

SEPULCHRAL BRASSES AT HARROW.

THE Church of Harrow has preserved a somewhat numerous series of Sepulchral Brasses, of which the following is a chronological list, with a few descriptive particulars:

c. 1370. Edmund Flambard: in armour, with pourpoint cuisses. The design embraced the figures of himself and wife, under a double canopy standing on a long stem, as if forming the head of a cross (resembling the brass of John Bloxham and John Whytton in Merton college chapel, engraved in Ingram's Memorials of Oxford, and Parker's Glossary of Architecture): height of the whole design 7 feet, of the figures 25 inches. The man's figure alone remains, with the upper part of the canopies. Both figures are engraved in the Supplement to Grose's Antiquities of England and Wales, 1787, vol. ii. Plate vi.

c. 1390. John Flambard: a fine figure, 4 feet 10 inches high; showing a slight change in armour from the preceding. Engraved in the same work, Plate vii. fig. 2. The inscription consists of the following very strange and enigmatic verses:

Jon me do marmore Numinis ordine flam tum'lat'
Bard qº; verbere stigis E fun'e hic tueatur.

--the two syllables of the surname being divided between the two lines.

1442. Simon Marchford, canon of Salisbury and of the King's free chapel of Windsor, and Rector of Harrow: in processional vestments, the head and inscription now wanting; about 16 inches high when complete.

c. 1450. Three-quarters figure of a priest in the dress of a Master of Arts; about 18 inches high; the inscription gone.

1480. John Byrkhede, Rector, in a splendid cope: fully described in the following pages.

1488. George Aynesworth, in civil costume, and his three wives, Agnes, Isabella, and Johanna, with fourteen children, one of them a priest vested as a Master of Arts. The figures 18 inches high and the costume of the wives identical. (Discovered during the restoration of the church, and now fixed against the wall of the South transept.)

1574. Inscriptions to Dorothye Frankyshe: engraved on the reverse of fragments of fine Flemish work, as described in the ensuing pages.

1579. William Wightman esquire (in armour) and his wife Etheldreda: figures 2 feet 3 inches high. The figures of five children lost.

1592. John Lyon yeoman, the Founder of Harrow School, standing, in doublet and plain trunk hose, and his wife, in hat, ruff, and gown open in front: the figure of a child lost. Figures 19½ inches high. (Lithographed by Netherclift.)

c. 1600. A gentleman and his wife, well executed: 4 feet 3 inches high; inscription gone.

1603. John Sonkey gentleman and Alice his wife: figures 3 feet 1 inch high.

SEPULCHRAL brass-plates, which are found engraved on both sides, have received the not very accurate but now generally accepted name of *palimpsest*.* An interesting discovery of this kind was made on the occasion of the Society's visit to Harrow.

Two plates, bearing inscriptions in rhyme and prose, to the memory of Dorothye Frankyshe, who died in 1574, had occupied a place in the pavement of the church, doubtless from that date, until a few years since, when the edifice was restored, and then one of them, being detached, was found to be engraved on the contrary side. The other of the two remained *in situ*, though loose, until October last, when, whilst some rubbings were being taken in anticipation of the meeting of this Society, it also be-

* See the Manual of Monumental Brasses, Oxford, 1848, p. ix.; and an article by Mr. Albert Way in the *Archæologia*, vol. xxx. p. 121. The examples that have since been noticed are very numerous.

came detached, and was found, like its companion, to be engraved on the under side. The small slip of brass from the chest of the female effigy had been fitted on at the end of the more modern prose legend, and bears the end of each line; it has been roughly filed, no doubt when re-set.

It is quite clear from the differing proportions of the accessory canopies, the several borders, and the inscriptions, upon these two plates, that they are portions of distinct monuments, and could not have been united in one design. It is at the same time very remarkable that in style and execution they bear a strong resemblance in many points, even to the ornaments between the words of the inscriptions, so that we might esteem them to be the productions of the same artist.

