

Original Documents.

THE ARMOUR AND ARMS BELONGING TO HENRY BOWET, ARCHBISHOP OF YORK, DECEASED IN 1423, FROM THE ROLL OF HIS EXECUTORS' ACCOUNTS.

THE voluminous Roll of Accounts of the executors of Henry Bowet, Archbishop of York in the reigns of Henry IV. and Henry V., comprises a minute Inventory of the valuable effects in every department of his establishment, and shows, in a most striking manner, the princely state with which all the appointments of his household were ordered. This enumeration of costly possessions of every description presents a singular contrast to the humility which marks the expressions of his will, made two years previously to his decease, with the directions that his funeral should be performed with the least possible pomp, consistent with decency.¹ The whole of this remarkable *Computus*, measuring many yards in length, and preserved at York in the Registry of the Dean and Chapter, well deserves to be printed. It is replete with illustrations of manners and customs, of language and local dialect; the curious picture of domestic magnificence which it presents is fully in accordance with the stately order for the "Service to the Baron-bishop within the close of Yorke," preserved by Hearne.²

Much interesting information regarding sacred usages might be gained from the long description of precious objects, under the head *Capella*. An item occurring in this section deserves mention. The executors accounted "pro pare de spectacle de argento, et deaurat," valued at twenty shillings. I am not aware that any earlier occurrence of the term has been noticed. Ducange cites various passages in ancient writers under the word *Berillus*,—*conspicilium*, in French, *besicle*, in which, however, it may be doubtful whether the optical appliances now designated spectacles were intended, or rather some object used in divination and mysterious arts. In the first Latin-English dictionary,—the *Ortus Vocabulorum*, we find the word—"Berillus, speculum presbyteriorum." Horman says, in his curious *Vulgaria*, 1519, "They that be hooke-nosed have this advantage, that theyr spectacles (*conspicilia*) shall not lightly fal fro them." William Bee, clerk and brother of the priory of Mountgrace in Cleveland, bequeathed in 1551 to the Prior of that house "two pare of Spektacles of syluer."—Wills and Inventories, Surtees Soc. Publ., part i., p. 136.

The most curious portion, however, of the document, perhaps, is the inventory of the archiepiscopal Armory, occurring under the head *Garderoba*. Such detailed descriptions are of rare occurrence.

It need not be regarded as surprising that such an assemblage of muni-

¹ It is dated Sept. 9, 1421, and was proved Oct. 26, 1423. Printed by the

Surtees Society, Testam. Ebor. i. 399.
² Leland's Coll. Append. vol. vi. p. 7.

tions of war should have been found in the palace of the deceased prelate. It may be supposed, indeed, that many, if not the whole of the objects here enumerated, and described as *multum debiles*, may have been handed down from the times of his predecessors in the see, since they appear to be of the fashions of a period considerably prior to the reign of Henry IV., when Henry Bowet was translated, in October, 1407, from the see of Bath and Wells to that of York.

The terms relating to armour and arms enumerated in the following extract present points of interest to those who investigate the details of military costume; and a few explanatory notes may not be unacceptable. The first object in the list, a "jake defence," was a military garment, as we are informed by Mr. Hewitt in his useful *Manual of Ancient Armour and Weapons in Europe* (vol. i., p. 131), of four kinds; viz., it was a quilted coat, or it was pourpointed of leather and canvas in many folds, or it was formed of mail, or of small plates like brigandine armour. In the document before us it appears to have been of red camlet, and provided with three gilt straps, by which doubtless it was fastened at the back or side. I have collected numerous particulars in a note on the word—"jakke of defence" (jak of fence, in one MS.), in the *Promptorium Parvulorum*, p. 256, from which the nature of this garment may be understood. Occasionally it had a more costly covering; in 1391, Margery, widow of Sir William de Aldeburgh, bequeaths to her son "unum jak defencionis opertum nigro velveto."—*Testam. Ebor.* vol. i. p. 150.

