

## THE MONUMENTAL BRASSES OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE.<sup>1</sup>

By CECIL T. DAVIS.

I have very much pleasure in bringing to the notice of this Society, rubbings of most, if not all, of those ancient Memorial Brasses on which are engraven representations of men, women, or children, and are now existing in Gloucestershire. Rubbings, I take it, possess two very decided charms:—the ease with which they may be made—and their absolute fidelity to the originals whence they are derived, assuming that they are properly rubbed. The actual cost of the rubbings is trifling,—if we except the expense entailed in reaching places so widely scattered as are many of the churches which possess these brasses,—and the *modus operandi* is simple in the extreme. No one doubts the great importance, interest, and value of Monumental Brasses, and I think the remarks of the Rev. W. E. Hadow, Vicar of South Cerney, are very apt:—

“I cannot,” he says, “refrain from pressing the search after the information which these monuments of mediæval art confer, not only upon archæologists, but upon every one who would desire to attain a thorough knowledge of history. The result is well worthy of the trouble, care, and labour involved; for monumental brasses, with comparatively few exceptions, present the only existing portraits we possess of the heroes of ages famed for chivalry and arms, also of worthies no less distinguished though in more peaceful pursuits. Monumental brasses are extremely valuable; the herald, the genealogist, the chronologist, the architect, the artist, the palæographer, and the general antiquary will each and all find much to

<sup>1</sup> Read in the Antiquarian Section at the Annual Meeting of the Institute, at Gloucester, August 16th, 1890.

interest and instruct them in their several branches of knowledge; and they furnish us, not only with well-defined ideas of celebrated persons, but make us acquainted with the manners and customs of their times; while to history they give a body and a substance, by placing before us those things which language, with all its power, is deficient in describing."

It seems a long time to hark back to the contents of a paper which I had the pleasure of reading before the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archæological Society on the 12th April, 1882, wherein a promise was made—as far as the limited time and opportunity at my disposal would allow—to gather, collate, and issue a detailed account of the Monumental Brasses which enrich the many interesting churches in this most interesting county.

Only in the month of June this year have I succeeded in completing my descriptions.<sup>1</sup>

It may here be as well to state that I have described those ancient Memorial Brasses alone on which are engraved representations of men, women, and children, with or without accessories, and that mere inscriptions have been omitted.

Many of you are aware that the Monumental Brasses of Gloucestershire are eighty-three in number, and are to be found in forty-three churches and one grammar school (Bristol), and, as not infrequently is the case, are irregularly, though widely distributed, the richest spots being Cirencester, Northleach, and Chipping Campden. Now let us note these were the homes of the woolstaplers, who exchanged the famous Cotteswold wool for the hardly less famed "*latten*" plate of Flanders.

Scattered over Gloucestershire from Clifford Chambers in the north to Bristol in the south, from Micheldean in the west to Lechlade in the east, are these memorials. They may be divided into four great divisions:—Ecclesiastical, Military, Judicial, and Civil. But sad to say that, either through neglect or wanton mischief, or downright theft, brasses to a large number have been lost, mutilated or destroyed.

I. *Ecclesiastical*.—Of these six priests remain, and Dame Alice, eldest daughter of John Hampton and Elyn his

<sup>1</sup> The descriptions appeared in the columns of the *Gloucester Journal*.

wife (c. 1510) is habited as a nun. In the cathedrals at Gloucester and Bristol are no bishops nor abbots in garments rich and rare, such as may be found in other cities—though formerly there was at least one in Gloucester Cathedral, but it has disappeared.

The earliest is c. 1460, at Temple Church, Bristol, and represents a priest in processional garments: it is remarkable for being palimpsest. Manning (1848) records that this effigy was loose in the vicarage kitchen.

A priest, c. 1520, at Dowdeswell is similarly attired, with the addition of an almuce or amess. His cope is richly diapered with *fleurs-de-lis*, and on the morse is engraved a *rose en soleil*.

