XVII.

ON MONUMENTAL BRASSES, WITH SPECIAL NOTICE OF THOSE AT STOKE D'ABERNON.

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READ AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT GUILDFORD 28TH JUNE, 1855.

THE special objects for which institutions such as our Surrey Archæological Society are formed, may, I think, be assigned to one or the other of these two divisions; first, the wider diffusion of a taste for archæological pursuits, studies, and researches, together with a just appreciation of their true character and bearing; and secondly, the application of a comprehensive and concentrated system to the practical treatment of archæology within the range of a certain locality. It would seem that the importance of the former of these objects is scarcely estimated aright by some who are themselves already masters in the science of archæology; and hence it occurs that the aid and co-operation of such learned and accomplished archæologists is not always accorded to the country societies, either so readily or so zealously as might be expected as well as desired. Were they to reflect upon the value to the cause of archæology of a wide-spread taste for those pursuits which are grouped together under this general title, I cannot but consider that our most eminent archæologists would regard archæological societies as possessing peculiar claims upon them for the readiest

and most strenuous support, inasmuch as they are unquestionably calculated, in a pre-eminent degree, to attract attention, and to excite interest where, without their agency, archæology would have remained without notice or regard, if not actually unknown. The claim which societies such as ours may advance for support, in their capacity for developing the archæology of particular districts, for organizing and imparting a definite system to research and investigation, and for giving a fresh impulse to advance archæological science, it is beside my present purpose to urge; I do, however, venture to introduce the subject which has been intrusted to me on this occasion, with a passing remark upon the worthiness of these institutions as the means for strengthening archæology, both by very considerably increasing the number of archæologists throughout the length and breadth of the land, and also by removing those vulgar and unjust prejudices which would define an archæologist as a sort of would-be scientific dustman, whose elaborately erudite trifling is as worthless in itself, as it is repulsive to all but the high-dried brethren of his craft. With those who take an active part in the establishment and the subsequent administration of archæological societies, the importance of winning fresh adherents to archæology is well understood and duly appreciated. They estimate aright the results of elaborate research, and they regard with mingled sentiments of admiration and gratitude the attainments of illustrious individuals; still they feel that the great lessons which the past has written from age to age on those diversified memorials which each age enshrines in the sanctuary of its own memory, and treasures up for those who should come after, as the visible and tangible expressions of its own (once living) presence amongst the

generations of mankind—the promoters of archæological institutions feel that these lessons can never be comprehended in the fulness of their meaning, nor estimated in the due preciousness of their value, without a well-nigh universal recognition of their existence, and a scarcely less widely extended inquiry into, and sympathy with, their teachings. They have learned to regard history as depending for its true value, because depending for its vital essence—truth, upon historical memorials, and, therefore, they are archæologists themselves. They are also conscious that archæology cannot be fully developed, or rightly appreciated, while its study is restricted to a comparatively few; and therefore they seek to enlist fresh recruits into their ranks. Now, in order to obtain these recruits in large numbers, and of a character calculated to do honour to the service, it appears to be essential that, in connection with other and higher matters, an archæological society should (from time to time, and more particularly at an early period of its career) set forth before its members and friends, certain elementary branches of archæological study, and should treat them in a popular manner. This is the opinion entertained by our council, and, accordingly, I am honoured with their permission to introduce, on the occasion of this present meeting, some remarks upon a subject already enjoying a wide popularity amongst the younger, as well as with more experienced, archæologists, and also specially calculated considerably to extend their numbers. Moreover, I am authorized to preface a careful description of the brasses of Surrey and an inquiry into their historical and biographical associations, with some general observations upon these equally curious, interesting, and instructive memorials. In carrying out this plan, I propose now to