The articles next enumerated consist of various defences of mail; amongst these may particularly be noticed "qwysschewes," namely *cuisse*s, armour for the thighs; also a "paunce," with other objects described as "de mayle rotundo," of round mail. This appears to designate a distinct peculiarity in the form of the rings of which such defences were composed; the rings may have been occasionally of elliptical or other form. In the *Inventory of the Armour of Louis X., King of France*, in 1316, we find—"uns pans et uns bras de roondes mailles de haute cloïeure: Item uns pans et uns bras d'acier plus fons de mailles rondes de haute cloïeure:—Item une couverture de mailles rondes demy cloées: Item une testiere de haute cloïeure de maille ronde."—See Ducange *Gloss. v. Armatura*. At an earlier period the legs and thighs had been protected wholly by *chausses* of interlaced mail, but, after the use of jacked leather or iron plate for the defence of the knees and shins, *chaussons* or *cuisse*s of mail were still retained for the thighs, which were occasionally encased in cuir bouilli or in metal plate. We find in the document under consideration a pair of "qwysschewes de plate, de antiqua forma;" and, amongst the armour of Roger Mortimer, in 1331, occur three pair "de quisseux de quir boile." *Kal. of the Exch.*, vol. iii., p. 165. These articles were sometimes of gambouised work; the list of armour of Louis X., before cited, includes "un cuissiaux gamboisez." Of this nature, probably, were the defences often seen in sepulchral brasses of the fourteenth century, representing the armour of the thighs as powdered with quatrefoils or small bezanty ornaments.

We find mention of a small "paunce,"³ described as in feeble condition

³ Mr. Hewitt suggests that the "pauncenars," in the *Roll of the Army before Calais* in 1346, were so named from the

armour they wore, the paunce or panzar. *Anc. Armour*, ii. 25.

and valued only at 20*d.* ; it was formed like the hauberk, aventaille, and other armour here enumerated, of round mail. The paunce was doubtless a defence for the abdomen ; called *panziera* by the Italians, *Panzer* by the Germans ;—the armour for the *pancia*, in French, *panse*, the paunch.—See Ducange *v.* Pancerea, Panseria, Panzeria, &c. It was either of mail or of plate. In a French and Latin vocabulary with English glosses, Harl. MS. 229, f. 151, occur—“*Peitryne*, a brestplate. *Pesse de mael*, a paunce.” So also in the Inventory of armour of Sir Simon Burley, beheaded 1388 (MS. in possession of Sir Thomas Phillipps, at Middle Hill) occur—“*j. pancher de mayl covere de drap noir : j. doublet blanc stuffe de un herbergone.*” Edward Duke of York, grandson of Edward III., bequeaths his “*petite cote de maille ; le piece de plate que Mons’ seignour le Prince ma donna apelle brest-plate ; le pance qe fuist a mon seignour mon piere, qe Dieu assoill.*” Nichols’ Royal Wills, p. 221. This piece of armour, when formed of polished steel, was probably the “*paunce de alwite*” (white or bright⁴) mentioned amongst the “*armature de optimo*” belonging to William Bowes, a merchant of York, 1439.—Coll. Top., vol. ii., p. 150. In a curious alliterative Poem, for which we are indebted to the editorial care of Sir Frederick Madden, Syr Gawayn, written about the time of Richard II., the following description occurs of the knight equipping himself for the fight,—

“*Fyrst he clad hym in his clothez the colde for to were,
And sythen his other harnays that holdely watz keped,
Bothe his paunce and his platez piked ful clene,
The rynges rokked of the roust of his riche bruny.*”—*v.* 2015.

Amongst the armour in the roll of Archbishop Bowet’s effects we find three ventayles, or *aventailles*, which in this instance were of round mail ; they are described as *pro gall*, possibly, as has been suggested, implying *pro galea*, or *galeis*, for the helm. I am not aware that evidence has previously been found of the use of mail for any of these appendages serving for the protection of the face. A “*bordoure*” jagged with latten, or brass, may have been a variety of the camail, or of the collar called at a later period a standard of mail, the margin of which was frequently vandyked with a fringe of rings of yellow metal, forming an ornamental contrast to the steel. A specimen thus decorated, found in London, is figured by Mr. Roach Smith in the Catalogue of his Collection of Antiquities now in the British Museum ; see p. 150. The term “*bordour*” occurs, Romance of Gologros and Gawane, *v.* 938, 977.

