

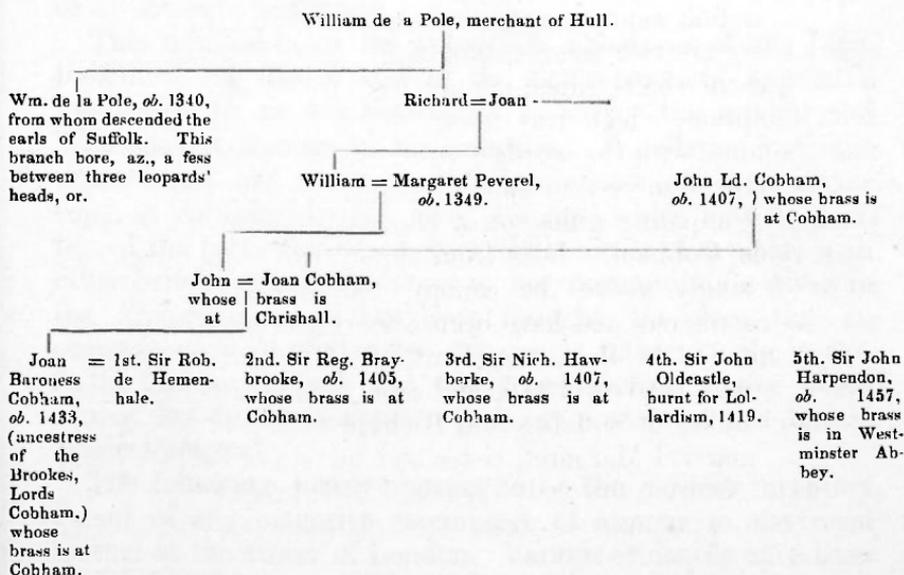
NOTICE OF AN UNDESCRIBED SEPULCHRAL BRASS.

IN the nave of Chrishall church, near Saffron Walden, Essex, is a large and fine brass, not hitherto described or appropriated, but well worthy of illustration from its commemorating members of a noble family, whose burial place has never been recorded, as well as from its value as an example of monumental art. It is, unfortunately, partly under the boards of a pew; but the whole may be uncovered with the exception of about four inches across the breast of the figures. It represents a knight in the armour of the end of Edward the Third's reign, holding his baldrick in his left hand, and the right hand of his lady in his right; her head-dress is the caul usually seen at the same period, and from her arms hang the sleeve-lappets which are sometimes, but rarely, found in contemporary brasses. The knight's feet rest on a lion, and below both the figures is a basement of quatrefoils: above them is a fine canopy, not double, as is generally the case where there are two figures, but triple; it is somewhat mutilated, and the shafts which supported it are entirely gone. Of the inscription, which was marginal, a very small fragment only remains, with the words "sa feme priez." Between the heads of the figures is a shield, azure, two bars nebuleè, or, Delapole: impaling gules, on a chevron or, three lions rampant, sable, Cobham. It is from these arms, which are also repeated singly above the canopy, that the names of the persons commemorated have been discovered.

William De la Pole, merchant of Hull, left two sons; William, who died in 1340, and from whom descended the earls and dukes of Suffolk; and Richard, whose son and heir, William, married Margaret, sister and heiress of John Peverel of Castle Ashby; this lady died in 1349, leaving a son and heir, John, who married Joan, sole daughter and heiress of John, Lord Cobham. These last are the knight and lady represented at Chrishall, as is proved by the arms.

The manor of Chrishall was held under Lord Stafford by

William and Margaret De la Pole in 1351—1358^a; and in 1399 by the heirs of John De la Pole^b, from whom it passed to his descendants, the Brookes^c. The exact year of Sir John's death has not been ascertained; his lady died before her father, Lord Cobham^d, and that barony descended to their only daughter, Joan: and they were both dead in 1389, as Lord Cobham had East Tilbury appropriated to his college at Cobham in that year, to maintain two chaplains to sing for their souls. The time of their deaths, however, would probably not affect the date of the brass, as there is good reason to suppose that it was put down in their life-time, and perhaps, soon after their marriage. Their daughter Joan was born in 1377, and the costume of the figures, and the style of the brass is such as to make it almost a certainty that it was executed about the year 1375, at which time it is probable they also rebuilt the church, as their arms remain on the south door, and many parts of the building are of late Decorated or transition character. This brass adds another to the fine series of monuments of the Cobham family at Cobham, Kent, among which are brasses to the lady's father, Lord Cobham, and to her daughter, Joan Braybrooke. The following brief pedigree may exhibit the connection of the families more clearly:—



^a Wright's Essex, 186.

^b Esch. 22. Ric. 2.

^c Morant's Essex.

^d Harl. MSS. 115t. 36

It is to be regretted that this brass should not be removed from its situation, and placed in a new stone in the chancel, where it might be seen to advantage. There is another fine monument in the church, a stone effigy of a lady, of about the same date as the brass, and also two small brasses of civilians of the fifteenth century.

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