request your attention to the first portion of these general observations, and also to the commencement of those particular notices of individual brasses which I hope to be enabled, on subsequent occasions, to extend to every individual brass which time has spared to the county of Surrey. It will be understood, that by the term "Brass," or "Monumental Brass," is implied a commemorative memorial of some person or persons, engraven either upon a rectangular plate of metal, or upon several pieces of similar metal cut out to correspond with the main outlines of the design, the incised metal being, in both cases, let into a marble or stone slab, so placed as to form a part of the pavement of a church, or occasionally elevated upon an altar-tomb. The occasional deviation from the last condition which led, at a late period, to brasses being affixed to the walls of churches, must be regarded as both an exceptional and an inconsistent usage. We are able to show that these brasses were in use, as well in England as on the continent, very early in the 13th century; and it seems to be probable that, with the advance of that century, they were in (at least comparatively) general use. Thus, these incised monumental plates were produced in considerable numbers, and they also attained to a high degree of perfection more than two centuries before the discovery by the Florentine goldsmith, Maso Finiguerra (A.D. 1460), of the art of engraving plates of metal for the purpose of producing facsimile copies by means of impression. The same remark applies to the delicate and beautiful works in true line engraving, executed by artists who flourished at a far earlier period, for the decoration of the metallic hand-mirrors used by the ladies of ancient Rome. In searching for the origin of commemorative works of this class amongst the monu-

mental memorials in use at a still earlier period, we are led to trace the introduction of the engraven metallic plates, in the first instance, to the enamels of the continental artists of the 12th century; those enamels having been themselves introduced, apparently, through Venice, from Byzantium into Europe; while the greater durability of the metal, and its superior beauty also to incised monumental slabs, would insure its favourable reception and extended adoption. The monuments in use in our own country anterior to the introduction of brasses, which now claim our first regard, were upright crosses, adorned with various rude devices of interlaced work, sometimes intermingled with figures of animals. Contemporary with these crosses were small stone tablets, bearing Runic characters. Flat slabs, of larger dimensions, appear to have been also in use at the same period. On all these the devices and letters were produced, either by cutting lines into the stone, that is by incising or engraving them, or by removing the adjoining portions of the face of the stone, and so leaving the designs and inscriptions themselves in *quasi-relief*. The great Christian symbol, the cross, appears incised upon some of the earliest slabs. Somewhat later, the cross, with its accompanying ornaments, was worked in a true, but still a low relief; and now the actual lid of the stone coffin became, in many instances, the monumental memorial; on other occasions, the large rectangular slab was still retained. Shortly after the Norman conquest, monumental inscriptions fell into disuse, if we may judge from the scarcity of examples; and about the commencement of the 12th century we find the first traces of attempts to give a representation of the person of the deceased, either upon the lid of his stone coffin or on a sepulchral slab. These early effigies, though

sometimes incised, were generally produced in low relief, and the desired effect was not unfrequently obtained by such cutting away of parts of the surface of the slab as caused the representation to appear rather sunk in the stone than raised above it. As, in process of time, monumental art steadily advanced, and effigies in full relief were produced by artists of no mean capacity, so it became apparent, from the inconvenience and obstruction necessarily attendant upon the introduction of numerous monuments which would require to be raised above the pavement of churches, that, as a general rule, designs for monumental memorials should be expressed upon flat slabs of marble or stone; thus, while in comparatively rare instances the altar-tomb with its sculptured effigy continued in use, in the great majority of cases the coped coffin-lid gave way to the flat slab; and thus also both the monumental cross and the effigy came to be depicted by incised lines, instead of being executed in relief. Such incised stones would also possess the recommendation of being obtainable at far less cost than similar memorials wrought by the sculptor's chisel, and, at the same time, the designs thus engraved might (so far as the outline process would admit) be identical with those adopted in more costly and elaborately wrought productions.

Still, these incised monuments were exposed to one most serious objection; that is, of being surely and specially injured, if not actually obliterated, through the contant attrition to which, from their position, they would necessarily be subjected. This objection would not attach to monumental brasses, such being the hardness and consequent durability of the plates prepared for their manufacture that many of the earliest examples of these memorials yet in existence are still as essentially perfect

as when first laid down. Brasses, accordingly, when once established in use, continued in favour for the purpose of monumental commemoration until the close of the era of the Renaissance.

In our own country, very considerable numbers of brasses yet remain, many of them being in a state of preservation truly wonderful, when their age and the perils to which they have been exposed are taken into consideration; while others exhibit the effect of every variety of injury. Besides the brasses still in existence, a vast series of despoiled stones, from which the original brasses have been torn, give a sad testimony both to the extensive adoption of these memorials at one period, and to the sacrilegious violence and spoliation to which they were subjected at another. On the Continent but few brasses have escaped, and these are chiefly to be found in the churches of Belgium and of certain parts of Germany.[1]

A degree of interest, second only to that which is claimed by the brasses themselves, is attached to the slabs which have been despoiled of their brasses. They will frequently repay attentive study, as they, unless mutilated, represent the composition of the lost brass with the utmost fidelity, and in many instances supply us with examples of designs of which there are no known existing specimens; and it is not uncommon for us thus to learn that brasses have been lost which were probably finer and more interesting than even the most splendid which yet remain. Such despoiled slabs thickly stud our larger and more important churches, and may also be found in almost every church in which the ignorant

[1] Recent researches have discovered a large number of Brasses in Belgium and Northern Germany.

and injudicious restorer has not busied himself to substitute new pavements for old.