The item which follows relates to a pair of “*schynbaldes, alias vamplattes, pro tebiis virorum,*” namely, defences for the legs, below the knee, greaves or “*jambeux*,” possibly as designated by Chaucer ; some, however, have made a distinction between greaves covering the front of the leg (thence, it may be supposed, here called vamplates), and defences of the whole leg, properly called “*peires de jammers.*” In the Indenture relating to stores in Dover Castle, 35 Edw. III., 1361, we find, with body-armour of mail and plate, gauntlets, &c., “*j. brustplate pour justes, deux avant-plates,*” &c.—Arch. Journ., vol. xi., p. 384. “*Schynbalde*” is a term of rare occurrence, which I have found only in the Awntyrs of Arthure, xxxi., 5, where it is written “*schynbawdes,*” printed by Pinkerton “*schynbandes ;*” and also in the alliterative Morte Arthure, where the effects of a

⁴ So in the Tourney Book of René d’Anjou,—“*harnoyz blanc.*”

wound are described, by which the blood, running down on the knight's shank, "schewed one his schwnbawde that was schire burneste."—See Sir F. Madden's Glossary, Syr Gawayn, *in v.*

We may next notice a "*pectorale*, alias brestplate, in ij. partibus, cum ij. wynghes," with buckles and pendants, and "barres" of silver gilt, namely the transverse metal ornaments of a strap or belt, sometimes richly chased, and through which the tongue of the buckle usually passed. We are scarcely justified in the conjecture that the "wynghes" may have been of the nature of those singular appendages designated *ailettes*, attached by laces to the shoulders, a fashion of a much earlier period, introduced towards the close of the thirteenth century, and much in vogue during the reign of Edward III.⁵ It may, however, deserve notice, if the possibility that ailettes are intended can be admitted, that the armour described in the curious Inventory before us is, for the most part, such as had been in use long before the date of the document (A.D. 1421). The pair of plates, of which mention is made by Chaucer, had come into use about 1350; the term continued long in use to designate body-armour composed of two portions, breast and back; and, although the defence described in the inventory may seem limited to the former, yet the expression "*in ij. partibus*" suggests the probability that it was a pair of plates in the usual sense of the term.⁶ The wings may have been ornamental roundels or epaulettes, which succeeded the ailettes and occur in a great variety of forms during the latter part of the fourteenth century. The item following gives us the rest of the defences for the arm, namely, the vambraces, for the fore-arm, and the rerebraces, extending from the elbow to the shoulder.

The palet is comparatively of rare occurrence in lists of the numerous defences for the head used during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. I have cited, in my notes in the Promptorium Parvulorum, p. 378, the principal instances of the use of this term by mediæval writers, and in inventories, &c. In that curious Dictionary it occurs thus:—"Palet, armowre for the heed; *Pelliris, Galerius*." It was properly a head-piece of leather or cuir-bouilli, and thence its name was doubtless derived;—"galea ex coreo et pelle," as *pelliris* is explained in the Catholicon. The term, however, was occasionally extended to analogous defences formed of metal.⁷ In the present instance we find the palet described as "closs' cum j. umberelle," and a good bordure of mail. The latter has been already noticed; from the term close (*clauso*), it may be supposed that this headpiece was so formed as to protect the face, whilst it was provided with an "umberelle," which may have been a projecting brim, such as is seen in one of the figures on the brass of Sir John de Hastings at Elsing, Norfolk, 1347.⁸ In the Dover Inventory in 1361, however, Archæol. Journal, vol. xi. p. 384, bacinets occurred "ove umbres," probably visors. In the Promptorium Parvulorum, p. 375, we find—"Owmbrer of bacenet; *Umbraculum*;" and, in Palsgrave's "Eclaircissement de la Langue

⁵ See Mr. Hewitt's detailed notices of ailettes, Armour and Weapons in Europe, vol. i. p. 245; vol. ii. p. 175. The latest examples occur about 1330.

⁶ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 119. The pectoral in two parts may doubtless have been a

breast with the addition of a placcate overlying it.

⁷ Ibid. vol. ii. 222.

