

NOTES ON THE HOWARD MONUMENT IN THE SOUTH AISLE OF FRAMLINGHAM CHURCH.

Most of the visitors to Framlingham on this occasion have, I suppose, made some endeavours to learn beforehand what they were to see. If for this purpose they have been so diligent as to read the accounts of these monuments given in the following books, viz: *Hawes's History of Framlingham* (edited by Loder); *Green's History of Framlingham*; *Green's Stranger's Guide to Framlingham*; *Memorials of the Howard Family*, by the late Mr. Howard, of Corby; *Blomefield's History of Norfolk*; *Martin's History of Thetford*; and elsewhere, they will probably be in a very doubtful state of mind as to whose this monument is, having not less than four opinions to select from.

Under these circumstances I have thought that an examination of this question might perhaps be interesting to the visitors here assembled, and I hope that before I conclude I shall succeed in settling their doubts, and satisfying them of the justice of Mr. Hawes's opinion.

He says that this tomb bears "the portraitures of Thomas Howard Duke of Norfolk" (meaning the third Howard, Duke of Norfolk) "and one of his Duchesses (who was either his first wife, the Lady Anne, one of the daughters of King Edward the IVth, or else his second wife, the daughter of Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham)."

Then, after describing the monument and the coats of arms at the corners, he observes:—

"But there is no coat for the Duchess, who in all likelihood was the Duke's second wife, the mother of Henry Earl of Surrey; because the Duke in his life time, after the attainder of her father the Duke of Buckingham (who did bear the King's arms), where the arms of his Duchess should have been ranged in his coat, had put a blank quarter in the place."

However, Mr. Blomefield, in his *History of Norfolk*, vol. ii, p. 125, says that upon the dissolution of Thetford monastery "the remains of the second Duke were removed with his freestone monument to this church, where it was placed on the south side of the altar;" and further says "on the top lies his own effigy, by that of Agnes, daughter of Sir Philip Tilney, knight, his second wife, who was buried at Lambeth church, in Surrey."

This account of the monument I believe to be erroneous, and I found my belief on several grounds, viz:—

1st. Martin, in his *History of Thetford*, says of the second Duke, "at the dissolution, his remains were removed to Framlingham, and his tomb destroyed."

2nd. If the lady represented was the daughter of Sir Philip Tilney, there is nothing to explain the absence of her armorial bearings.

3rd. There was attached to the tomb of the second Duke at Thetford, a tablet referring to the nature of the tomb itself, in a manner which shewed that it differed materially from the tomb we are now examining. This tablet, which contained the bulk of seven octavo pages of biography, (do not fear that I mean to read it, you may find it in Blomefield, Martin, or Green), commenced as follows:—

"Forasmuch as it is written in the epitaph about the tomb here present, of the high and mighty Prince Thomas, late Duke of Norfolk, after his descent from his noble ancestors, declared in the same in writing, which is also set out in arms about the tomb: they that will see farther of his living and service done by him to his Prince, and of his honourable departing out of this world, shall resort and look in this table."

Now this clearly implies that the tomb of the second Duke not only was very rich in heraldic sculpture, but also bore a full genealogical epitaph; while the tomb we are examining bears only the arms of Howard, Brotherton, Warren, and Mowbray, quartered within a garter at each corner, and has no epitaph, nor even room for any.

4th. It has been a constant tradition that the third Duke,

during the latter part of his life, wore a collar with the motto "Graciâ Dei Sum Quod Sum" ("by the grace of God I am what I am"), in pious recognition of the hand of God in his escape from the scaffold by the death of Henry the VIIIth, the day before that appointed for his execution.

This collar will be seen represented on the Duke's effigy. For these reasons, and for others of less weight, with which I will not trouble you, I feel satisfied that the tomb *is not* that of the second Duke, and that the male effigy *is* that of the third Duke. That the tomb and the effigies belong to one another may be inferred not only from the *a priori* probability, but also from the manifest congruity between the collar I have already referred to on the Duke's neck, the book in the lady's hands, and the general religious character of the whole monument. I may here remark by the way, that casual observers often miss one feature of this tomb which materially adds to its religious character; I allude to the little figures, of which it would seem there were originally twelve (three on each pillar), representing, I suppose, either apostles or patriarchs, though only four now remain, almost concealed between the corner pillars and the tomb itself.

It remains to consider who was the lady.

Mr. Green, in his *History of Framlingham*, endeavouring to reconcile Blomefield's statement that this is the monument of the second Duke, with the evidence afforded by the collar, that the male effigy is that of the third Duke, suggests that the effigy of the father was removed to make room for that of the son, but that the lady's effigy is that originally placed on the father's tomb, viz: that of his second wife, the son's stepmother.

Surely sepulchral honours were not so managed in those days; and even in these utilitarian times the cheapest advertising undertaker would not suggest, nor the most penurious noble or ignoble family adopt such a method of immortalising the "dear departed."

