



NORFOLK HELMET, FRAMLINGHAM.

THE NORFOLK HELMET IN FRAMLINGHAM CHURCH, SUFFOLK.

BY CHARLES GANZ.

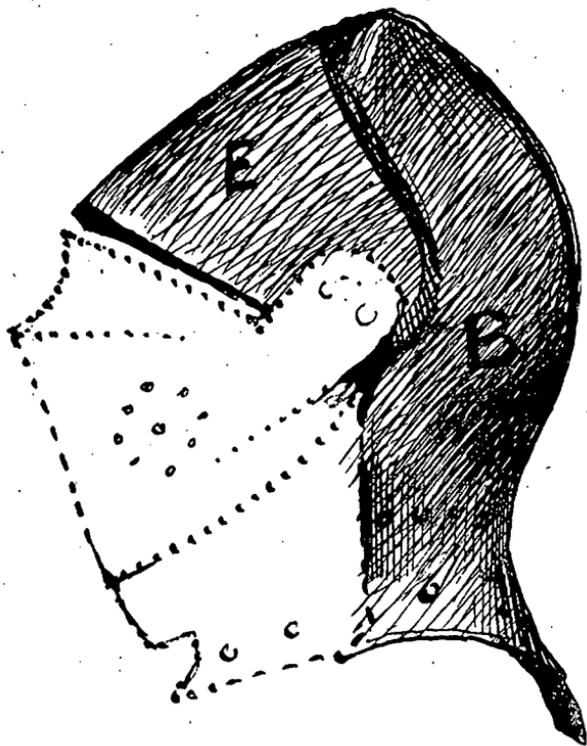
Though for many years a helmet surmounted with a crest has hung over the tomb of the third Duke of Norfolk, on the north wall of Framlingham Church, as recorded by guide-books, no opportunity for examining it closely had arisen until lately when it was safe-guarded in the rectory, while the restoration of the church was in progress.

No pictorial record has been traced of this historical memorial. The helmet in its present form, may be described as a composite one, as it could neither be a fighting nor a tilting helmet.

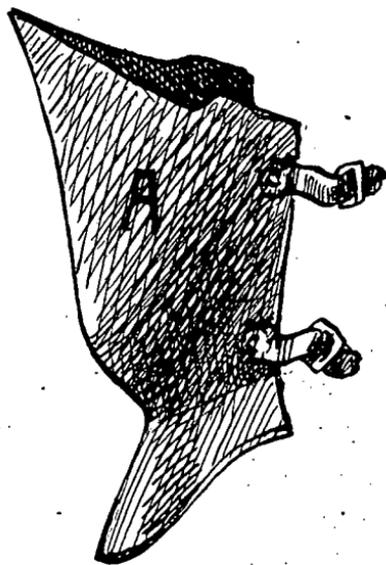
On the authority of Mr. Guy F. Laking (Keeper of the King's Armoury) to whom I am much indebted for valuable advice, the helmet may be described as consisting of a skull-piece and a "bouffe": these parts formerly belonged to two separate fighting helmets, and are now clumsily riveted together. "The skull-piece is its finest feature; it is characteristically English and of the very last years of the fifteenth or commencement of the sixteenth century. Indeed, it is the counterpart of the head-piece of the helmet, in the possession of Sir Edward Barry, of Ockwells Manor, Bray."

The beaver or vizor, as it might be called, is, in reality, a reinforcement vizor, known as a "bouffe," the use of which originally was to strap over and reinforce the actual vizor of a fighting helmet.

It certainly was no fighting helmet, as it has no occularium or slit for vision on its right-hand side, but was evidently put together for mortuary purposes, as it is



A and B are from separate helmets. E—Reinforcing plate. B—Skull-piece.
A has now been rivetted carelessly on to B, as in the photograph.



THE BOUFFE.



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entirely impracticable as a fighting head-piece. The decoration upon the 'bouffe' consists of a quasi floral pattern, in red colour on a gold ground. This appears to be the work of the undertaker, the gilding being crudely painted.

Helmets and crests were often placed over the graves of great warriors.

The helmet and crest of the Black Prince, with his shield, are treasured in Canterbury Cathedral, and in truth are unique historical and national heirlooms.

Sir John Gostwich's helmet, believed to have been worn at the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1520, hangs over his tomb in Willington Church, Bedfordshire. The ocellarium proves its former use. This helmet is surmounted by an eagle with outspread wings as its crest.

The armet of Sir George Brooke, K.G., third Lord Cobham, in Cobham Church, Kent, has a Saracen's head, carved in wood, as crest.

Similarly in Penshurst Place, Kent (Lord de L'Isle and Dudley) there is an iron helmet surmounted by a wooden porcupine for crest.

