

ON THE HERALDRY WITHIN THE ABBEY GATE AT BURY ST. EDMUND'S, AS EVIDENCE OF ITS DATE.

FEW strangers visiting Bury can fail to have their attention arrested by that much admired relic of its former magnificence, the Abbey Gate. Those at all interested in such matters naturally desire to know the time of its erection. They may turn in vain to the valuable collection of dated examples of mediæval buildings in the Companion to the Glossary of Architecture, nor will Yates's History of Bury furnish a satisfactory answer, although they may there learn that it was erected sometime between 1327 and the end of that century. The architect, the archæologist, and the historian require a closer approximation to the fact. On a recent visit to Bury, not exactly as a stranger, but after a long interval, my curiosity was awakened as to this building; and while scrutinizing the architectural decoration with some misgivings as to its date, I caught sight of those beautifully carved shields of arms within the gateway. In them I saw I had, in all probability, the solution of my difficulty, and was well pleased to find such evidence of the time of its erection remaining on the building itself.

Yates describes this gateway as having been built in the place of one destroyed in a violent assault on the abbey by the inhabitants of the town in 1327. The rebuilding of the gateway, it will be observed, is inferred from the injury said to have been done at that time to the gates of the abbey. In another part of his volume we have further particulars of the assault, or rather assaults, for there were two; and we learn that in January, 1327, the townspeople "broke down the gates," and in October in the same year they are said to have "attacked and burnt the gates of the abbey." Those, who have compared historical accounts of

buildings with the condition in which they still remain, know that such words as "destroyed" and the like are often to be understood with great qualification. Whatever may have been the fact, it is unsafe to infer that the gateway was then rebuilt from such narratives of injuries done to the abbey. The author's conclusion, however, may still be true, though not warranted by his premises. In the progress of his description of the edifice, he mentions the shields within the gateway, as containing the arms of Edward the Confessor, Thomas of Brotherton "twice repeated", and Holland, Duke of Exeter. Now what date would these arms indicate? The first are found at divers periods in the 13th and 14th centuries, and even later; the second were borne, not only by Thomas of Brotherton, but also by his daughter Margaret, Countess, and afterwards Duchess, of Norfolk, on a shield of the same form, till her death in 1399; and as to the last, there was no Holland, Duke of Exeter, till 1398; nor is there reason to believe that any Holland bore that coat till after the accession of Richard II. Such an account of the building therefore leaves the inquirer at a loss as to what time between 1327 and the end of the century he is to regard as the date of its erection. Seeing what violent assaults the abbey had recently sustained, the abbots would hardly have been even half a century in completing their principal gateway.

The heraldry, as well as the architecture, will, when properly interpreted, bring us to a more definite conclusion; but it is with the evidence derived from the former only that I shall occupy myself on this occasion.

The arms on the shields are as follows:

1. Three lions passant guardant in pale; for Edward III., as King of England.
2. Missing.
3. England within a bordure of fleurs-de-lis; for John of Eltham, Earl of Cornwall, brother of Edw. III.
4. England with a label of three points plain; for Thomas of Brotherton, Earl of Norfolk, uncle of Edw. III.
5. A cross flory between five martlets; for Edward the Confessor.

6. England with a label of five points, each charged with three fleurs de lis ; for Henry, Earl of Lancaster, first cousin of Edw. II.

The only one of these coats, which admits of any doubt, is the 4th ; for as no colour appears on the label, it might be either that of Thomas of Brotherton, who bore his label *argent*, or that of Prince Edward, afterwards known as the Black Prince, who bore his *azure* before 1340 ; but, young as the latter was when these shields were carved, I have had no hesitation in attributing it to Thomas of Brotherton.* However, whether it be one or the other, will presently be seen to be not material.

The date of these shields I determine in this manner. The arms of the King of England must be before 1340, when Edward III. quartered France and England : and John of Eltham, who was born in 1315, died unmarried in September or October, 1336, having been created Earl of Cornwall in 1328, until which time probably no arms had been assigned him : add to which, that Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, was attaint and executed in 1321, and his brother and heir, the before-mentioned Henry, was not restored till 1327. Thomas of Brotherton died in 1338, but nothing depends on his coat, as it was continued after his death. From what has been said, therefore, we may refer the shields to between 1327 and 1337. And as the carving is not likely to have been executed till the gateway was at least substantially completed, we may conclude the building itself was erected at that time.