⁸ Cotman's Sep. Brasses, vol. i. pl. i. See notices of the wide-rimmed head-piece, Hewitt's Armour, vol. ii. p. 213.

Frangoyse," 1530, "Umbrell of an heed pece, *visière*." I have thought the term, comparatively of rare occurrence, deserving of notice, especially as it is not clear in what respect the umber and umberelle differed from the visor. In the relation given by Stowe of the combat before Henry VI., in 1442, between John de Astley and a knight of Aragon, it is said that the latter struck his adversary on his bacinet, "brast up his umbar three times," and would fain have smitten him in the face with his dagger. In the narrative of this affair in Stowe's Survey of London this word is printed erroneously "uniber."

A pair of gauntlets is described in the next item, of ancient fashion, and with brass knuckles (*condolis de latone*). Examples are not wanting of representations of gauntlets thus ornamented in monumental portraitures, such as the effigy of John de Montacute in Salisbury Cathedral; he died in 1388.⁹ In a *Computus* of the Treasurer of the Dauphin, in 1333, a payment occurs for "guantis lattunatis;"—for a pair "de caligis de latono," &c. These may, however, have been gauntlets wholly of brass, such as those still suspended over the tomb of the Black Prince in Canterbury Cathedral.

In the Inventory of munitions at Dover Castle, in 1344, we noticed formerly the item—"j. barelle pro armaturis rollandis" (Arch. Journ. vol. xi. pp. 382, 386), and pointed out some other evidences of the practice of cleaning mail-armour by rolling it in a barrel, probably with sand. Here we find 20 d. "pro j. barelle cum suis pertinentiis ad purgandas loricas et alia arma de mayle." In the passage from Syr Gawayn above cited the hauberk is said to have been cleaned of rust by being "rokked." Froissart, in 1372, describes the soldiers hastening to furbish their armour, "à rouler leurs cottes de fer." So again we find, amongst effects at Winchester College after the death of Warden Thurnberne, 4 Hen. V., "j. barelle pro loriceis purgandis." In the Howard Household Book a payment of 9d. is found, in 1467, "to an Armerer at Pawles Cheyne for an harneys barelle." (Domestic Expen. in Eng. p. 416.) A notice of such a process occurs as late as 1603, in the Inventory of the Armory at Hengrave—"Item, one barrel to make clean the shirt of maile and gorgetts," a single shirt of mail being found there, and 22 gorgets. The leathern sacks mentioned in the roll of Ministers' Accounts, 23 and 24 Edw. I. (Duchy of Lanc.), were possibly for a like purpose. The entry is as follows—"in xx. s. xj. d. in duobus saccis de coreo pro armatura Comitiss."

Mr. Burt, in his interesting notices of the first use of guns and gunpowder in the English army, during the campaign of Edward III. in which the memorable battle of Cressy was fought, A.D. 1346, has lately brought before us certain entries relating to the stocks for guns at that early period;—the *telar* or tiller, to which the tube termed a "gonne" was affixed. (See pp. 71, 72, note, *ante*.) Amongst the warlike munitions in the *Garderoba* of Archbishop Bowet we here find, with old lances and battle-axes, two "stokgunnes de ferro," much decayed, valued at 13s. 4d. These may have been some of the earliest hand-guns known in the northern counties.

It is remarkable that in the curious list of ancient warlike appliances to which I have been desirous to invite attention, as a sample of the evidences of this description preserved in the Treasury at York, we find

⁹ Stothard's Monumental Effigies.

chiefly objects of a much earlier period than the date of the document, and described also as *veteres, maxime, or multum debiles, or de antiqua forma*. They include items which those who are versed in military costume might be disposed to ascribe to times a century previous to the decease of the Archbishop, and to be regarded possibly as the ancient munitions of the stately archiepiscopal palace at Cawood Castle, of that at Bishopthorpe, or of the magnificent residence formerly existing in the Cathedral Close at York.