Robert Lond, 1461, St. Peter's, Bristol, and Ralph Parsons, 1478, Cirencester, are wearing the eucharistic vestments and have the chalice and host in their hands.

At Cirencester is a priest (c. 1480) in a cassock: as this is a rarity it is worthy of a more detailed description. The cassock was generally worn as an under-garment, but here the priest is represented in it as his ordinary dress. The cassock was of various colours, and often red. His reaches to the ground, fits tightly to the neck, where it seems to be buckled: the sleeves are close, revealing the tight sleeves of an under-dress at the wrists. His cassock is fastened down the front, with buttons or hooks, not like the modern cassocks, which have a long row of buttons from top to bottom: again, the cassock is not confined by a cincture, and the lower portion is open and turned back in a fashion similar to the gowns of civilians of the period, or the uniform coat tails of a Georgian private, but it is not lined with fur. At Cardynham, Cornwall, is a brass commemorating Thomas Awmarle, rector, *circa* 1400. He is represented with the tonsure, and is vested in a cassock with his anelace by his side, and it is worth while to compare the two cassocks. The one at Cirencester is of the plainest description and no fastening is shown, whilst the skirt of Awmarle's cassock is fastened by pairs of buttons. For these particulars about the Cardynham brass I am indebted to Mr. E. H. W. Dunkin.

William Lawnder, c. 1530, Northleach, is vested in hood, surplice, and cassock.

Alice, the eldest daughter of John and Elyn Hampton, is dressed as a nun. She wears the veil head-dress, a cape over her shoulders, a mantle open in front revealing her gown with tight sleeves, and girt by a loose hip girdle, from which hangs in front a rosary of fourteen beads. Fosbrooke (*Gloucestershire*, i., 375) records that "In Amberley is a large tract of common given to poor housekeepers by the supposed benefaction of Alice Hampton, daughter of John Hampton," and, according to Bigland, "her Will or Deed of Gift is said to be preserved among the Tower Records." "The monastery of Syon was founded by Henry V. in 1414. It was established according to the modified order of St. Saviour and St. Bridget. As the monastery had the manor of Minchinhampton granted it by its founder, it is most probable that Dame Alice Hampton was a member of that society." *Haines*, i., lxxxviii.

II. *Military*.—Fifteen rubbings may be classed under this heading, the earliest being Thomas, fourth Lord Berkeley, 1392, Wotton-under-Edge. This is noteworthy for its collar of mermaids. Mrs. Palliser suggests that the mermaid denoted his maritime jurisdiction. In 5 Henry IV. Thomas was made admiral of the king's fleet. He burnt fifteen sail of French ships in Milford Haven and took the seneschal of France and eight officers of note prisoners. But the seal of Thomas, third Lord Berkeley, has for supporters two mermaids. Sir Morys Russel, 1401, Dyrham, wears armour very similar to that worn by Thomas, fourth Lord Berkeley.

Richard Dixon, 1438, Cirencester, is well known and often cited as a good example of a warrior clothed in the characteristic armour of the fifteenth century. Richard Dixon must have presented a most dazzling appearance when clad in his harness of burnished steel, and especially so when it reflected the bright beams of the sun. In fact, the gallant gentlemen of this period were not a little proud of the glittering splendour of their polished armour.

At Newland, is also a figure in plate armour, c. 1445; his beard is full and his head rests on a helmet of which the vizor is raised. Unfortunately the inscription has, like his legs, disappeared. Of the crest more anon.

William Prelatte, 1462, Cirencester, is a good specimen

for exhibiting the change made in the armour during the twenty-five years which had elapsed since the time of Richard Dixon. The tabard covers nearly all of the kneeling effigy of Philip Mede, 1475, St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol.

John Tame, 1500, Fairford, is well known in connection with the famous church at Fairford. In the same church are two memorials to his son, Sir Edmond Tame, 1534. It is now the only instance in this county of two brasses to the same person in the same church. His armour is covered by a tabard on which are emblazoned his arms.