"The following ten English heaumes (helmets) of about 1515 are known to us :—

1. The Wallace heaume $14\frac{1}{8}$ inches. There can be no doubt that this most rare helmet has the additional interest of being of English fashion and manufacture. Indeed, so closely does it resemble in outline the tilting heaume hanging over the tomb, in Haseley Church, of Sir William Barendyne, high sheriff of Oxfordshire in the reign of Henry VIII., that it must be the work of the same armourer, though, unfortunately, both helmets are without an armourer's mark of any description:

2. The Barendyne heaume, $12\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

3. The heaume, in every way similar to the two preceding heaumes, bequeathed with the remainder of his collection to the Bargello, at Florence, by M. Louis Carrand. This heaume is labelled as coming from an English church—which statement is borne out by the painting upon its surface, customarily added by the undertakers in England when a helmet was used for tomb adornment.

4. The heaume of almost exactly the same period and form hanging in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, traditionally ascribed as being worn by King Edward IV. This heaume, which is circa 1500,

has had added to it, at some time, bars riveted in a loop-like fashion across the ocularia to lend to it a more heraldic appearance.

5. The Brocas heaume now in the Rotunda at Woolwich. (A magnificent example, but not indubitably English.)

6. The heaume figured in Meyrick & Skelton, Plate xi., Vol. i., and since bequeathed to the Bargello, at Florence. Also not indubitably English.

7. The heaume in Petworth church.

8. The heaume in Ashford church which was placed over the tomb of Sir John Fogge shortly after his death in 1499.

9. The heaume found in the triforium of Westminster Abbey in 1869; it was afterwards lent to Woolwich, but has now been given back to the Dean and Chapter.

10. The heaume now in the possession of Captain H. Lindsay, of Sutton Courtney, Berks., at present its original provenance unknown. Society of Antiquaries (2nd S., Vol. xviii., pp. 174-7)."

Extract from Catalogue of Wallace Collection, London.

The Norfolk Helmet. 'A chapeau turned up ermine' on which 'statant guardant' is the Norfolk lion, both carved in wood, is fastened by an iron bar to the apex of the Norfolk Helmet in Framlingham Church. The chapeau is 2½ inches in height. The lion is ducally crowned, and measures 13 inches in height, its tail was once broken in pieces, so that now it hangs down instead of being "extended," and the helmet is 15 inches high by 14 inches broad; the total height of helmet and crest is 30½ inches.

*The third Duke of Norfolk by his testament, proved the 18th day of November, 1554, bequeathed his body to be buried where his executors should think most convenient, and thereupon they buried him in the south aisle of Framlingham Chancel, on October 2nd, 1554. Henry Machyn, a citizen of London, who was present at the funeral says, that there was as goodly a hearse (? effigy) of wax as he had seen in those days, with a dozen banner-rolls of his progenitors, twelve dozen pennoncils, twelve dozen scutcheons with standard, three coats of arms, a banner of damask, and three banners of images and many mourners, and a "great dole" followed by a banquet.†

*Dugdale's Baronage, Vol. 3, p. 274.

†Holmshed 1121 (Hawes and Loder's, Framlingham, p. 123).

†Diary of Henry Machyn, citizen of London, ed. J. G. Nichols, for the Camden Society. "East Anglian," Tymms, Vol. i., p. 15.

