

ON THREE SEPULCHRAL MONUMENTS AT CLIFTON REYNES
IN THE COUNTY OF BUCKINGHAM.

CLIFTON REYNES is a small secluded village about a mile from Olney, in Buckinghamshire, but on the opposite bank of the Ouse. The church consists of a chancel with a north aisle; a nave with north and south aisles; and a low, massive, embattled tower at the west end.

The chancel aisle, which is separated from the chancel by two Decorated arches, appears to have been built as a sepulchral chapel. The earliest existing monument in it is placed in the north wall within a canopied recess, with good foliated tracery of the Decorated period. It consists of two recumbent effigies, male and female, carved in oak, and placed on a modern slab supported by Grecian brackets.

The knight wears a *coif de mailles*, bound with a fillet encircling the head; a hauberk reaching nearly to the knees; a sleeveless surcoat, the skirt partly open in front; his sword is suspended by a plain belt or leathern strap hanging obliquely from the right hip, and fastened in front by a plain buckle. The leg-armour, which does not now appear, was doubtless shown by colour on the surface. The spurs are gone, but the straps remain. The toes are pointed.

The right leg is crossed over the left. With the right hand he is sheathing his sword, and with the left he holds the scabbard. He has *genouilleres*, but no bosses at the shoulders or elbows. No beard or moustachios appear; his head rests on two cushions; his feet on a dog very rudely figured.



The lady wears over her head a veil, which falls on each side of the face to the shoulders. The neck and chin are covered with a wimple reaching almost up to the under lip. The dress is low in front about the neck, and falls in folds down to the feet. The gown is sleeveless with long slits for the arms. The hands are raised in prayer. The head rests on two cushions, and the feet on a dog similar to that at her husband's feet.

The monument has neither date, inscription, nor armorial bearings. Lipscomb assigns it to Sir Thomas de Reynes, who married Joan, daughter of Baron Seton, of Scotland, and died A.D. 1380. He says elsewhere, however, that he married the daughter of Sir Thomas Seyton, of Seyton, co. Northampton, and died in 1389. Vol. iv. p. 103.

A manuscript History of Clifton, written in 1821 by the Rev. Edward Cooke, rector of Haversham, and left by him to the rector of Clifton for the time being, states that these effigies "are of considerable antiquity, and were probably designed for some of the Borard family, or for that Thomas Reynes and his wife, who succeeded them in the estate," and died about A.D. 1310. Lipscomb's conjecture is undoubtedly erroneous; for the monument evidently belongs to a far earlier period than A.D. 1380, and even earlier, I doubt not, than A.D. 1310. The entire absence of plate armour, except genouilleres, the sleeveless surcoat, the unornamented sword-belt, resembling a plain strap, fastened by a common buckle instead of the richly-chased ornament of the fourteenth century, unless we suppose that the ornaments were here indicated by colour, which has been effaced; the absence, also, of the dagger, and the cross-legged attitude, are sufficient characteristics for assigning the male effigy to the thirteenth century. The peculiarities of the lady's costume equally belong to the same century. Consequently, viewing these effigies in connection with the history of the manor, I am inclined to assign them to Simon de Borard and Margaret his wife, daughter of Sir Asceline Sydenham of Titchmerch, by whom he became possessed of part of that manor. This Simon de Borard died shortly before 1267, which agrees with the apparent date of the monument. The Church of Clifton, which had been founded by one of his ancestors, who, however, was only a sub-feudary lord of the manor, probably was a small edifice. But after the attainder of

his superior lord, Simon de Borard became lord of the manor immediately under the king, and having increased his possessions by marriage, he is very likely to have rebuilt his parish church of which he was patron; and his wife, who was an heiress, probably joined him in this good work. This conjecture is strengthened by the appearance of the present church, the greater part of which belongs to about the period of their death. Here, then, is a reason for their being specially commemorated in it. Nor can these effigies with any degree of probability be assigned to later members of the Borard family. For, of the three sons left by this Simon and Margaret, Richard, who first succeeded his father, died unmarried; Asceline, who next inherited the property, was a priest; and Robert, the last of the male line, died without issue, soon after 1296, and probably unmarried, for no record appears of his wife.