Archæologists have long been agreed that certain monumental brasses differing in several distinct peculiarities from those usually found in England, are the work of foreigners; the beautiful examples at Saint Alban's, North Mimms, Aveley, Lynn, and Newark, are well known. Out of about 4,000 Brasses remaining in England there are but a dozen which exhibit these peculiarities, and half a dozen more, less distinctly defined, may perhaps be added. Seven date between 1349 and 1396; one 1429; and the remaining four from 1510 to 1535. The inscriptions of the first eight being in Latin afford no clue to their country, except so far as may be gathered from the bold form of the letters; so that in the absence of documentary evidence the belief of their foreign origin rested upon their similarity of character to the few remaining on the Continent, and their dissimilarity to the style common here; while on the other hand the only one of English character found on the Continent is the Brass in Constance Cathedral of an English bishop* who died whilst attending the great council held there in 1416. It is known that brass was an article of import from the Netherlands, but that fact affords little or no presumption in favour of the theory. The present discovery forms a connecting link necessary to show that the supposed foreign Brasses found in England are really foreign and not English in disguise, for, while the style of

* Robert Hallum, bishop of Salisbury: engraved in the *Archæologia*, vol. xxx. pl. xix.

these fragments unquestionably accords with them, the few words of legend, which one of them presents, are Flemish or Dutch.*

They run thus:

In't (abbrev. for *In't* or *In het*) *Jaer ons heeren* (*In the year of our Lord*)

On the same (or upright) fragment is engraved the figure of a man in a long gown, his face muffled up in a hood, and holding a book. This was evidently one of a series of statuettes placed in tabernacles on the left side of the effigy of the deceased. He is not a Saint, but perhaps intended for one of the ancient Doctors: and in a smaller niche below him, seated as it were at the feet of Gamaliel, is a smaller figure reading a book; his back is to the spectator, and along its whole length is extended the liripipe of his hood, as then worn.

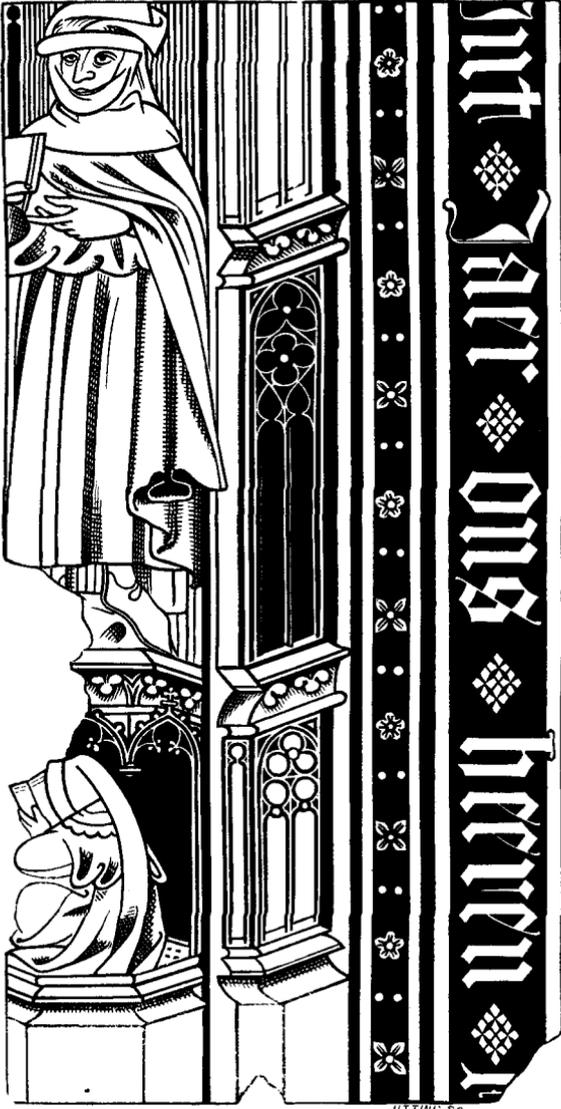
The other (oblong) fragment is a portion of a brass 1·8 × 9 in. of equal beauty, and of exactly the same style of art. It preserves the lower part of the face and the shoulders of the lady whom the brass commemorated. Her hands are raised in

prayer. Her head rests on a cushion which is supported by two angels; the cushion is tasseled at its corners, and ornamented with a very beautiful pattern of foliage, which incloses birds in circles. The annexed cut shews a very similar design occurring on the dress of one of the two wives of Robert Braunché at Lynn, which is one of the Flemish works already enumerated.