At Olveston is Morys Denys and Sir Walter his son, 1505; they wear tabards, but not spurs.

Roger Porter, 1523, Newent, is in the armour of the period.

At Weston-upon-Avon are the brasses of Sir John Greville, 1546, and Sir Edward Greville, 1559, both in armour and wearing tabards.

Hercules Raynsford, 1583, Clifford Chambers, may be described more at length. He is bare-headed, his hair is cut short, and his head rests on his helmet. His moustache and beard are of moderate length. Around his neck and wrists are slight frills. A gorget of plate reaches to the chin, the paldrons have their upright edges scroll-shaped, brassarts of plate, with plain coudières, protect the arms, and a cuirass covers the body. At this period civilians wore trunk-hose; this was also adopted by the men in armour, so we may notice that the skirt of mail (*vide* Sir John Greville's brass at Weston-upon-Avon) has disappeared, and in its stead Hercules Raynsford is wearing trunk-hose. These were large breeches well padded, puffed, and slashed. As the stuffing was not of sufficient firmness to protect the thigh, to the projecting rim of the breastplate or cuirass were hinged *tassets*, which somewhat filled the functions of the tuiles so conspicuous in earlier armour. These tassets consisted of a series of small plates rivetted together, and may be considered to be the last remnant of the skirt of taces. In this example the plates of the tassets are of a rectangular form. Steel armour encases the remainder of the legs.

At Minety is Nicholas Poulett, c. 1620, whose armour calls for no comment.

III. *Judicial*.—In this county are some interesting examples of judicial costume. Sir John Cassy, 1400, Deerhurst, Sir John Juyn or Inyn, 1439, St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, Sir William Greville, 1513, Cheltenham, and John Brook, 1522, also at St. Mary Redcliffe, shew the costume well, except that Sir Wm. Greville's brass is so badly worn that the incised lines are hardly discernible.

John Edward, 1461, Rodmarton, is termed "*in lege peritus*," and, in addition to the ordinary civilian attire of the time, he wears a small cap, which Gough notes as like that of the "*Président au Mortier*."

IV. *Civilian*.—As may be expected the majority of the brasses commemorate civilians, and many of them connected with the staple of the county, the far-famed Cotteswold wool. The series ranges over a period lasting from 1396 to 1636, and the ordinary costume of the well-to-do man of the day is well depicted. Noteworthy among them is "*Wilelmus Greuel de Campdene flos mercatorum lanarum tocius Anglie*," whose memorial is worthy of a place of honour. He is the ancestor of the well-known family of the Earls of Warwick. John Fortey, 1458, Northleach, deserves note: here it may be added that some years ago a hole was wantonly knocked through the figure near the right wrist in order to fix a stove!

Time will not allow of a lengthened description of these effigies. Moreover we see from such a collection as this that "fashion has its day"; at one time the gentleman wears ruffs so huge as nearly to conceal his head, at another he is wholly destitute of any covering for his neck. At one time he is so closely shaven that not a vestige of hair is visible on his face, and his hair is closely cropped all over his head; at another, his beard, whiskers, and moustache are full and dense, and the hair of his head reaches his shoulders. Sometimes the shoes are a quarter of a yard longer than his feet; and one might go on indefinitely pointing out the vagaries of fashion to which men, not devoid of intelligence, have submitted; in fact, the changes in man's costume have been indeed great, complete and thorough. But woman throughout all these changes has for centuries kept her flowing gown, though it has been varied in almost every particular: at one time short-waisted, then



long-waisted; bag sleeves, then close-fitting sleeves; short skirts, then long skirts and trains; enormous hoop petticoats, then close-fitting, and so *ad infinitum*.