I pass on now to observe that the use of incised slabs was not discontinued subsequently to the introduction of the engraven plates or "brasses," and particularly in those districts where marble and stone were most abundant; on the contrary, the two classes of flat memorials continued in use together, and contemporary examples of both exhibit many features in common; the distinguishing characteristic of the brasses being, in most cases, their higher degree of artistic merit. In both the brass and the incised slab the engraven lines were filled in with a species of mastic, generally black, but in some instances of various colours. Colour was also introduced into many brasses by means of enamel.

The brass plate originally denominated "latten" was a compound somewhat resembling the brass now in use amongst ourselves, but more costly and far more durable than that alloy. It appears to have been manufactured exclusively on the Continent previously to the middle of the 16th century, and from thence imported into this country. Although the "plate" itself was not made at home until long after the decline of brasses as works of art, yet we have every reason for believing that almost all the brasses laid down in English churches were the work of native artists, and probably even in the few instances in which the designs are certainly French or Flemish the actual engravers may have been Englishmen.[2] This brings me to the consideration of the

[2] Flemish brasses are best distinguished by the execution. The lines are broader, cut with flat chisel-shaped gravers, and not generally so deep as those of England. The Flemish brasses at Ipswich and All-hallows, Barking, London, have errors in the heraldry which would not have occurred if they had been executed in England.

designs generally adopted in brasses, and also of certain peculiarities in their treatment and execution which at once determine and facilitate their classification.

The first great distinction to be observed in the matter of design may be considered to have been ruled by the two general varieties of form in which the plate was used. In the first of these varieties, the brasses were worked in one unbroken plate of metal, or in several plates so united as to present the appearance of one unbroken metallic surface. This was the Flemish practice, and in brasses of this variety the design (derived apparently, like the form of the plate, from the enamelled tablets of Limoges) exhibits the effigy under a canopy elaborately enriched with tabernacle work, and with figures of saints and other personages in niches; the composition being surrounded by an inscription, and beyond that by an ornamental border. The background was covered with a rich diaper, which was (generally) continued between the shafts of the canopy and the inscription, thus imparting to the canopy and to the effigy beneath it the appearance of having been cut out in metal and laid upon a carpet of gorgeous richness. This arrangement accords exactly with the altar-tomb and its effigy sculptured in relief.

Five brasses of this class yet remain in our churches—at St. Alban's, Lynn, Newark, and Topcliffe—which may be assigned to the same artist, whose hand may also be traced in the fine relics preserved in the Church of St. Sauveur, at Bruges. A fragment of a sixth great work, by the same masterly hand, is in the British Museum; it is, in my opinion, the finest specimen of these engraven memorials in existence, and I am much disposed to consider, that it may be the remains of the companion work to the brass of Abbot Delamere which once covered the

remains of his predecessor in the abbacy of St. Alban's, at the foot of the altar-steps in the abbey church.

Other Flemish brasses may also be seen (their dates varying from A.D. 1370 to 1535) at Aveley (Essex), Newcastle-on-Tyne, Ipswich, in the Church of All-hallows, Barking (in London), and at Fulham on the Thames.

The second variety in the form of brasses differs from the Flemish in this respect, that here the effigy or cross, the canopy, shield of arms, inscriptions, and other devices, are each engraven on a separate piece of metal, cut out to correspond with the outline of the several details; each piece being also placed in a distinct matrix, or indent, of a form corresponding with its own, sunk in the face of the marble or stone slab, which thus became the field or background of the entire work. This is the method which was adopted by the English artists in the brasses which they produced, and it is unquestionably superior to the Flemish system. In these Flemish works, however wonderful as productions of the graving-tool, the eye is confused by the large and profusely ornamented surface presented to it at one view; whereas the brasses of England, by their arrangement, preserve clearly the distinctness of the several parts, while the canopy and surrounding marginal inscription sustain the unity of the design. I must add that the slab itself to which the brass plates are affixed contributes in no slight degree to the unity and completeness of the work as a composition. Accordingly, in taking rubbings, or in making drawings or engravings, the slab should always be included.

