

against the encroachers in the name of the president, or as they called him the "Mayor," and hence the title was perpetuated.

It was also customary in Newbury in former times to annually elect a "Mayor of Norcutt," whose jurisdiction was confined to the Lammas lands in Northcroft, and who was supposed to see that no person turned out but whose qualification was exceptional; his duties assimilating to those of a hayward, or keeper of the common rights.

Some Forms of the Cross, in its relation to Monumental Brasses,

*Being Notes from a Paper read before the Members and Friends of
the Oxford Ladies' Brass-rubbing Society, at the New Ash-
molean Museum, Oxford, 18th November, 1895, by the Rev.
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EXISTING brasses, in which the memorial takes the form of the Cross, are few in number, the total being only about 30 of all kinds. They are scattered over some fifteen counties, seven of them being assigned to Berks, Bucks and Oxon, where also there are a considerable number of the matrices of lost examples.

From the commencement of the 14th century to the reign of Henry VIII., when the cross-brass fell into disuse, its various forms fall naturally into four main divisions.

I. THE 14TH CENTURY, c. 1300—1325. Floriated crosses of considerable beauty, in which the distinguishing characteristic is that a head, bust, or demi-figure, is placed (*a*) either entirely above the cross, or (*b*) upon the intersection of the arms.

(*a*) This corresponds to the sculptural stone coffin-lid previously in use. No brasses are known to exist, but there are at least two matrices in Oxon alone, viz., at Dorchester and Garsington.

(b) Two good brasses, both in Oxon.

- i. *Chinnor*, c. 1320—1325. The stem, which was adorned with two pairs of bunches of foliage, and the border inscription are best; the remainder has unhappily been removed from its matrix (? destroyed), which formed part of the pavement of the chancel, and placed against the wall beneath the Credence Table, where it has been robbed of all sense of its beautiful proportions. It is a type of what was once probably a very numerous class. The head of a priest, showing the embroidered collar of his amice, occupies the central position. The finials are large and graceful, and the total height was 7ft. 10in.
- ii. *Merton College Chapel*, c. 1315, to Richard de Hakebourne. A slightly later type than the previous example, though of an earlier date. A demi-figure in eucharistic vestments covers and almost hides the narrow fillet which forms the centre of the cross. The very large finials and the stem are lost, but their outline may easily be traced in the stone.

Of much later date, c. 1380, is a cross at *Grainthorpe, Lincolnshire* (near Grimsby), without figure, but which in form seems to belong to those already mentioned. It is perhaps the most beautiful engraved medieval cross in existence. The outline of the head somewhat resembles that at Chinnor, with the addition of external cusps. A quatrefoiled circle enclosing a subsidiary cross forms the centre, and the base is built upon a rock rising from the sea, in which are swimming four fishes of different species.

II. THE 14TH CENTURY, c. 1325—1400. Quatrefoil and Octofoil Crosses. The head is expanded until a considerable space is left at the centre. Its margin consists of a band of metal forming a series of four or more usually eight ogee arches, and within the enclosed space is set a figure or symbol, disconnected with the rest of the composition. The stem frequently rises from a crest, badge, or other device.

(a) *Crosses with Octofoil head, and effigy of person commemorated.*

Good examples are still to be met with at E. Wickham, Kent, c. 1325; Wimbish, Essex, 1347; Taplow, Bucks, c. 1350; Sparsholt, Berks, c. 1360; Merton College Chapel, 1372; Hereford Cathedral, c. 1390; Hanbury, Staffordshire, c. 1390; St. Michael's, St. Alban's, c. 1400; Stone, Kent, 1408; and Cobham, Kent, 1447.

The Taplow brass is of local interest, and may be taken as an excellent example. The practice of placing an emblem or badge at the foot of the cross is exemplified by the dolphin which supports the stem. The civilian, whose effigy is depicted at full length within the head, was a "Fishmonger of London,"—hence the fish below. The legend runs as follows:—"Nichole de Aumberdene iadis pesioner de Londres gist icy: de salme eit mercy Amen."

