THE PASGUARD, GARDE DE COU, BRECH-RAND STOSS-KRAGEN OR RANDT, AND THE VOLANT PIECE.

By THE HON. HAROLD DILLON, F.S.A.

Such are the names given in the English, French and German works on armour to the erect guards on the shoulders of suits, as seen in original examples and as found in monumental effigies, brasses and other representations in pictures and illuminated manuscripts. Whatever may be said of the French and German terms for these defences, the English word *pasguard* is certainly misapplied when referring to them.

When this erroneous nomenclature first obtained, it is difficult to say; but as late as 1697 there were some who still knew what the word really referred to. In the Tower Inventory of that year, the fine suit of tilting armour (No. $\frac{9}{11}$ of the present collection) was described as "One Armour cap-a-pe Engraven with a Ragged Staffe, made for ye Earle of Leisester, a Mainfere, Passguard and Maineguard and Gantlett." The Mainfere and Gantlett are of course the defences of the left and right hands, the Mainfere as explained by the late Albert Way being the main de fer or bridle gauntlet. The Maineguarde we may reasonably suppose to be the large detached piece of armour engraved like the suit, with the Ragged Staff, and covering the front of the upper part of the body. This piece as will be seen on examination fitted closely over the upper part of the cuirass and the left shoulder, and a small attached piece, further defended part of the left arm. The whole was kept in position, by the upper part fitting tightly round the front of the helmet, a pin on the right side of the latter passing through the Mainguard; and below, a staple projecting from the tapul or ridge of the breastplate passed through this extra defence and would

be secured by a linch pin. At some period the slot for this staple (in the breastplate) has been filled up but its former existence is still clearly defined. A strap with a metal tag was also attached to the small plate, and the tag which was pierced with an eye, fitted over a pin projecting from the left side of the cuirass. The upper part of this Mainguard which, conformed as before noted, to the contour of the neck and lower part of the helmet, was actually a separate piece of metal and only rivetted to the main portion. This upper part has been (we conceive) wrongly termed the *volante piece* but was really only a part of the Mainguard. Having thus disposed of three of the pieces mentioned in the 1697 Inventory we may take the Passguard to refer to the other loose piece now seen with the suit. This portion of the panoply is also engraved with the Ragged Staff and is undoubtedly of the suit.

In shape it is irregular, and in Meyrick and Skelton's fine work a similar piece is engraved at fig. 5, plates vii and viii.

It has a hole in it, for passing over a pin on the left elbow piece, to which it would be thus fixed by a linch pin.

Its purpose was to afford additional protection to the left arm at the elbow joint between the top of the Mainfere and the lower part of the Grandguard or Mainguard.

To return to the so-called Pasguard; in this suit neither of the upright plates springing from the shoulders, is now left. That there were two originally, may be seen if we examine the means by which they were attached to the pauldron. It will then be observed that the upright plate had its lower edge bent so as to form an angle; and in the bent portion were three holes which passed over pins standing out of the pauldron. These pins also have gone, and the holes for them on the ridge of the shoulder have been filled up. Small hooks acting as linch pins, probably secured the upright plates on these pins, as may be seen in the one plate still remaining on the left shoulder of figure No. $\frac{2}{10}$ of the Tower collection. For further proof of the former existence of these plates on this suit, we have only to look at the sketch by Zucchero for a portrait of the Earl of Leicester, who is represented in

this very suit.[1] The Grandguard is seen on the ground behind him, and on each shoulder are shown the so-called Pasguards.

It may now be interesting, having shown what the so-called Pasguards were not, to examine what these defences were, and to endeavour to trace their use in armour in England.

Their object was clearly to protect the neck from blows of sword or lance directed from the side. Some have imagined that the Ailettes of the 14th century were for this same purpose, but if so it is curious that they should have disappeared from the scene, after the comparatively short period during which they are represented or mentioned.

The earliest instance of the upstanding plate on the shoulder that we have yet met with, is in the Bedford Missal. This magnificent MS. was executed about 1424. Three of the illuminations are figured in outline in Gough's description of the MS. 1794. In one of these is seen a king, standing in a room and being armed by his attendants. The king who is in full armour except as regards his head, on which is a crown, has on his right shoulder a series of three plates or lames, the upper one of which is bent upwards so as to form a standing ridge. The left pauldron is composed of two plates only, but the upper one is very large and this also has its upper part bent so as to form a similar ridge.

The Manuscript having been executed in France, this may have been a foreign fashion only, and indeed the two next instances in point of date are, in one case certainly, if not in both, subject to the same observation.

In the National Gallery there is a beautiful little picture of St. Anthony and George, painted by Pisano in 1438.