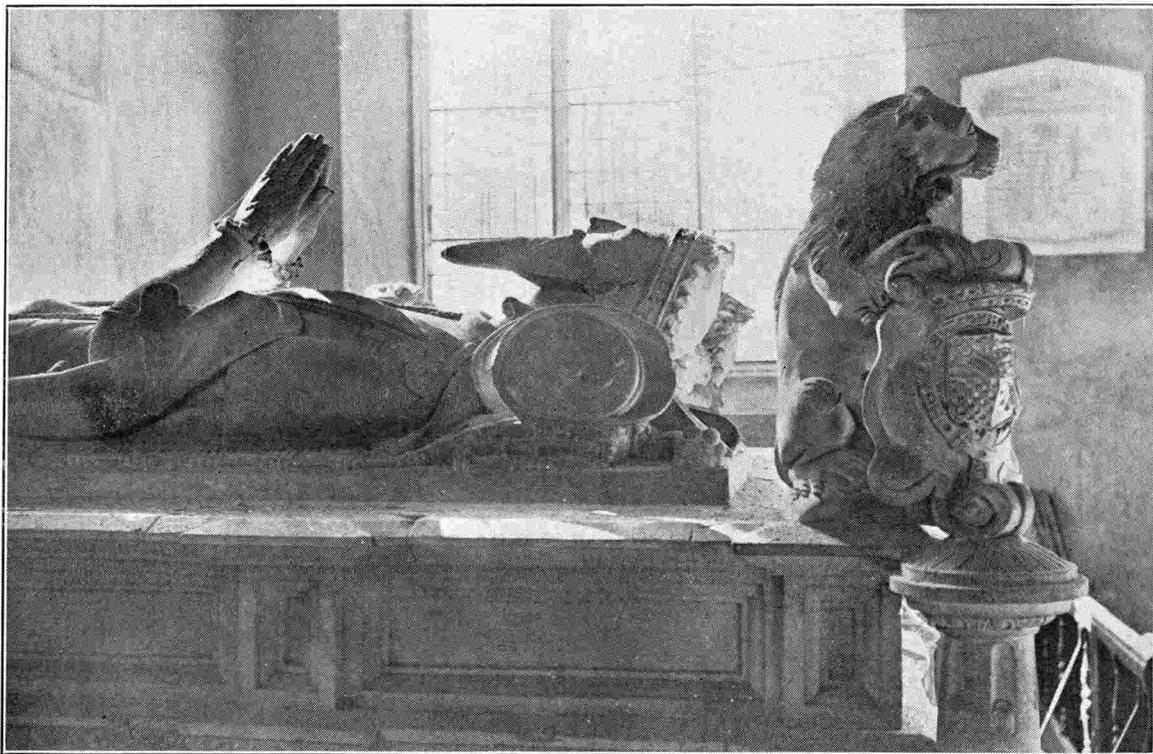


Photo by Cousins, Bury St. Edmunds.

TOMB OF 3RD DUKE OF NORFOLK, FRAMLINGHAM CHURCH.



COLLAR ON NORFOLK TOMB, FRAMLINGHAM CHURCH.

It may well be conceived that the helmet, with its imposing crest, now in Framlingham Church, was borne in this funeral cortege, so graphically described by this observing citizen. We read of one that was carried by the Windsor Herald at the funeral of the father of the third Duke.*

The lions supporting the armorial shields on the third Duke's ornate freestone tomb are very similar in artistic finish to the lion on the helmet. His head rests on a great helm, which was evidently surmounted by a Norfolk lion, as indicated by broken remains of its feet.

Hawes and Loder's illustration of the tomb is slightly inaccurate, as will be noted by a comparison with the photograph in this article.

A noticeable feature of the Duke's tomb is a collar on his breast, formed of oval medallions, each about 2 by $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches, which bear letters forming:—

G. R. A. CIA. DE. I. SV^M. Q^D. SV. M.

"By the grace of God I am what I am"; St. Paul's words to the Corinthians 15th chap., v. 10.

The life-history of the third Duke, the hero of Flodden Field, is so well known that recapitulation would seem out of place. The motto is said to have been worn in remembrance of his remarkable escape, by the death of King Henry VIII. on the night of January 27th, 1547, from the fate which had been already meted out to his son, Henry, Earl of Surrey, the poet.†

The Duke was committed to the Tower on December 12th, 1546, and was not released until 1554 by the order of Queen Mary.

His petition to the Lords for books while he was lying in the Tower of London, will bear repetition.

"He requests to have some of the books, which are now at Lambeth; for, says he, unless I have books to read, ere I fall asleep and after I awake again, I cannot sleep, nor have done these dozen years."

* Guide Book to Framlingham. R. Green. p. 55.

† "Memorials of Old Suffolk." F. S. Stevenson, 1908, pp. 152-9.

Further requesting:—

“That I may hear Mass and be bound upon my life not to speak to *him* who says Mass, which he may do in the other chamber whilst I remain within.”

“That I may be allowed sheets to lie on; to have licence in the day-time to walk in the chamber without, and in the night to be locked in, as I am now.”

And he concludes:—

“I would gladly have licence to send to London, to buy one book of St. Austin, ‘De Civitate Dei,’ and one of Josephus, ‘De Antiquitatibus.’” (Archæologia, Vol. XIII., p. 69).

Legends, we are often told, die hard; let us leave unquestioned the legend of the Framlingham helmet's having been worn at Flodden Field, a legend which has been woven round the third Duke's helmet, for it can do no harm, if it attracts attention to the romantic career of this noble and warlike scion of the Howard Family.*

NOTE. In the unique Armourer's Album which is preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, there is a design of a suit of armour belonging to Thomas, fourth Duke of Norfolk. The Album is the work of Jacob Toft or Jacobi, Armourer at Greenwich in Queen Elizabeth's reign.

My thanks are due to the Rev. J. Hulme Pilkington, and Mr. C. Cooke, of Framlingham, and Viscount Dillon, Curator, The Armouries, Tower of London.

*His Grace, the Duke of Norfolk, has lately sent £100, as a donation, to the Restoration Fund of Framlingham Church, 1908.