We now proceed to the altar-tomb standing under the lower arch between the chancel and its aisle. Each side of the tomb is ornamented with five shields of arms surrounded with tracery, and over every shield, and within the tracery, is the figure of a rose. Roses are also figured on the spaces between the shields, and a border of roses placed at short intervals surrounds each side of the tomb.

The armorial bearings, as described by Lipscomb, are, on the south side—1. Eleven bezants, a canton ermine (Zouch). 2. A saltier engrailed (Tyringham), impaling chequy or and azure, a canton ermine (Reynes). 3. Ermine on a fess three crosses fleury. (? Brisley). 4. Three bucks trippant (probably Green). 5. A cross engrailed (Drayton).

On the north side.—1. Three arches. (? Seyton). 2. A chevron chequy between three escallops (Dyve). 3. A chevron between three escallops (Chamberlain), impaling chequy, a canton ermine (Reynes). 4. Chequy, a canton ermine (Reynes). 5. Two lions passant with a label of three points for a difference. (This last is indistinct.)

Upon the tomb are two recumbent effigies, male and female, carved in oak, much resembling those last described, but evidently, from their execution and some points of difference, belonging to a somewhat later period.

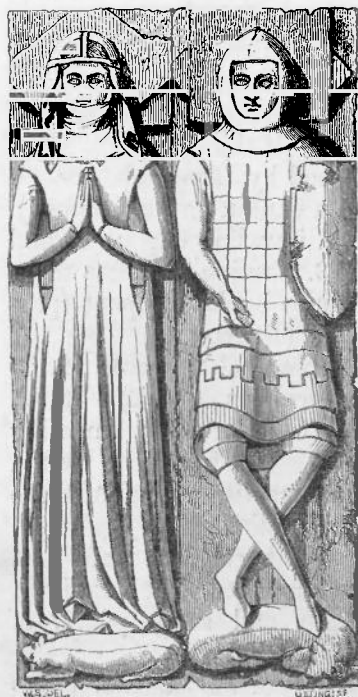
The knight, who has neither beard nor moustachio, wears a bascinet with camail, or possibly, the hood of mail; his hauberk reaches nearly to his knees; his surcoat marked

with squares, perhaps intended for chequy, the bearing of Reynes; he has knee-pieces, but no appearance of armour beneath them on the legs, nor on the arms which have been coloured red; no spurs or straps remain: no bosses appear at the shoulders or elbows; the toes are pointed, but there is no appearance of sollerets. His head rests on two cushions; his right hand is in the attitude of sheathing the sword, which is entirely broken away, and there is no appearance of the swordbelt; with his left arm he holds a shield, semi-cylindrical and of the heater shape, but devoid of armorial device. His right leg is crossed over the left, and his feet rest on a dog.

The lady wears a veil over the head with a fillet encircling the temples, and another passing from the forehead over the crown. The veil, passing under the fillet, falls on each side the face down to the shoulders.

A wimple, or gorget, covers the neck and chin almost up to the under lip. The dress, low about the neck, falls in

folds to the feet, which are remarkably small; the gown, or super-tunic, is sleeveless; there is no girdle. The hands are in the attitude of prayer, and the arms, or sleeves of the under dress, have been coloured red. The head rests on a double cushion, and the feet on a dog. The dimensions are as follows:—length of the effigies, 6 feet 1 inch; length of the tomb, 6 feet 5 inches.



There is neither date nor inscription on this monument, but the armorial bearings may assist us in determining whom it was intended to commemorate, if indeed the effigies and the tomb originally belonged to each other. Lipscomb assigns it to Sir Thomas Reynes and his wife, Cecilia, daughter of Sir Roger Tyringham, prob-

bably because the arms of Tyringham appear on the tomb.