St. George, who stands in full armour, except a large straw hat which he wears in place of a helmet, has on his shoulders the very large shoulder pieces which appear to have been in fashion in Italy at that date. His back is turned to the spectator, but one can see the standing-plate on the left shoulder. Its upper edge is bent over so as nearly to reach the plate of the pauldron itself.

[1] The sketch which is now in the British Museum had been engraved in black and red. the original colours, in Rogers' *Imitations of Drawings.*

The next example in point of date is the latten effigy of Richard Earl of Warwick. This exquisite figure so often of the greatest use for the solution of questions of detail, affords good instances of the upright guards. As figured by Stothard and Blore, one can see not only the front, but the back and side views of these additions to the shoulder defences.

The left pauldron also gives indications of the fashion which later on became a decided feature of this part of the suit. This is a point on the very slope of the shoulder, and we see it strongly marked in the brasses of Stapleton 1466, Curson 1471, and Sir H. Grey 1492. In the brasses of Sherbourne 1458 and Dengayn c. 1460, we find the upright guards and also a second ridge on the shoulder, while the Quatremain brass of about 1460 has a series of ridges on the large left pauldron. A similar treatment of the left pauldron is seen in the brass of Sir Thos. Peyton (1508) and several others.

Standing plates with invected edges, on both shoulders are seen in the Parice brass c. 1460, and double ridges on the left shoulder only, are observable in the brass of le Strange 1478 and that of W. Berdwell 1508.

In the portraits now at the Pinacothek of the brothers Baumgartner c. 1512, figured by Hefner, both these warriors wear shoulder pieces with erect guards. In the splendid engraved suit of Henry VIII No. $\frac{2}{6}$ of the Tower Collection the two guards vary in size and shape. That for the sword arm, as one would expect is much smaller than the one on the left shoulder, which is high enough to reach to the level of the ear and instead of being a simple curved upright plate, is in three planes.

The guards on the fluted suit No. $\frac{2}{3}$ of which one only now remains, were like the later examples on the Leicester figure and No. $\frac{2}{10}$, fixed by pin and staple to the pauldron and so could be removed at pleasure.

When the Salade and beaver were worn, one might well wish for a further and more complete defence for the side of the neck, but with the Armet, and the Burgonet and Buffe, it seems hardly necessary to add to the protection afforded by these close fitting headpieces. There is no doubt however that the upright guards were invented and used to meet some special requirement; for the extreme

reasonableness of each portion of the warlike panoply (until exaggerated by individuals) is one of the distinguishing and most worthy points of the armourer's art.

THE VOLANT PIECE.

Meyrick and most other writers on Armour have spoken of this piece, as an additional protection for the lower part of the head of a jouster, but rivetted or otherwise made fast to the upper part of the Grandguard. Such defences are seen in many collections and besides detached examples in the Tower Armoury, that belonging to the Leicester suit No. $\frac{2}{11}$ may be mentioned as a fine specimen of this portion of the panoply of the knight in the Tilt Yard.

That it had some special name there is little reason to doubt, but we are inclined to think that *Volante Piece* was not its proper designation. We do not propose to enquire here what that name was, but to offer some suggestions as to what the Volante piece really was. The term belongs to the 16th century and is used by Hall in his interesting account of the accident, so nearly fatal, which befel Henry VIII in 1524.

It will be remembered that on that occasion Henry who was jousting with his friend and brother-in-law Charles Brandon Duke of Suffolk, started on his course "the viser of his headpece beyng up and not doune nor fastened, so that his face was clene naked," Brandon, who was not only short-sighted but unable from the fashion of his headpiece, to see the king, also started and, to the great dismay of the beholders, who perceived the state of the king, but too late to prevent the encounter, "strake the kyng on the brow right under the defence of the hedpece on the verye coyffe scull or bassenet pece, whereunto the barbet for power and defence is charneld, to whiche coyffe or bassenet never armour taketh hede, for it is evermore covered with the viser, barbet and volant pece, and so that pece is so defended that it forseth of no charge."