A few other brasses yet preserved in England are evidently of foreign workmanship, or at least of foreign design, notwithstanding that they are destitute of backgrounds. Such brasses are at Wensley, Yorkshire, and

North Mimms, Herts; they both belong to ecclesiastics, and are both Flemish. Also at Minster and Horsmonden, Kent; at Elsyng, Norfolk; Horseheath, Cambridge; at Ockham, Surrey; and at Trotton in Sussex, (date 1310); all of which are to be attributed to French artists. And, on the other hand, there is a brass at Constance cathedral to Robert Hallum, Bishop of Salisbury, who died while attending the council held at that city, A.D. 1416, which is of English design, and there is a tradition that it was sent thither from England.

Before the introduction of brasses, the designs which we have good reason for supposing to have been prevalent upon incised slabs were crosses with (in some instances) marginal inscriptions. Effigies appear to have been less common. There was also a singularly interesting class of designs which obtained very generally in incised slabs, but which we do not find to have been adopted in more than a few instances by the engravers of brasses; these designs exhibit, with the monumental cross, and sometimes with the inscription also, a device indicative of the profession or occupation of the deceased, such as a pastoral staff for a bishop or abbot, a chalice for a priest, a sword for a warrior, &c.

The earliest brasses appear to have been inscriptions, or inscriptions and crosses. In these memorials the inscription was set about the four sides of the slab near the margin; each letter was cut out of the metal and fixed in a hollow for its reception, and the rows of letters were (but not in the earliest examples) enclosed within narrow strips or fillets of metal forming borders to them. During the 13th and 14th centuries we find that an attempt was made to combine the cross and the effigy upon the same monument and in the

same design. Parts of the figure were sometimes introduced into these compositions; hence, apparently, may be derived the demi-figures so common in brasses. From these curious and interesting slabs, also, crosses were introduced into brasses having open floriated heads and inclosing figures or parts of figures. Crosses were also engraved without any open floriated heads, as in the fine and interesting examples at Higham Ferrers (Chichele Brass, A.D. 1400), and at Beddington, Surrey, to Margaret Oliver, A.D. 1425.

The custom of placing effigies or semi-effigies within or upon crosses, and also above them, led to the adoption of bracket brasses, in which the figure was placed upon a bracket and generally covered with a canopy.

The effigies represented in brasses comprise an almost uninterrupted series of figures of ladies, men in armour of various ranks, and civilians, from the time of Edward II. and Edward III. till the Reformation. The number of these figures is very considerable, and they are widely scattered through different districts, affording abundant facilities for reference, comparison, and illustration. They exhibit and illustrate with admirable exactness the changes in armour and costume which were introduced and discarded during that long and eventful period. They exemplify the feelings, tastes, and usages of our ancestors in almost every department of social and political life in those days, from generation to generation. They furnish a graphic chapter in the rise, development, and decline of art. I need scarcely add that they supply to the historian, the politician, the artist, the herald, and the topographer of our own times, information at once valuable, interesting, and instructive.

The brasses of ecclesiastics which yet exist give us examples of every variety in the habits of the hierarchy, down to the year 1554 (2 Mary), and on to 1611 (7 Charles I.). In addition to archbishops, bishops and abbots, priors and abbesses are also represented in brasses, though at a late period only; and in addition to these, commencing early in the second half of the 14th century, there is a long series of engraven effigies of priests in eucharistic, processional, and academic habits. The modifications of form and adjustment introduced into some of the clerical vestments, together with the varieties in their ornamentation, are well shown in these brasses, which are also, in many instances, indicative of the tone of feeling prevalent at the time.

