I.

NOTE ON THE SWORD OF BATTLE ABBEY, FORMERLY IN THE MEYRICK COLLECTION. BY SIR J. NOEL PATON, KT., VICE-PRESIDENT, S.A. SCOT. (PLATES XV. AND XVI.)

The unfortunate circumstances which led to the breaking up, in March 1872, of the Goodrich Court Armoury are still fresh in our recollection. Such events happen but rarely in the history of civilised nations, and are not soon forgotten. In my note on the jousting helm of Sir Richard Pembridge,[1] I mentioned that—the then Chancellor of the Exchequer having finally declined to purchase this collection for the nation at the very inadequate price of £45,000, for which, if not indeed for a much smaller sum, it was known Colonel Meyrick was willing to hand it over to Government—orders were given for its private sale; and that in less than six weeks thereafter the sum of £30,000 had been received for a portion which a casual visitor would hardly miss. It may tend to edification if I now add, on the authority of Colonel Meyrick's agent, that for the objects sold up to November 29, 1873 (chiefly, I regret to say, to Continental collectors and museums), the sum received amounted to £42,000, while there still remained to be disposed of the residue of the

[1] This note will appear in pt. ii. vol. v. of the "Archæologia Scotica."

European arms and armour, the magnificent ivories, and the entire Indian collection—together estimated to produce about £15,000 more; in all, some £57,000. So much for imperial cheese-paring.

The beautiful relic of the stately ecclesiastical life of mediæval England which forms the subject of the present note was deservedly esteemed one of the most interesting and authentic objects in the Meyrick collection. It is engraved, though but indifferently, in Skelton's "Illustrations of Arms and Armour in Goodrich Court," vol. ii. plate 101, where it is thus described by Sir Samuel Meyrick:—"A war-sword, used as one of state, having been made for Battle Abbey, Sussex, which William the Conqueror endowed with exclusive jurisdiction. It was fabricated during the abbacy of Thomas de Lodelowe,[1] who was abbot from 1417 to 1434. Sir John Gage, K.G., being in the reign of Henry VIII. one of the commissioners for receiving the surrenders of religious houses, this sword was delivered into his hands. It has remained in the possession of his posterity at Firle Place in that county until the present Viscount Gage, with the most liberal and elegant expressions, added it to this collection. The pommel and cross are plated with silver, engraved and gilt. On each side of the former is a shield, charged with the arms of Battle Abbey—viz., a cross, in the 1st and 4th quarters a crown of strawberry leaves, in the 2d and 3d a sword, the point in chief. The whole between the initials t. l."

When compared with the original, this description will be found very precise and full. But I would further draw attention to the general design of the sword—so remarkable for its grand simplicity and its look of delicate strength, to the beautiful Gothic enrichment of its guard and pommel, and to its weight and balance—the latter pointing it out as a genuine war-sword, though used, it would appear, for purely pacific purposes. It should also be noted that the fashion of the sword is of a date anterior to the period of Abbot Lodelowe,—a fact which suggests, what there are other grounds for believing probable, that it may have been copied from an earlier weapon. The blade, which has the centre ridge strongly marked, has been cruelly ground down, but still retains the

[1] Thomas de Lodelowe, who had been cellarer of the monastery, was elected abbot 11th May 1417, and was invested with the temporalities on the 30th of the same month. He resigned in 1434.—*Gleanings respecting Battle and its Abbey.*

tapering shape of swords of this type. When it came into my hands, the grip was *gone*, and the guard and pommel loose on the tang, which is very strong, and rough from the hammer. In this condition, I have since learned, it was when presented by Lord Gage to Sir Samuel Meyrick. But, partly with a view to its preservation against further wear-and-tear, partly to bring out more clearly the beauty of its proportions, I have had it fitted with a new grip.