We here have the Volant piece, Barbet and Viser mentioned as the front portions of the helmet. The Barbet is the piece protecting the chin and lower part of the face and like the viser, it is "charneld" or hinged to the Coyffe or bassenet piece which includes the main

portion of the helmet. The Viser is of course evident, but what is the Volant piece? The name implies a moveable portion, and referring to Baron de Cosson's valuable Catalogue of Helmets in vol. xxxvii of this *Journal* we find on page 51 something which complies with this condition. Speaking of the Salade for the jouste, we are told that some examples have on the front portion, two plates corresponding in contour to the exterior of the Salade, and resting on or in some cases behind a slight ridge on the Salade. These plates are retained in position by a bar with forked extremity, which fastened to the upper part of the Salade, holds the two plates by this forked end, against the Salade. A smart blow from the opponent's lance would displace the bar, and the plates being liberated would fall or fly off. Here we have the idea of "volant." But the main object of these plates was to add to the protection of the brow. In the Musée d'Artillerie, Paris, there is a Salade of this kind, figured at p. 404, Vol. II of Viollet le Duc's *Dictionnaire du mobilier*. At the Tower, the suit No. 2, supposed to have been purchased in Spain, and worn at the Eglinton Tournament in 1839 by the late Marquis of Waterford, has these two plates. But this suit is a modern forgery, and one of the most glaring proofs of its falseness consists in the position of these plates which have been *rivetted* to the Salade, and fixed in a way that could never have been the custom. In fact they are sometimes described as wings. The Armet of figure No. $\frac{2}{6}$ however has an additional reinforcing plate over the brow. A similar piece is also seen in the Armet No. 30 at Paris and figured in Viollet le Duc's work at Vol. V., pl. I. This reinforcing plate answers the purpose of strengthening the brow of the helmet, and though not detachable like the plates on the Salade, by a blow from a lance, it is not rivetted to the "bassenet pece" but is removable just as the Visor is.

Von Leber at page 112 of his *Wien's Kaiserliches Zeughaus* mentions that this extra brow piece *Stirndoppelstuck* is not uncommon or of very great antiquity. He mentions four other helmets at Vienna as having such a piece.

In the suit No. $\frac{2}{6}$ at the Tower the absence of ornament on the part of the helmet under this piece (the whole of

the rest of the helmet and suit being engraved) points to its being always worn on the helmet. It has a stout rib on its lower edge which coincides with the brow of the main portion of the armet, and conforms to the ridge of the armet terminating at the sides in invected outlines with trefoiled finials between the curves. It is retained in position by the pivots of the Visor which pass through it and the Armet itself on each side.

When Henry VII created his son Henry, Prince of Wales, at the Pas d'armes, at Westminster, the challenger was to come "in harness for the tilt," without targe or brochette, woolant piece over the head, rondall over the garde, reste of advantage, fraude, deceit or other malengine." We may then suppose that the term does apply to something over the head, and not the fixed piece which forms a part of the Grandguard. That piece in modern French works is called the Haute piece, and such may be a fair term for it, but Volant cannot be applied.

It would be very desirable to ascertain the earliest occurrence of the different terms as now used for armour, and we should then avoid much of the confusion which is caused by giving names to things, which when they were in use were never known by them.

THE PASGUARD.

Additional Note, by the Hon. H. A. DILLON, F.S.A. (*see* p. 129).

In writing of the incorrect use of the word pasguard, for the upright plates on the shoulder-pieces of fifteenth and sixteenth century suits, I omitted what seems to be a stronger argument than any there used against the use of that term. It is pretty certain that in no representation of any kind do we see these upright plates with linings, nor are there any traces on existing specimens of rivet holes for the attachment of the strips of leather to which linings could be fastened. Neither could there be any use in lining or padding such portions of the armour. But we know that linings of padded or quilted materials were used with many pieces of the suit, in order to protect the body and limbs of the wearer from the effect of a blow on the surface of the hard metal. In the list of payments in connection with the jousts held Oct. 20, 1519, there is one for "9 yards of Cheshire cotton at 7d. for lining the king's pasguard, grand garde, great mayn de fer &c." In 1521 there is again a charge for two yards of yellow satin at 7s. 4d., for lining two head-pieces, two pair of tasses, a pasguard and two maynd fers. In March, 1522, four pounds of fine caddis wool were bought for lining three head-pieces, three collars, two pasguards, one main de fer, and three gauntlets, and three yards of crimson satin at 9s. were bought on the same occasion for lining a head-piece, a pasguard, and a main de fer and two gauntlets.

Here we have the materials for the padding of portions of armour, all of which would be in contact with the head or limbs of the king. The wool would require to be quilted in order to keep it evenly distributed over the inside surface of the armour, and we see in the MS. of Meliadus in the British Museum instances of this arrangement on the inside of shields, or, at least, that part of them which would press on the arm. The handsome targets and roundels of the sixteenth century are continually described in inventories as lined and fringed, and some still exist with their linings. Of course with the highly ornamented armour of the sixteenth century the lining of some parts, such as the pouldrons, served also as a protection from chafing for the parts of the suit over which the pouldrons would continually rub with every movement of the arm. All this was reasonable and useful, but the upright shoulder plates, the so-called pasguards, could have no such cause for being lined or padded.