The effigy within the much mutilated cross at Merton College is interesting as being that of a man in civil costume, but with the ecclesiastical tonsure.

- (b) *Crosses with quatrefoil head, and effigy.* At Woodchurch, Kent, c. 1320—1330, is a broad circle, lightly quatrefoiled within, and with the four points of a graceful floriated cross without, containing the full-length effigy of a priest in eucharistic vestments. The stem is lost. The circle bears a rhyming couplet in French Uncial characters.

Mestre Nichol de Gore gist en ceste place
Jhesu Crist prioms ore qe merci lui face.

Buxted Church, Sussex, has the only other known quatrefoil, to Britellus Avenel, rector, Canon of Windsor, who died in 1408. It is diapered, and exhibits his half-effigy in eucharistic vestments.

- (c) *Crosses with octofoil, and symbol instead of effigy.* Hildersham, Cambridgeshire, Robert de Paris and Wife Alianora, 1379, contains a fine symbol of the Father and Crucified Son (the holy dove being absent). Newton-by-Geddington, Northants, John Mulsho and Wife Joan, 1400. Here there is a symbolic picture of "Sancta Fides Virgo et Martyr."

III. THE 15TH CENTURY. The form of cross chiefly in use throughout the whole of the 15th century was the Latin, and good examples remain at Higham Ferrars, Northants, 1400; Cassington, Oxon, 1414; St. Mary's, Reading, 1416; Beddington, Surrey, 1425; Broadwater, Sussex, 1445; and Pepper-harrow, Surrey, 1487.

The arms of that at Higham Ferrars, which commemorates Thomas and Agnes Chichely, the parents of the Founder of All Souls College, are enriched with an elegant flowing pattern, and terminate in the evangelistic emblems, while at the intersection is placed a figure of our Lord.

The more usual form is a plainer cross, with its ends fleury, as at Cassington and elsewhere.

IV. THE 16TH CENTURY. Latin crosses are still met with, at Royston, Herts, c. 1500; Eversley, Hants, 1502; Sutton, Beds, 1516; Penshurst and Hever, Kent, c. 1520; and Floore, Northants, 1537.

They are for the most part small and very inferior in every respect to the earlier examples. That at Floore, the latest, is curiously drawn in perspective on a rock.

In the same period we meet occasionally with the outline and matrix of the Crucifix, though only one known brass example has survived. This is at Chelsfield, Kent, to Robert de Brun, rector, 1417, and is a full representation of the Crucifix, with St. Mary (lost) and St. John. It is only to be expected that such brasses should have been diligently eradicated at the time of the reformation and Puritan "crusades," but as there are very few matrices to be found, we may suppose that the Crucifix was never so popular as it is at the present.

Bontell, referring to the whole subject (Mon. Brasses, p. 117, note), observes that—

"Originally these engraved crosses constituted perhaps the most numerous class of brasses: their despoiled matrices *may be still seen* in almost every village church."

Almost 50 years have elapsed since those words were penned, and they now require to be sadly modified. The half-century has seen a wave of so-called "Restoration" pass over the whole country, and our village churches are hopelessly changed. One may enter church after church and see nothing but a dreary waste of black and red tiles, picked out with yellow,—the abomination of desolation to many who know what the church floors once were. Where there were brasses, they may perhaps have been let alone, though only too often they have been moved away from the graves where they marked the resting places of the dead, or they have been ruthlessly divorced from their very slabs, and gibbeted unmeaningly on some neighbouring wall, like the body of Saul on the walls of Beth-Shan. As for matrices only, few restorers have understood their value or cared for their meaning, and they have been broken up and carted away to the contractors' yards, or buried beneath the usurping tiles.

Some few, however, still exist, and these should all be carefully recorded and jealously guarded.