Thus far the history of the sword is clear enough. A question, however, arises as to why the Abbey of Battle came to be possessed of such a weapon at all—bearing the armorial ensignia of the monastery, and the initials of its abbot's name. For at no time does it appear that a sword formed part of the equipment of an abbot, whatever his dignity, or whatever the extent of his privileges and jurisdiction—never, at least, subsequent to the existence of those strong-fisted lay abbots of the tenth and eleventh centuries, to whom so ready a means of conciliating dissent was no doubt a convenient if not an indispensable adjunct. But the monastery of the Place of Battle was in many ways exceptional; and certain circumstances connected with its establishment, together with another sword which figures in its history, may enable us, if not to answer the question satisfactorily, at least to make a guess at its solution.

The Battle of Hastings must ever be interesting to Scotsmen, as the first shock of that mighty wave of Norman aggression which so swiftly and so thoroughly submerged the liberties of that portion of Great Britain south of the Tweed, and which menaced for so long the institutions of our own northern land—flowing and ebbing, again and yet again—leaving misery and desolation, but, thank God! not conquest, in its track—until two centuries and a half after the subjugation of England (for the third time in her eventful history) it broke for ever in a spray of blood against the stubborn Scottish spears at Bannockburn. It will be remembered that at first Duke William affected to base his claim to the crown of England on right and justice, not on conquest, to which he professed to have been driven by the sacreligious perjury of Harold. On his advance from his entrenched position at Hastings on the morning of the battle (14th October 1066), he paused on the height of Telham, where he donned his war-gear and mounted his charger. It was here, on horseback, and in sight of all his army, with the more precious of the relics on which

Harold had sworn his fatal oath suspended round his neck, that William made his vow to erect on the field of battle, should he prove victorious, a monastery in commemoration of the event. The battle was fought, the victory was achieved, and, faithful to his word,[1] the conqueror gave command that "on the same stead on which God granted him that he might subdue England an abbey should forthwith be erected, where perpetual praise might be offered for the souls of such as were there slain," Norman and English alike. Indeed, on the authority of Matthew Paris, he so far extended his late and safe generosity as to include the perjured soul of Harold himself in the number.

It is unnecessary here to go into any details touching the erection of this "Monastery of St Martin of Battaille" on the hill of Senlac—a spot which the blood of free-born and heroic Englishmen, shed in defence of king and fatherland, had made so sacred, that not even its consecration as the site of this blasphemous thank-offering to the God of justice, of mercy, and of truth, could render it other than holy ground. By the express command of the conqueror, the high altar of the church—which was dedicated to the Holy Trinity, the Virgin Mary, and St Martin the Confessor, as patron saint of the Norman and French men-at-arms—was placed on the spot where Harold and his standard fell.

The monastery was of great extent, and possessed large endowments and many privileges. The *Carta Prima* not only exempts the monastery from episcopal jurisdiction, but confers the exemption in as ample a manner as that enjoyed by the metropolitan church of Canterbury. It also grants freedom from all tax and service whatsoever; the right of free warren in all its manors; treasure-trove; the right of inquest; sanctuary in cases of murder and homicide; and even gave the abbot the royal power of pardoning any condemned thief whom he should pass or meet going to execution. It is with the first of these privileges mainly—the entire independence of the abbot, alike of episcopal authority at home and of the authority of the parent monastery of Marmoutier, that it appears to me the sword referred to may be connected.

[1] It would seem, however, that his memory required to be jogged more than once by William Faber, the energetic and accomplished monk of Marmoutier, to whom the building of the monastery was afterwards entrusted, and who was near him when the vow was made.

It is recorded by Browne Willis in his "View of the Mitred Abbies," written about 1774, and printed in "Leland's Collectanea," that "in this church the Conqueror offered up his sword and royal robe which he wore on the day of his coronation." Whether the sword thus offered up was the actual weapon worn by him on the day of the great victory, as tradition narrates, it is hard to say. But probably the same sword served for both purposes. For that he did wear a sword at the battle of Hastings is, as we shall see, scarcely open to doubt, although we learn from that invaluable contemporary record, the Bayeux tapestry, that he fought that day with a ponderous bludgeon-like mace—not with a sword.[1]