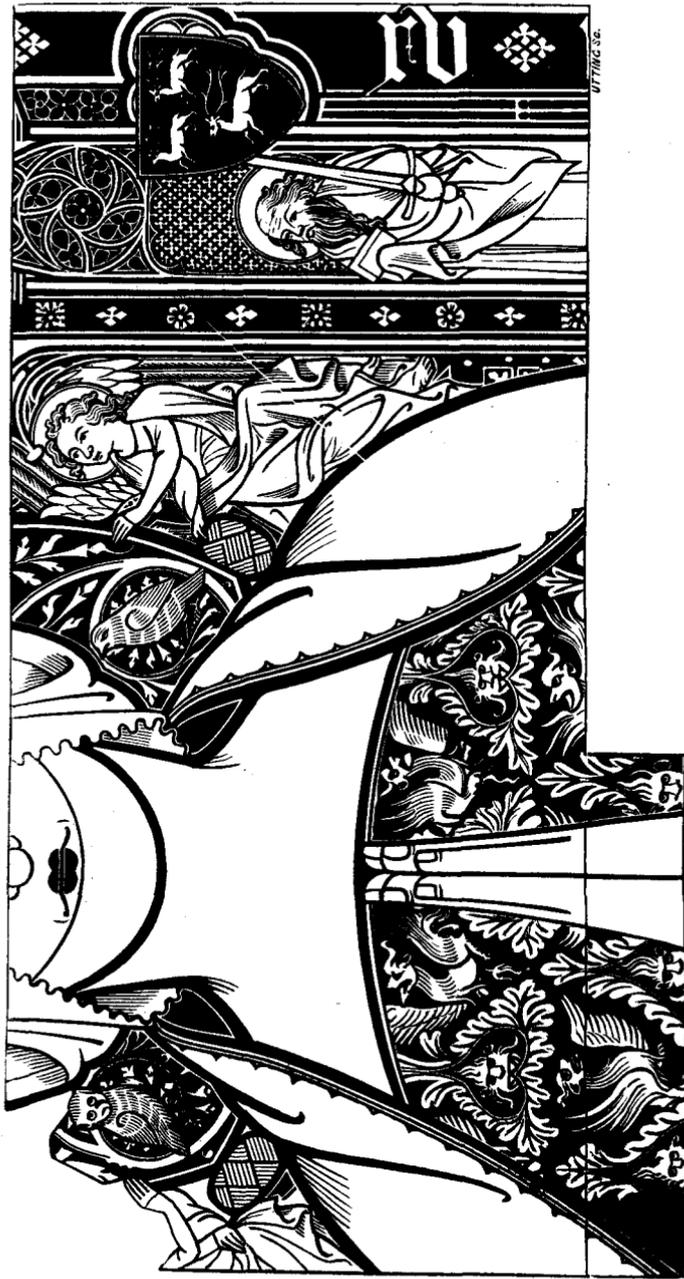
AT LYNN, A.D. 1364.

* In the *Journal of the Archæological Institute*, vol. iv. p. 363, is noticed the brass of John Dautesey, 1559, at West Lavington, Wilts, which had a Dutch inscription on its reverse; and in vol. vi. p. 414, some brasses found at Westerham, Kent, also of the middle of the sixteenth century, of which the reversed sides were of Flemish work, but the inscriptions in Latin.



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FLEMISH BRASS AT HARROW, CO. MIDDLESEX, DISCOVERED 1859.



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PORTION OF BRASS AT LÜBECK, A.D. 1350.

The body dress of the Harrow figure may also be compared with the details of Brasses at Lübeck, which are here introduced, in order to show how entirely the style of these unquestionably foreign examples accords with the supposed Flemish Brasses in England, as well as with the subjects of this article. The conventional dragon with foliage is copied from the Brass of John Luncborch, A.D. 1464, in the Katerinenkirke; and the small dragon is part of the diapering of one in the cathedral, dated 1350.*

But the most peculiar characteristic of the foreign style is the treatment of the mouth when represented in full face. The beau-

PORTION OF BRASS AT LÜBECK,
A.D. 1464.