The brasses of ladies and civilians (which commence at about the same period with those of ecclesiastics) exhibit abundant varieties in costume. These are all, without doubt, truthful examples of the dresses and ornaments actually worn. From other sources (illuminated MSS., &c.) we learn, that during the 14th and 15th centuries the dresses of both sexes were not only continually changing in their fashion, but that they were various and fantastic in the extreme. On the brasses the extravagances of fashion almost universally appear, with the very best taste, chastened, and the more outrageous forms are curtailed and simplified; or, rather, such forms are omitted, while the comparatively simpler styles are retained and exhibited. A marked similarity between the general effect of the costume of the two sexes is observable: the knightly coif of mail was emulated in the wimple of the high-born dame; both knight and lady wore the flowing mantle; the ladies delighted to have their dresses covered with heraldic adornments, and strange to our eyes (if not to their own) they

would have looked thus emblazoned,[3] as in the instance of Lady Tiptoft, whose brass at Enfield shows her in a mantle having three great lions passant on one half of it, and on the other another lion rampant, at least as large as his three neighbours. The merchant and his lady wore the same flowing tunic; the knightly belt, both in form and adjustment, was closely imitated in the more delicate cinctures which encircled the ladies' waists. In addition to the long array of brasses of ladies and of merchants of various callings, there are also brasses of judges, from which we learn that in the 15th century the civilian's sword (*anelace*) was worn with the judicial coif and ermine; and there are brasses of serjeants learned in the law with coif and bands, of notaries with inkhorn and penner, and of crown-keepers and yeomen of the guard to the sovereign; of yeomen, and others.

The armour represented in brasses commences with the mail suit worn in the time of the first Edward, and furnishes examples of almost every change and modification in the panoply worn by the chivalry of England. Six brasses exemplify this style of armour; of these, the brasses at Trumpington and Chartham are unfinished, those at Croft and Buslingthorpe are half-figures; the Acton brass to Sir R. de Bures is singularly fine, and its preservation is actually wonderful. Of the sixth, the earliest of the group, I shall have presently to speak more particularly; this is the brass of Sir John D'Aubernoun.

From the unmixed mail we are carried on to the first decided addition of defences of plate or perhaps of prepared leather (*cuirbouilli*). During the next succeeding

[3] These dresses were doubtless for state occasions only. The legal term "feme coverte" is derived from this usage.

period, the earlier years of Edward III., we have but a few examples: one of these, however, though much worn and mutilated, is a splendid work of art, and in the matter of armour and arms a little arsenal of itself; this is the brass to Sir H. Hastings, at Elsyng, which is also equally valuable from its architectural and heraldic accessories. Here is one of the earliest known quartered coats of arms—the royal arms on the jupon of Edward III. himself, who appears in a compartment of the canopy. I may add that the sub-canopies of these compartments of the principal canopy afford admirable hints for designs for stained glass.

Examples increase as the reign of Edward III. advances, and they abound during those of his unfortunate grandson and of Henry IV. The camail was universal. To this martial appendage the gorget of steel succeeded under Henry V., and thus the armour became of unmixed plate.

Every plate that, in process of time, was added in hopes of strengthening the defensive equipment against the shock of the charge either in the lists or in the field, and every fresh device for giving increased freedom to the sword-arm of the knight without detracting from its security, are found to have been carefully rendered on the brasses of the 15th century. The decadence of armour is also fully illustrated in the later brasses, which themselves give evident proof of an art rapidly declining.

The full value of the representation of armour given in brasses cannot, perhaps, be adequately appreciated, without instituting a comparison between these engraven figures and the actual relics of armour preserved in the Tower and other amouries. A comparison between the designs of brasses and those of sculptured effigies, seals, illuminations, and stained glass, will also tend

greatly to enhance our opinion of the value of these engravings.

As a matter of course, all these figures supply us with illustrations for a national history—illustrations of the people of England drawn in their own times, therefore of peculiar interest and value. No less admirably do they illustrate our great national writers in other departments of literature. How very valuable in this respect, for example, are the brasses of Alianore de Bohun, Duchess of Gloucester, of Lord Berkely, and Sir William Bagot, all characters in our great dramatist's "Richard II.;" also the brass of the standard-bearer to that unfortunate prince, Sir S. de Felbrigge, Knight of the Garter, who appears with the royal banner by his side, and who married a maid of honour to Anne of Bohemia, the queen. Then there is Lord Camoys, also a Knight of the Garter, who led the left wing at Agincourt; and Sir Anthony Grey (brother of Lord Grey of Groby, the first husband of Elizabeth Woodville afterwards Queen of Edward IV.) who, with his brother, fell at the battle of Bernard's Heath, near St. Alban's, February 17th, 1480; and, still later, at Hever is the brass to Sir T. Bullen, the father of the ill-fated mother of Queen Elizabeth; while at Blickling, another Anne Bullen, aunt to the queen, is represented in a brass. I might with ease extend very considerably this historic series, but I must be content to specify only one other example—a brass of poetic interest, the memorial of Thomas, son of Geoffrey Chaucer, at Ewelme.