In one of his interesting and exhaustive notes to "The Norman Conquest," vol. iii. p. 463, Dr Freeman discusses the weapon used by Duke William at Senlac—certain accounts of the battle, at variance with the Bayeux tapestry on this point, describing him as using a sword on the occasion. Dr Freeman concludes—"He may very well have carried both mace and sword, but the sword does not appear in the tapestry." This is quite true; but the reason, which is obvious enough, has escaped the notice of the learned historian. Generally—indeed I may say invariably—in the Bayeux tapestry, when horsemen, not actually wielding the sword, are represented with the left side towards the spectator, the sheathed sword is shown; when with the right side exposed, no indication of the sword appears. To this latter rule I can find only two exceptions—both unimportant figures. Now, it so happens that in all the views of the conqueror on horseback, with but one exception, his right side is presented to the spectator, and—as in the case of the other mounted figures in the same position—the sword is not shown, the peculiar shape of the Norman saddle, and the manner in which the great kite-shaped shield is borne, sufficiently explaining why. The exception I allude to occurs in the representation of the surrender of Dinan, where Duke William receives the keys on the point of his spear. In this case

[1] On the same authority we know that in his expedition to quell the rebellion of Conan of Bretagne he was armed with the same unlovely implement. This also was a war against those he considered his own kindred and subjects; and it is not improbable that this weapon was assumed on both occasions in the same spirit of hypocritical quibbling which made the mace the arm of churchmen in the field, as it was of Bishop Odo at Senlac.

his bridle-hand is towards the spectator, and his sword is represented by his side. On the other hand, in all the views of the Norman on foot or seated, he carries a sword, either sheathed, drawn, or suspended by his side—notably in the magnificent standing figure, undoubtedly intended to represent him in the act of confiding the consecrated banner sent him by the Pope, to Toustain the White, on the departure of the army from Hastings on the morning of the great battle. To this rule there are but three exceptions. In the first category, where, standing in full war-harness, he confers knighthood on Earl Harold after the capture of Dinan. Here the gallant Englishman has a sword and sword belt, while the Norman has neither, indicating, I am disposed to think, with that marvellous fidelity to minute fact which makes this tapestry so valuable to the antiquary and the historian, that William, arch-dissimulator as he was, had invested his generous and unsuspecting dupe with his own sword as an act of special grace.[1] In the second category, where the Bastard is seated, giving orders for the building of ships for his great expedition, he is represented entirely unarmed; also where, seated in his robes of peace, and holding the consecrated banner in his left hand, he receives the messenger from Harold before the battle of Hastings. But in this latter case, his right side being towards the spectator, and his mantle more than usually voluminous, the sword could not be shown.

We therefore see that there is no inconsistency or improbability in the tradition that King William presented to the favoured Abbey the sword he had worn at the battle. And although in the Chronicle of the Monastary—which records, under 1087–1095, the presentation by William II. after his coronation, and in compliance with the paternal command, of his father's royal pall and feretory—no mention is made of the previous offering up of his sword by the Conqueror himself, as stated by Browne Willis, the conspicuous place, which, as we shall see, a sword holds in the arms of the Abbey, coupled with the existence of the sword before us,

[1] It is not unworthy of note that the only other instances which I can trace in the tapestry of the sword-belt being worn outside the hauberk, are the two scouts reporting to Harold the position of William's army, and possibly this was the English fashion; in which case my notion as to William's having invested Harold with his own sword falls to the ground.

affords strong corroboration of the tradition. It is further recorded by the careful and seemingly well-informed writer just named, that along with his sword the Conqueror offered up the "royal robe which he wore on the day of his coronation." These, he says, "the monks kept till the suppression, and used to show them as great curiosities, and worthy the sight of their best friends and all persons of distinction that happened to come thither." It is a question whether the royal robe here mentioned as having been offered up along with his sword by the Conqueror himself may not have been the *pallium regale* presented, according to the Chronicle, along with his father's feretory by William Rufus. But whether it was or no, the probable significance of the gift remains the same.