*Ladies*.—It may seem lacking in courtesy to allude to the ladies' costume after the others. It has been done for the sake of convenience, as on many of the brasses, already mentioned, are represented the wives with their husbands—hand in hand through life they passed and in death are not divided. We find examples of the principal styles of dress, varying from the simple though elegant gown of the fourteenth century to the more ornate types of later days. The head-dresses are noticeable, the butterfly head-dress of the fifteenth century is shown on Margaret Baynham, wife of Thomas Baynham, c. 1485.

Heraldic mantles are worn by a few: *e.g.*, one wife of Philip Mede, 1475; Elizabeth Knevet, 1518, Eastington; Agnes and Elizabeth, wives of Edmond Tame, 1534.

*Eccentric*.—Two of the brasses may be classed under this heading: viz., John Hampton and wife, c. 1510, Minchinhampton, who are in shrouds; and Anne Savage, 1605, Wormington, who is represented in bed.

*Accessories*.—On some of the brasses are fine canopies; groining is shewn over the heads of the Wine-merchant and his wife, c. 1400, Cirencester; John Jay and wife Joan, c. 1480, St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol; and John Cooke and his wife Joan, 1544, Crypt Church, Gloucester.

Canopies may be seen, too, on the brasses of—Sir John Cassy, 1400, Deerhurst (the figure of John the Baptist has been stolen); William Grevel, 1401, Chipping Campden; Sir Morys Russel, 1401, Dyrham; Joan Clopton, 1430, Quinton; Richard Dixon, 1438, Cirencester; Robert Page, 1440, Cirencester; Thomas Fortey, 1447, Northleach; John Fortey, 1458, Northleach; John Jay, c. 1480, St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol; and Thomas Bushe, 1526, Northleach. In the pediment of this canopy is a rural scene representing a tree under which are three horned sheep with long tails; the sheep in the middle is lying down, the other two are standing and looking towards each other. Above the tree, suspended by a hook, is a shield charged with the arms of the *Merchants of the Staple of Calais*.

*Animals*.—The feet of Thomas Lord Berkeley, 1392, are resting on a lion, also those of Sir John Cassy and

Sir Morys Russel Dyrham. Lady Berkeley, Alice Cassy, wife of Wool-merchant (c. 1400, Northleach), Lady Russel, and Agnes and Joan Prelatte have little pet lap-dogs at their feet. The dog at Deerhurst was evidently a favourite, for under it is engraved its name, "Tirri." The Wool-merchants have one foot resting on a sheep, and another on a woolpack. In the centre of John Taylour's brass, c. 1490, Northleach, is a sheep's head to left standing on a woolpack. The sheep on Thomas Bushe's brass have been already mentioned.

*Merchants' Marks* may be seen on William Grevel (1401), his coat of arms is to be found on the same brass; John Barstaple (1411), Robert Page (1440), Reginald Spycer (1449), John Fortey (1458), Thomas Rowley (1478), John Jay (c. 1480), a Wool merchant (c. 1485, Northleach), John Taylour (1521), a Wool merchant (c. 1510, Lechlade), Edward Halyday (1519), William Hichman (1521), and Thomas Bushe (1526).

*Coats of Arms* appear on several of the brasses; under this heading we may perhaps be permitted to notice the interesting crest at Newland. In the Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archæological Society, vol. vii. part i. are "Notes" on this brass by Sir John Maclean. The crest gives a good representation of an iron miner equipped for his work. Possibly some of those present here this morning may be able to throw light on this, as far as I know, unique crest.

*Inscriptions.*—The breaks in the inscription of Joan Clopton are "pears." Various ornaments are between the words of the marginal inscription of Thomas Fortey and of John Ceysyll, 1493, Tormarton. On the former will be found "two dogs fighting," "hedgehog," "goose," "snail," etc.; on the latter "hare," "bell," "cherries," etc.

The date on Thomas Fortey has formed a stumbling-block to many; the figures "47" afford one of the instances of an early use of Arabic numerals in England being only two years later than the well-known date 1445, on a stone in the interior of the church at Heathfield, Sussex.