The death of John of Eltham has been taken as one of the limits of this space of time, because he died unmarried, and his coat armour thereupon lapsed ; and it remained unappropriated until, in the reign of Richard II., the same arms were borne by John Holland, Earl of Huntingdon, and afterwards Duke of Exeter, but commonly, if not always, impaled with the arms of Edward the Confessor, in consequence of a grant from King Richard, who was his uterine brother. Perhaps the presence of the arms of the Confessor may have conduced to mislead the historian of Bury as to the coat of John of Eltham. Edward the

* He was interred at Bury and had been a benefactor to the abbey.

Confessor was the patron saint of the royal family at that time; and Edward I., II., and III. may be said to have been named after him; and the arms ascribed to him, which were derived with a little modification from one of his coins, were not unfrequently associated with their arms. Beside which, the shield of arms, that I confidently attribute to John of Eltham,* could not have been that of John Holland, as Earl of Huntingdon, or Duke of Exeter, because, if so, the shield of the king would have borne France and England quarterly. I have stated that John of Eltham died in 1336. Some writers say his death took place in 1334, but a document in Rymer, dated 20th June, 1336, shows that he was then living.† He died suddenly at Perth in the September or October following. The English chronicles are reserved as to the cause of his death, but Fordun's *Scotichronicon*‡ states, with some apparent probability, that he fell by the hand of Edw. III. in a fit of anger, excited by an indignant reply from his brother, when reproved for certain ravages committed on some Scots, to whom the king had granted peace.

Of the missing shield I have said nothing. As no evidence, I believe, remains of what it was, I could offer only conjectures. If it bore the arms of Edmund of Woodstock, Earl of Kent, another uncle of Edw. III., it would somewhat narrow the space of time to which the building is referred, as he was put to death in 1330; but though we might have expected to find those arms, as he is the only prince of the blood between 1327 and 1330 whose coat armour is wanting; yet I have great doubt whether it would have been placed next to the king's. Prince Edward was created Earl of Chester in 1333, when about three years of age. The missing shield may therefore have borne his arms, but I do not think this very probable. Queen Philippa's would have been more likely to have occupied that place; or possibly some may suggest those of Isabella the Queen-mother, and that on her disgrace they were removed. She fell into disgrace in 1330; and whosever arms they may

* The arms of John of Eltham are erroneously given in Broke's Catalogue. Vincent has clearly shown that these were his arms. They are on the monu-

ment now universally admitted to be his in Westminster Abbey.

† Rymer's *Fœdera*, ii. p. 940.

‡ Hearne's Edit. iv. p. 1029.

have been, I think we may feel assured that, if they had been removed on that or any other occasion, or been accidentally destroyed any considerable time before the dissolution of the monastery, the space would not have been allowed to remain vacant. It appears to me most probable that the arms of Queen Philippa were on that shield, and that it was by some accident broken since the monastery was dissolved.

I have been induced to point out the incorrectness of Yates in regard to these shields, not with any intention of impugning the general accuracy of his history, but as a caution to those who are pursuing the study of mediæval architecture, without a competent acquaintance with the heraldry of the period; a subject only a few years ago so little understood that no reliance can be placed on the statements or conclusions of local historians, even of recent date, however trustworthy in other respects. W. S. W.

QUARTERLY MEETINGS.

HAWSTED AND HARDWICK, June 17, 1853.—*The Right Hon. and Rev. Lord Arthur Hervey, President, in the Chair.*

The Institute assembled at the church of Hawsted, where the Rev. W. Collett, the Rector, and Mrs. Collett received the visitors, and where the Honorary Secretary read a paper assigning, from documentary evidence, the precise dates of various parts of the fabric. The company then proceeded to Hawsted Place, the site of the old moated house of the Drurys. Here Sir Thomas Cullum conducted the visitors to some remarkably fine lime and oriental plane trees—the latter, it is believed, the oldest and finest specimens of the kind in the kingdom. Mr. Tymms then read an account of the manorial history of Hawsted and of the knightly family of the Drurys, by whom Hawsted Place was occupied for 150 years. On leaving Hawsted Place the company proceeded to Hardwick House, the seat of the Rev. Sir Thomas Gery Cullum, Bart. The Company having assembled in the entrance hall, the Secretary gave a brief history of the house and its possessions, and pointed out some of the most remarkable objects of vertu and antiquarian interest in the possession of the owner. The Rev. J. W. Donaldson, D.D., then read a descriptive and explanatory paper on the Etruscan tomb, brought from Chiusi in 1841, which occupies a prominent place in the hall. At the close of this paper the visitors adjourned to the dining-room, where a variety of antiquities had been arranged on the table, and were afterwards invited to an elegant repast under a marquee on the lawn. The various papers read at this meeting will be found printed in this volume, pp. 1-40.