side of the chancel. A.D. 1573.

Warwick. St. Mary's. Thomas Oken, and his wife Joan. A.D. 1573.

Compton Verney. George Verney, Esq., and his wife Jane, daughter of William Lucy, Esq., of Charlecote. A.D. 1574.

Coventry. St. Michael's. Maria Hinton. A.D. 1594.

Ann Sewel. A.D. 1609.

Tanworth. Margaret Archer. Dugd. A.D. 1614.

Mereden. Elizabeth Rotton.

At Whatcote, portion of a figure of a priest remains, the head is lost. Some brasses were to be seen in the church of Ryton upon Dunsmoor, detached from the matrices. At Walton on Trent there is a small figure of a priest. Numerous sepulchral brasses formerly existing in Warwickshire have been described, and representations of them preserved, in Dugdale's History.

The following incised slabs may deserve notice.

Newbold on Avon. Geoffrey Allesley, and his wife Alianore. A.D. 1401.

Thomas Boughton, and his wife Elizabeth Allesley. Date about

A.D. 1450.

Coleshill. Reginolde Digby, his wife and children.

A.D. 1549.

Similar incised memorials, with figures of the persons commemorated, designed in outline upon flat slabs, exist at Ipsley, Witherbrook, Whichford, and in other churches in Warwickshire.