The Rev. H. Haines records that the brasses have been "lost at Bishop's Cleeve, Churchdown, Painswick, and St.



John the Baptist, Gloucester.<sup>1</sup> At Churcham is the matrix of a large cross, c. fourteenth century." He also gives in his *Introduction*, page 124, a drawing of the matrix of the fine brass in memory of Sir John de la Rivière, 1350, at Tormarton. This brass consisted of a floriated cross, within the head of which is the knight holding up a model of the church which he had founded; on the stem of the cross appears to have been a helmet, at the base probably an Agnus Dei, and in the angles shields of arms surmounted by helmets and crests.<sup>2</sup> Under Wotton-under-Edge Mr. Haines mentions the matrix of the brass of Rich. de Wootton, c. 1320, "rector kneeling at the foot of a cross. There are but one or two brasses of ecclesiastics of this early date, and it would have been interesting to have seen the brass itself. It exhibited the peculiarity of having a scroll issuing from the hands of the figure, with an inscription of which every letter was separately inlaid with brass."<sup>3</sup> In addition to those mentioned, brasses have also disappeared from Cirencester, Cubberley, Gloucester Cathedral, Minchinhampton, Newland, Northleach, and Quinton.

Our Gloucestershire series is a thoroughly representative one, deeply interesting and instructive. The examples too are varied. We have the knightly effigy of the doughty warrior as well as that of the peaceful citizen; the stoled priest in vestments rich, the uplifted chalice; as also "ye ladye faire" arrayed in the quaint though costly dresses of the olden time; the wealthy woolstapler, ancestor of a noble house; the grave judge in his official robes, and even the miner in his work-a-day homely garb, carrying his mattock—all are included.

The fashion of erecting brasses as memorials to the departed appears to have died out in the seventeenth century, but has now been revived. Haines records that brasses have been placed in the following churches: Bristol, St. Leonard and Nicholas, Mitcheldean, Newent, and Upper Slaughter. In Gloucester Cathedral is a fine specimen in one of the Chapels, and in the same noble edifice is a brass—a fitting memorial to the Rev. H. Haines,

<sup>1</sup> A portion of the one at St. John the Baptist, Gloucester, was found during the recent restoration.

<sup>2</sup> A. W. Franks, F.S.A. Proceedings

of the Society of Antiquaries, 2nd Series vii., 409.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

M.A., whose exhaustive "*Manual*," issued in 1861, is still the standard work on Monumental Brasses. He is represented robed as a priest of the Church of England in cassock, surplice, stole and hood, beneath a canopy, and the following inscription is round the margin:—

HERBERTUS HAINES, A.M., SCHOLÆ HUIUS | CATHEDRALIS PER  
XXIII ANNOS HYPODIDASCALUS, OBIT A.D. XIV. KAL. OCT. A.S.  
MDCCCLXXII, ANNOS XLVI NATUS, CUJUS CORPUS IN | CEMETERIO  
JUXTA HANC URBEM SEPULTUM | JACET. HOC MONUMENTUM  
PAUCI EX DISCIPULIS ET AMICIS, BENEFICIORUM AB ILLO ACCEP-  
TORUM MEMORES, PONENDUM CURAVERUNT.

This may be translated thus:—"Herbert Haines, M.A., for twenty-three years second master of (this) Cathedral School, died September 18th, 1872, aged 46 years, whose body lies buried in the cemetery near this city. A few of his pupils and friends, mindful of benefits received from him, have caused this memorial to be erected."

Much might be said of the fascination that a study of these memorials induces. One is brought as it were into contact with the ages when the persons commemorated played their respective parts in the great drama of life. I beg to thank many friends—some alas! are no more—for much valuable help most ungrudgingly given, and especially I wish to offer my acknowledgments to the clergy, without whose kind permission I should have been unable to obtain the many rubbings needed to render this series of Gloucestershire Brasses complete.