However, Mr. Green has since abandoned this entirely

unwarrantable theory, and, in his *Stranger's Guide to Framlingham*, calls the female effigy that of the third Duke's first wife, Ann, daughter of Edward the IVth.

That the first rather than the second wife is here represented is the opinion of many antiquaries, and amongst others of the late Mr. Howard, of Corby.

I believe the arguments for this opinion are the following:—

1st. The Howard family would rather commemorate their ancestor's alliance with the daughter of a King, than with the daughter of a Duke.

2nd. The second wife was at variance with her husband, and lived apart from him, so that it is unlikely she would be buried in the same vault, or sculptured on the same tomb with him.

3rd. The unusual position of the lady, to the right hand of her husband, is supposed to indicate that she was a Princess of the blood royal.

4th. The first wife (according to Mr. Hawes) was buried at Framlingham, but the second seems to have been buried at Lambeth.

In answer to the first I would urge, that it is most unlikely that the Duke's descendants (who, be it remembered, were *all* descended from the second wife, the first wife having no issue but what died in early infancy) would select their father's first wife, rather than their own ancestress, to be represented on his monument.

As to the estrangement between the Duke and his second wife I would ask—if the Duke thought fit to desert the Duchess, for the superior charms of Bess Holland a washer in her grace's nursery, was that any reason that her children or grandchildren when erecting a monument to the Duke, should slight her memory, or prefer the Duke's first childless wife? Surely no.

But if, contrary to all ordinary custom and natural feeling, the Duke's descendants by his second wife (to whom of course the erection of this monument must be ascribed)

thought fit to commemorate the first rather than the second wife, how are we to account for the absence of all indications of her royal descent? A king's daughter with no arms, no crest, no supporters, no insignia of rank whatever!

We have already seen how this absence of armorial bearings is to be accounted for in the case of the second wife. Her father was attainted as a traitor, and therefore she had no arms.

But no such explanation exists in the case of the first wife. She was doubtless entitled to bear the royal arms of England. Where are they?

It has been attempted to explain this, by suggesting that at the time when this monument was erected it might have been dangerous for the Howards to ornament their ancestor's tomb with the royal arms.

I do not know when or by whom this monument was erected, and therefore perhaps do not duly estimate this danger. But I am at a loss to conjecture at what time the Howards could have feared to attribute royal descent to their ancestor's issueless wife, while they were actually, on this very tomb, claiming royal descent for that ancestor himself, by quartering the arms of England as descended from Thomas of Brotherton, fifth son of Edward the 1st.

I have said that the female effigy has no insignia of rank; this is not quite correct, for she wears a coronet. But this strengthens my case; for to such a coronet, a ducal coronet like that of her husband, the second wife was clearly entitled as a Duchess-by marriage. But the first wife never was a Duchess; she died in 1512, *o. s.* when as yet her husband was only Sir Thomas Howard. He did not become Earl of Surrey until one year, nor Duke of Norfolk until twelve years, after her death.

As to the position of the lady on the right hand, which is certainly unusual, I think it may be accounted for as a compliment paid to a wife (or, I should rather say to a mother or a grandmother), who, though deprived by her

father's attainder of her right to bear the royal arms, was not the less by birth a Princess of the royal race of Plantagenet, standing nearer to the crown than her husband; for she was descended from Thomas, of Woodstock, son of Edward the IIIrd; he from Thomas, of Brotherton, son of Edward the Ist.

As to the objection that the second wife was not buried at Framlingham, I would remark—neither was the second wife of the second Duke buried at Thetford, yet her effigy, and not that of his first wife was placed upon his tomb there.

Lastly, I wish to call the attention of visitors to the form and features of the female effigy, requesting them to bear in mind that the first wife died at thirty-six, the second at sixty-four. I shall be surprised if they do not find here a further argument for the opinion I have endeavoured to maintain, that it was the latter, not the former, that the sculptor intended to represent.

Before I conclude let me state the present contents of the vault.

This tomb was opened in 1841, and the vault was found to contain four bodies, all apparently aged, three male and one female. One of the former was in a lead coffin, the other three bodies were wrapped in cerecloth.

It may be difficult to draw any satisfactory inference from these bodies, but I should imagine that the male body in the coffin was that of the third Duke, who was buried here, the other three bodies having been removed, without their coffins, from Thetford.

The vault also contained a few fragments of sculptured stone, some of them seemingly being parts of the figures on the pillars above alluded to.

P.S. Since writing the above, I have noticed that the same mason's mark is cut upon this tomb as upon that of the Duke of Richmond (the Duke's son-in-law,) and on that of the fourth Duke's two Duchesses. This may perhaps throw some light on the date of their erection.

30th Sept., 1859.

GEORGE OCTAVIUS EDWARDS.