But this Sir Thomas Reynes was living in the latter half of the fourteenth century, and according to Lipscomb in 1366, which is too late for the apparent date of the effigies. Moreover, the arms of Tyingham appear on the tomb impaling those of Reynes, that is, Tyingham on the dexter and Reynes on the sinister side, which, according to the present rules of heraldry, would make the husband a Tyingham and the wife a Reynes. Consequently, this coat could not have been introduced in allusion to Sir Thomas Reynes' marriage with Cecilia Tyingham, but may be the arms of a married lady of the Reynes family, (according to the heraldic usage of that time,) who was a near relation of the deceased. As Tyinghams and Reynes had lived near each other for several generations, they had probably intermarried before the alliance here mentioned. Moreover, this Sir Thomas and his wife are commemorated by a brass with their effigies and respective arms properly impaled. These considerations are sufficient to show that the heraldic bearings on the tomb afford no conclusive evidence for assigning it to Thomas Reynes and Cecilia Tyingham.

The manuscript history of the parish, already referred to, assigns it to Ralph de Reynes, the father of Thomas who married Cecilia Tyingham, and the nephew or great-nephew of Robert, the last of the Borards, and consequently the heir and representative of that family.

This Ralph de Reynes was twice married ; first, to Amabel, daughter of Sir Henry Green of Boughton, near Northampton, by Catherine, daughter of Sir John de Drayton ; secondly, to Amabel, daughter of Sir Richard Chamberlain of Petsoe Manor, adjoining that of Clifton. The arms of Green and of Drayton, as we have already seen, are found on the south side of the tomb, as are those of Chamberlain on the north side. But since the arms of Chamberlain are impaled with those of Reynes on the sinister or wife's side, these impaled arms are probably to be referred to some lady of the Reynes family who had married a Chamberlain, whilst another, as we have seen, appears to have married a Tyingham. Nevertheless, though we find on this monument no impalement of Reynes with either Green or Chamberlain on the sinister side, the MS. History may not be wrong in assigning it to Ralph de Reynes, who died about A.D. 1310. Apparently he was the first of his family who possessed the manor

and advowson of Clifton, and he probably devoted a portion of his increased fortune to the improvement of his parish church. For the chancel aisle, or chantry chapel, and other additions and improvements in the church, may be attributed, together with the tomb under consideration, to about the period of his death.

These wooden effigies are hollow, and unconnected with the slabs on which they rest. They have been deeply scooped out, and the cavity left in a rough and jagged state. There can be no certainty that any of them occupy their original position. Those in the recess are evidently of an earlier date than any portion of the sepulchral chapel; and the altar-tomb, on which the others lie, appears to have been shortened, as the end does not correspond with the sides, and is made of unsculptured stones. The tomb probably extended to the pier, which supports the arcade between the chapel and chancel, and was shortened to allow a passage into the chapel when the more modern and splendid tomb was raised, which occupies the whole length of the other arch.

Another monument in the same church remains to be noticed. This is an extremely elegant altar-tomb under the upper or east arch. It is made of a soft white stone, and not of alabaster, as commonly stated. Two recumbent effigies, boldly and elaborately executed, rest upon it. The knight wears a pointed bascinet, camail of chain-mail, a jupon emblazoned with the Reynes arms, reaching scarcely below the hips, and fitting close to the body, the mail hauberk appears about two inches below the surcoat; the legs are defended with plate-armour, knee-pieces, and broad pointed sollerets. The spurs are broken off, but the straps remain; the sword is gone, but an ornamented belt with a richly-chased fastening remains. The dagger is perfect, except the hilt; the hands are in the attitude of prayer, but the greater part of the left arm is broken off. The head rests on a tilting helmet, and the feet on a well-sculptured dog with a collar bearing the name—BO, in letters sculptured in bold relief.¹

The lady's face is almost lost in her reticulated head-dress

¹ This may possibly have been the name of the favourite dog. One of the feet of Brian de Stapylton, as represented on his Sepulchral Brass at Ingham, Norfolk, rests on a dog, near which is a scroll inscribed,

JAKKE. A like memorial occurs at Deerhurst, Gloucestershire. The name of the favourite dog of Alicia, wife of Sir John Cassey, is recorded on her tomb at that place as Tirri.

and veil ; her gown is buttoned down to the waist, a mantle over her shoulders is fastened by a band over the breast and reaches to the feet. Her head rests on two pillows, and her feet on two dogs, their heads in opposite directions, and each wearing a collar.