Archbishop Bowet died at Cawood, Oct. 20, 1423; his will, dated Sept. 9, 1421, and proved Oct. 26, 1423, has been published for the Surtees Society in the *Testamenta Eboracensia*, Part I., p. 398, under the editorial care of the late Rev. James Raine. The executors, constituted by his will, were Henry Bowet, Archdeacon of Richmond, Thomas Wyot, *succentor* of the church of York, Henry Soulby and Robert Penreth, *domicelli*, probably domestic attendants in the household of the deceased prelate.¹ The Archbishop's Register is preserved at York; his tomb, with its lofty, graceful canopy, may be seen in the Minster near the east end; this remarkable example of its period has been figured in Britton's *History of the Cathedral*, Pl. xxvi. Our readers need not be reminded of the valuable services rendered by my lamented friend, the historian of Durham, to the cause of archæology and topography in the North; the completion of purposes long cherished by him has fallen into the hands of a son worthy to succeed such a father. Mr. Raine, now resident at York, and by whom the Fabric Rolls of the Minster have recently been edited for the Surtees Society, has in preparation detailed memoirs of the prelates and dignitaries of that see, from the rich store of evidence there preserved in the Treasury. In his forthcoming work I hope that the valuable illustrations of ancient manners to be derived from documents of the class to which it has been my object, in the following short extract, to invite attention, will be brought as they deserve under the notice of those who study our national history and antiquities.

ALBERT WAY.

EXTRACT FROM THE COMPUTUS ROLL OF THE EXECUTORS OF HENRY BOWET,
ARCHBISHOP OF YORK, DECEASED OCT. 20, 1423.

GARDEROBA.

Respondent executores—de xx. s. receptis pro j. jake deffence de chamlet rubeo, cum iij. legulis deauratis. Et de iij. s. iiij. d. receptis pro uno pare de qwysschewes de mayle rotund' pro defencione crurum. Et de iij. s. iiij. d. receptis pro una lorica debili de mayle rotund'. Et de vj. s. viij. d. receptis pro una lorica vetere de mayle rotund'. Et de xx. d. receptis pro uno parvo paunce, maxime debili, de mayle rotund'. Et de xx. d. pro uno parvo ventayle vetere de mayle rotund'. Et de ij. d. receptis pro uno ventayle vetere pro gall' de mayle rotund'. Et de vj. d. receptis pro uno ventayle vetere et valde debuli (*sic*) pro gall' de mayle rotund'. Et de vj. d. receptis pro altere ventayle vetere et multum debili pro gall' de mayle rotund'. Et de vj. d. receptis pro uno bordoure de mayle rotund' jaggyde cum latone pro gall'. Et de ij. s. receptis pro uno pare de schynbaldes al' vamplattes, pro tebiis (*sic*) virorum. Et de iij. s. iiij. d.

¹ See Ducange, *in v.*

receptis pro uno pare de qwysscbewes de plate, de antiqua forma. Et de xvj. s. receptis pro uno pectorali alias brestplate in ij. partibus, cum ij. wynghes, cum iij. bokeles, et quinque pendandes cum x. barres de argento et deaurat'. Et de iij. s. iiij. d. receptis pro uno pare de vambrace et rerebrace, in quatuor peciis. Et de xij. s. iiij. d. receptis pro uno palet closs' cum j. umberelle, cum ij. bono bordoure de mayle. Et de ij. s. receptis pro uno pare cirothecarum cum condolis de latone, de antiqua forma. Et de lxxiiij. s. receptis pro omnibus aliis armis existentibus in garderoba, simul sic appreciatis. Et de xx. d. receptis pro j. barelle cum suis pertinentiis, ad purgandas loricas et alia arma de mayle. Et de xx. d. receptis pro una cista vetere in qua ponuntur omnia arma predicta custodiendum. Et de x. s. receptis pro viij. lanciis veteribus, cum sex capitibus de antiqua forma, et ij. schaftet'² pro baner' et pensil.³ Et de xij. s. iiij. d. receptis pro ij. stokgunnes de ferro multum debilibus. Et de ij. s. iiij. d. receptis pro quatuor batelle axe multum debilibus.

² The contraction should probably be read schaftetes, or schaftetis. A question might occur whether this word signifies shafts, or shaft-heads with some contrivance for the attachment of the banner and penoncel. As, however, of the eight lances enumerated six appear to have

had heads of the old fashion, it appears probable that the term in question describes the heads of the remaining pair.

³ This word is somewhat indistinct in the MS. Roll.