Leaving for some future occasion a sketch of the general character of the inscriptions introduced into brasses, of their heraldry and symbolic devices, the attitudes of their effigies, and their accompanying accessories, including some observations upon the cross-

legged attitude in certain military effigies, which has attracted so much attention and led to such unfounded theories; leaving also the canopies, architecture, and other accessories, and the cost of their production,—I proceed to remark, that the earlier examples of these engraven monuments you will find to be the best as works of art: the plates are of harder metal, thicker, and in all respects better prepared; the designs are distinguished by a simplicity, breadth, and boldness, which gradually disappeared in process of time; the art workmanship is firmer than in later brasses, more expressive, more artistic. The true power and capacity of outline were thoroughly understood by the earlier brass-engravers.

The same may be said with reference to the brasses which prevailed in particular districts. In all cases, however, fidelity of representation was rigidly observed. To personal portraiture, as we now understand the term, these artists paid but little regard; they seem, indeed, to have considered it unnecessary to impart to the countenances of their figures more than the distinctive characteristics of sex, and of youth or age, as the case might be. The figures themselves varied in size, from the full proportion of life to 18 or 15 inches; but the costume and armour of the time in which the brass was engraved were always the costume and armour indicated on the brass. And since, as a general rule, the brasses were engraved and laid down immediately after the decease of the person represented, the date of the brass and of the commemorative inscription may usually be regarded as identical. Exceptions to this rule will be observed by the student of brasses; they arise chiefly from a habit which prevailed with some persons (and more particularly amongst ecclesiastics) of having their brasses

prepared during their lifetime and under their own directions. In these cases, even the inscriptions were written and engraved, blanks being left for the actual dates. The blanks generally remain, since too often none were found who cared to fill them up. In other instances, a brass may have been laid down to commemorate a person then long deceased; or an early brass may have been appropriated afresh at a subsequent period, and, with a fresh inscription, laid down as the portraiture and memorial of some person of a more modern age. (And here, in a parenthesis, I would observe, that not the least remarkable circumstance brought to light by the study of the monumental memorials of the middle ages, is the readiness with which the very men who were most anxious to provide monuments for themselves treated the monuments of others with disrespect, and even removed or appropriated them to their own purposes.) On the death of either a husband or wife, the survivor, in placing a brass to the memory of the lost one, usually had the figures of both represented, and the inscription written in the plural number, blanks being left for the date of the survivor's decease. In these brasses, if two dates appear, the brass itself is almost always of the earlier date. I say almost always, because in rare instances the brass to both husband and wife, with figures of both sexes, was laid down at the decease of the survivor. While speaking of the brasses to husband and wife, I may add that such effigies are occasionally to be seen hand in hand, and that, when in this attitude, they generally, if not always, denote a memorial placed by a widow to her departed lord. Of brasses of this kind, I may mention examples at Berkhampstead, A.D. 1356; Chrishall, 1370; Southacre, 1384; Dartmouth, 1403 (where Sir J. Hanley

appears between his two wives, holding the second spouse by the hand, his right hand resting upon the sword-hilt), and Trotton; 1424. Sculptured effigies are also thus represented; as remarkable examples, I may mention the effigies of Richard II. and his queen. My no less judicious than talented and accomplished friend Mr. E. Richardson discovered that this was the original attitude of the group from a close examination of the mutilated figures in Westminster Abbey; and having obtained corroborative proof of the correctness of his conjecture, he restored the cast of this fine monument in the Crystal Palace in accordance with the original design. There is one brass, and it is in every respect one of the finest in existence, which appears to be a solitary exception, commonly considered to be necessary for establishing a general rule. In this case, I refer to the rule already set forth that the costume of the period in which the brass was executed was represented on the engraven effigies. This is the memorial of Sir R. de Swynborne and his son, Sir T. de Swynborne, at Little Horkesley. The father and son severally died A.D. 1391 and A.D. 1412; and the brass (executed in 1412) represents the two knights each in the armour of his own time; and as an important change in armour was introduced in the interval between these two dates, the two effigies exhibit some points in marked contrast. Each of these effigies is surmounted by a triple canopy of the utmost grace and beauty, and the entire work, which rests on an altar-tomb, is in a rare condition of preservation.