* This brass represents bishops Burchardus de Serken and Johannes de Müll, who respectively died A.D. 1317 and 1350. It is an unbroken surface of brass, 12 ft. long by 6 ft. wide, entirely covered with the richest work, unsurpassed in artistic design, and probably forms the most splendid specimen in existence.

tiful head of the B.V. Mary at the close of this article (p. 284) is slightly reduced from the original, which forms part of the detail of the first mentioned Brass at Lübeck, A.D. 1464; it should be compared with the principal effigy at Harrow. Some persons have supposed that the line between the lips represents the Eucharistic Wafer; but the supposition is clearly disproved by this example; it was probably no more than one of those conventionalisms which in the middle ages held art with a tight grip.



Of the marginal rows of Saints which decorated the lady's brass the figure of Saint Paul remains, and near him is a shield of arms bearing three stags tripping. Also of the legend the two letters **xv**. In the tracery above Saint Paul there is again a remarkable correspondence with the annexed circle, which is copied from the Lübeck brass of 1350.

It is not easy to fix the date of these remains, but they may probably be assigned to the early part of the fifteenth century. The artistic design shows them to have been executed whilst brass engraving was still in its highest development; but the style of architecture, and mode of rendering it, and also the diapering of the dress, prove them to be later than most of the foreign specimens remaining in this country, and of a period when art had been here superseded by a hard mannerism.

Some curiosity will be naturally entertained to account for the circumstance, how fragments of very splendid sepulchral memorials, which once decorated a foreign church or churches, should be converted to the commemoration of the wife of a simple English gentleman.

One peculiarity of these beautiful relics is that they are not at all worn by attrition. No careless tread has ever blunted the sharpness of their lines. One might readily imagine them to have remained unused in the workman's shop from the time when the Flemish surface was engraved until they were required at Harrow. But, as the period of a century and a half involved in such a supposition appears too great for probability, it will be more satisfactory to look to other circumstances.

A few years before the plates were re-engraved, the Netherlands suffered, at the hands of the Reformers, a religious convulsion unparalleled even in England. Hordes of Anabaptists had diffused their doctrines throughout the country; their temper, wild enthusiasm, and reckless disregard of laws and institutions, spread with fearful rapidity, and in August 1566 the easily foreseen consequence was, that the people rushing to the churches tore down the images, and left even the buildings in a state of ruin.

Combining with these facts the evidence afforded by the plates themselves, a fair presumption is raised that the magnificent Brasses to which they originally belonged were worked and laid down, in the early part of the fifteenth century, in some cathedral or church in the Netherlands; torn away in 1566, and exported to London, where Brasses were still in great demand, and cut up and re-engraved by a London dealer.

The legend on the reverse of the female head runs thus :—

Here Dorothye frankyshe lyeth, whos mortall lym'es ar dead'.
 But to enioye im'ortall' rest, her soule to heben ys fleadd'.
 Whyles lyfe dyd' last, she was a paterne of good' lyfe,
 Deboute to god', good' to the poore, a chaste and perfet wyfe.
 For christ hys crosse she cald', agaynst the pang'e of death,
 Which she with mynd' (t' ye beheld', untill' her later breath).
 And' so gaue up her gost, to god' which lyfe dyd' lend',
 Who for her good' and' worthy lyfe, gawe her a happye end'.
 (Alt) hough y' death w'e dynt of dart hath brought her corpe asleape,
 (The ete)rnall' god', her eternall' soule, eternallye doth kepe.

Upon the reverse of the other fragment is this legend :—

Here lyeth buryed' y' body o(f Doroth)ye, late wyfe of Antony frankyshe, of waterstroford', in the Countye of Buck, Gent' and dowghter of william Bellamy of benden, in the parryshe of harrow upon the hyl', in the countye of Midd' Esquier, and' Katheryn his wyfe, which Antony and' Dorothye had' issue betwene them one sonne and' fowre dowghters, viz. Gerratt frankyshe, Jone, Mary, fraunces, and Jone, and the sayd Dorothye did' depart out of this worlde' the xx'e day of August, A°. 1574.

The burial of this lady (whose marriage is noticed hereafter, p. 287) is thus recorded in the Parish Register:—

1574. August the xxvth day Dorothy Franke.