The ends of the tomb are concealed by the columns supporting the arch under which it stands, but the sides are richly sculptured. Each is divided by graduated buttresses into eight lofty niches with trefoiled canopies, crocketed and enriched with pinnacles and finials. The first niche on either side of the tomb contains an armed statuette, and each of the others a male or female figure, probably representing the knight's relations or dependents. The canopies are surmounted by a hollow cornice bearing in relief an armorial shield over each niche. Those on the south side are as follows. (See the account given by Lipscomb).

1. A fess between six cross-crosslets, (Beauchamp). 2. A saltire engrailed, (Tyringham). 3. A bend between six martlets, (? Seyton, almost obliterated) 4. An inescutcheon within an orle of eight martlets, (Erpingham). 5. A cross engrailed, (Drayton). 6. Three crosses fitché, in chief a demi-lion. 7. Three stirrups with leathers, (Scudamore). 8. On a chief a lion passant.

On the north side of the tomb are :—1. Bezanty, a canton ermine, (Zouch). 2. Obliterated. 3. Three stags trippant, (Green). 4. Three arches, (Seyton). 5. Ermine, a chief endented, (Morteyn). 6. A saltire engrailed, (Tyringham). 7. Ermine, on a fess, three crosses potent, (Brisley). 8. A chevron between three escallop shells, (Dyve).

The proper tinctures, which were doubtless shewn, cannot now be discerned. The knight's effigy measures 6 ft. 10 in. in length, the lady's 6 ft. 1 in.

The author of the manuscript History of Clifton supposed, and I think on sufficient grounds, that this tomb was raised to commemorate Sir John Reynes and his first wife, Catherine, daughter and heir of Sir Peter Scudamore, of Wiltshire, by Joan, daughter and heir of Henry Brisley, Esq. Though the arms of Reynes are not on the tomb, they are on the effigy. The arms of Scudamore and Brisley appear on the tomb, though not impaled, and no one of the family of Reynes could with more propriety so use them, as there was no male descendant from this alliance.

After the death of his first wife he was twice married, but the tomb presents no indication of these subsequent alliances, a fact which appears clearly to intimate that it was erected by him before his second marriage.

He was the great grandson of Ralph Reynes above-mentioned, and having succeeded to the family property about A.D. 1394 on the death of his unmarried elder brother, he died A.D. 1428, as recorded on a brass bearing his effigy with an inscription to his memory, and probably lying over the place of his interment.

The tomb was doubtless built after his succession to the manor in A.D. 1394. Allowing therefore as many years as may reasonably be reckoned for his second and third marriages, and for the evident difference between the sculptured effigy on the tomb and that on the brass, we may with great probability fix the date of the tomb at about A.D. 1400. It certainly is a fine specimen, both in design and execution, of that period. It has received rather rough treatment, especially at the sides, where two or three of the small effigies have been literally defaced, but on the whole it is in good preservation. Not many years ago these curious monuments were thickly covered with coatings of whitewash, and the dust and dirt that had long been accumulating about them. Perhaps this caused Lipscomb to consider them as scarcely worthy of notice, for he describes them in the most cursory manner and does not give a single illustration of them, while his History contains numerous representations of other memorials of comparatively slight importance.

Since his account of the parish was published, the Rev. Thomas Evetts, now Incumbent of Prestwold, near Missenden, Bucks, was for a short time curate of Clifton, and while there, he restored, at his own expense, the church, and very carefully removed the crust which disfigured the sepulchral monuments. The oaken effigies may now be examined with advantage, and they will perhaps be found equal to any examples of such memorials in the kingdom.²

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² The representations of the effigies above described have been supplied from the sketches by Mr. Slater, architect, who kindly visited Clifton Reynes for the purpose of preparing drawings.

Sepulchral effigies of oak or chestnut wood, are comparatively rare, but several

examples are described by Gough, Sep. Mon. See also Bloxam's Monum. Archit. p. 142; "Notes and Queries," vol. vii. pp. 528, 607; vol. viii. p. 255; vol. ix. pp. 17, 457. These statues are often found to be hollowed out and charred internally to preserve them from decay.