The earliest example of a brass of which we have any record, was in the church of St. Paul at Bedford, to Earl Simon de Beauchamp, who died before A.D. 1208; this memorial, now long lost, consisted of a border inscription, with probably a cross. The earliest brass of

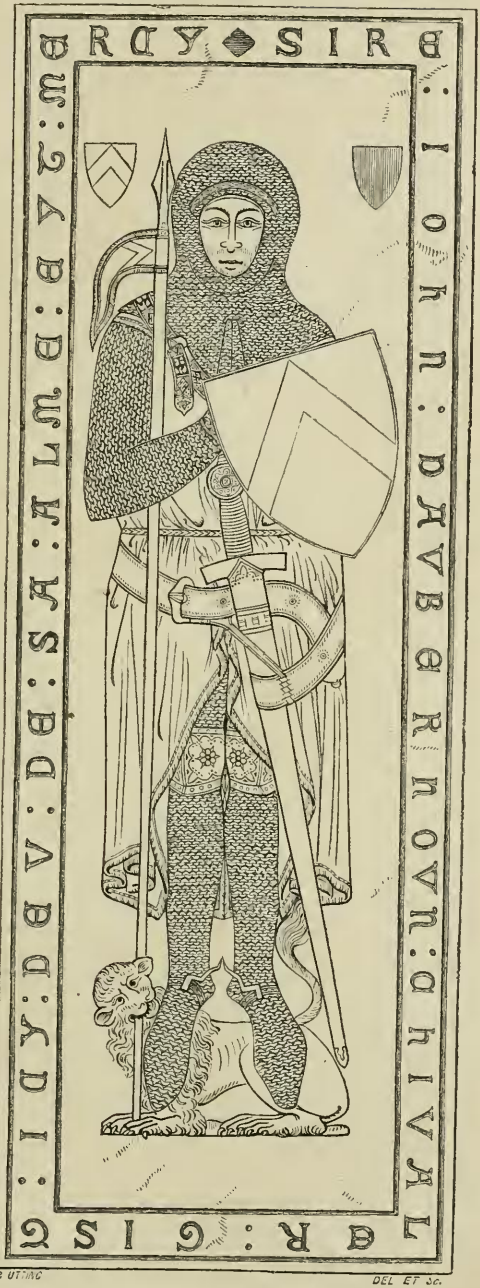
which the design has been preserved by means of an engraving was in France, and commemorated Philip and John, the two sons of Louis VIII., who reigned from A.D. 1223 to 1226; and the earliest brass known to be still in existence,[4] is the bold and martial effigy of Sir John d'Aubernoun, which is preserved in the church of Stoke d'Abernon, in this county of Surrey; with this brass, accordingly, I commence my proposed descriptive notices of "The Monumental Brasses of Surrey."

This brass, when in its original state of completeness, consisted of the armed effigy of the knight, two small shields of arms, one on either side, a little above his head, and an inscription in Norman-French, which formed a border to the entire composition. This description was written in single Lombardic, or Uncial capitals, according to the usage of the time, with stops between each word, and a cross at its commencement; the letters were also inclosed within two narrow fillets of the metal. The brass-work of this inscription is entirely lost; the time-worn stone, however, still shows that it was thus expressed, ✠ SIRЄ : IOHN : DAV-BЄRNOVN : CHIVALЄR : GIST : ICY : DЄV : DЄ : SA : ALMЄ : ЄYT : MЄRCY : and that it commenced in the centre of the stone at its head. Of the two small shields, that on the sinister side of the slab is lost; the dexter shield remains, and it is charged with the arms of d'Aubernoun, *Azure, a chevron or.* This effigy has been preserved with scarcely any injury throughout the long period that has passed away since the time of Edward I. It represents the knight as armed in a complete suit of mail (chain-armour). The body is

[4] There are early brasses in Belgium, and one bearing the date of 1279 is at Hildesheim, in Germany.

covered with a sleeved hauberk, a coif is drawn over the head, and the lower limbs and feet are guarded by chausses of the same flexible and inwoven defence. The genouillieres, or knee-plates, are possibly of prepared leather. There is a lion at his feet, and he is not, as in many other instances, represented as cross-legged; his attitude is that of repose. Mr. Waller's remarks on this are to the following effect:—"Considered as a work of art, it will be found that the figure is ill-proportioned, but the arrangement of the drapery judiciously contrived; whilst, as a production of the burin, this brass is not excelled by any subsequent example; each link of the mail is distinctly represented, and the mere work of graving up so large a surface must have cost many weeks of patient labour." This name of d'Aubernon appears to have been derived from the river Aube, in Picardy, Champagne, and Burgundy. Roger d'Aubernon came over with the Conqueror, and appears in Doomsday as settled in Surrey, under Richard de Tonbridge, Earl of Clare. He held the manors of Molesham and Aldbury, and others in Stoke and Fetcham, but he established his residence at Stoke. This baron also possessed various other estates in other parts of the kingdom, especially in Bedfordshire and Devonshire. Several of his descendants are mentioned, and Walter d'Aubernon bore arms against King John. The first of this family, named John, died before 1279, the 7th, that is, of Edward I., leaving a son, another John, who died 1327; his son was also John, and his son William, who died in 1358 without male issue, after which the representation of the family became vested in the female line. There are three stones commemorative of members of this family in the chancel, all to Johns; but these are easily distinguished, and to each a period

may be assigned. With reference to our Sir John d'Aubernon: at the death of his father, Gilbert, in 1236, he was a minor, but not far from his majority. In 1264, he was sheriff of Surrey and Sussex, so that you see there was a union in early times between Surrey and other counties. In 1266 he was sheriff again of the two counties, and after that period he is not mentioned in any public document. The son, however, appears, and is known in 1278, because in that year he was summoned to pay a fine on entering on his property; consequently, therefore, the inference is, that his father died previous to that period. Hence we assign to the brass the date of 1277. I have said the state of society is well illustrated by an inquiry into the circumstances connected with the career of this individual. There is preserved an account of the remarkable suit instituted against Sir John, the sheriff of Sussex and Surrey, in the year 1269, the 49th of Henry III. It appears that in 1265 William Hod, of Normandy, shipped to Portsmouth ten hogsheads of woad. These were seized, immediately on their landing, by robbers who infested the neighbourhood of Portsmouth in those days, and carried them off to Guildford; William Hod, of Normandy, overtook the robbers, regained his property, and lodged it for safe keeping in the castle. Then one Nicholas Picard and others from Normandy appear, and demand the property, that it should be given up to them in the name of one Stephen Buckerel and others. If there were any demur, he threatened to destroy by fire the whole town of Guildford, with its church, chapel, and neighbourhood, on the morrow. Nicholas, the under-sheriff, who appears to have resided there, and had property, and what he esteemed more than his property, his wife and family



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BRASS OF SIR JOHN D'AUBERNOUN,

Stoke D'Abernon Church, Surrey, A.D 1277.

BRASS OF SIR JOHN D'AUBERNOUN.

Stoke D'Abernon Church Surrey. A.D. 1327.

living at Ditton not far off, gave up the property, which was at once carried off from the castle of Guildford. It was in consequence of this transaction that the original merchant brought an action against the sheriff of the county, the sheriff of course being responsible for the deeds of his representative, and he was fined in the full sum of 120 marks. It appears there were some circumstances connected with this matter which made it a mere question of disputed property. After all, the transaction is very questionable. I may remark, how strange does this mode of settling disputes appear to us. How strange that the sheriff of a county so near the metropolis, should have been unable to raise a sufficient number of persons to prevent so gross an outrage. From the first Sir John, I pass to his son, the second of that name, who died in 1327. The original brass of this second Sir John D'Aubernon is even more interesting, in certain respects, than that of his father, inasmuch as there are several others which present the same features as the brass of the first Sir John; whereas of the second there are but very few indeed. In very many places in this county of Surrey there are other brasses, all of which deserve some degree of attention, as all of them are interesting, and, indeed, all are valuable. The most important are at Kingston (Skene), Beddington (Carews), Crowhurst (Gaynesford), Ditton, Horley, East Horsley (the remarkable brass of Bishop Boothe), Lingfield (Sir Reginald de Cobham), Merstham (Elmebrygge), Shere, Cranley, and many other places.