The vestment called pallium in the middle ages was regarded as the ensign of jurisdiction, and was undoubtedly the direct descendant and representative of the paludamentum of Roman emperors and generals. The pallium of Pope Gregory the Great is described as a long band of white linen[1] "which hung from the right shoulder in a circular form in front of the breast, and was then turned over the left shoulder, with the end hanging behind"—clearly symbolising the more ancient garment. But so early as the tenth century I find it had assumed the form of a narrow band round the shoulders, with bands of the same width depending from it in front and rear, as represented in the miniature of Abbot Elfnoth,[2] who died in 980, and in the arms of the see of Canterbury, with which we are all familiar. But the use of this vestment was not confined to ecclesiastics alone; for, "as kings by their coronation are admitted into a sacred as well as a civil character, the former of these is particularly manifested in the investiture with clerical garments"[3]—the first of these being appropriately the dalmatic or open pall—the symbol of jurisdiction. It would appear, however, that the pall, as worn by sovereign princes, had retained the more ancient form, often represented in mediæval art, and described by Ducange as "four-cornered, double, and so formed that when placed on the shoulders it covered the feet in front and behind, but at the sides it barely touched the knees." "Of the same shape," he

[1] Monumental Brasses, by Parker of Oxford, xxx., xxxi.

[2] In the Bayeux tapestry, Archbishop Stigand also wears a pallium of this form.

[3] The Glory of Regality, by Arthur Taylor, F.S.A., p. 80.

adds, "was the pallium of the English kings; for it is thus described by Thomas of Walsingham when he treats of the coronation of Richard II., king of England: 'Thereafter the archbishop puts on him the royal pallium, saying, Receive the four-corned Pallium, that by it you may understand that the four parts of the world are subject to the divine power, and that no one can reign prosperously in the world but he upon whom the power of ruling has been conferred from heaven.'" But it was understood that "the anointing of kings and their investiture in 'Bysshopps gere' did not give them power to discharge any of the priestly functions, but only made them 'spiritualis jurisdictionis capaces.'"[1] In the case of one of the fiery temper and indomitable self-assertion of the Conqueror, however, we can readily understand how, once invested with the symbols of spiritual jurisdiction, and being thereby made theoretically capable of such jurisdiction, he would not be slow to take advantage of the fact to assert his practical capacity also, by vigorous and high-handed interference in spiritual affairs, as he actually did. In his case, therefore, the assumption of this symbolical vestment was peculiarly significant and appropriate. Especially was it so after his rupture with the vatican in 1078, when, it will be remembered, he resolutely refused to pay that homage to the throne of St Peter which its then occupant demanded of him—standing up with characteristic magnanimity for the grand principle, that within his dominions the Church should be free from every despotism save his own. And it must have been with no small gratification that he donned his pallium on those occasions when it was his policy—evidently with a view to touch the imagination and overawe the disaffection of his subjugated people—to appear in public decked with the ensigns of sovereignty; if not, indeed, which would seem to have been more than once the case, to repeat the act and ceremonial of coronation.

Reverting to the Chronicle of Battle, we see that, along with the pallium of the Conqueror, his unworthy son also presented to the Church his feretrum or feretory[2]—the name appropriately given to the litter-like shrine in which the relics of saints were borne in processions, but

[1] Ibid, pp. 36, 264.

[2] In the 9th and 10th centuries the use of this feretory, chasse, or *coffre transportable*, would appear to have become general.

which cannot properly be applied to any stationary reliquary. In the historical accounts of the unhappy oath of Harold, a reliquary holds a conspicuous place. But whether the tradition be correct, that he swore his oath of fidelity to William in ignorance that he did so on relics of peculiar sanctity—the reliquary containing them having been treacherously covered over with a cloth by order of Duke William—it is unnecessary here to inquire. The Bayeux tapestry, however, clearly contradicts this tradition. But on such a point as this the evidence of the tapestry, generally so reliable, must be received with caution, as it would doubtless be the object of those by whom that wonderful pictorial chronicle was executed to ignore as far as possible any such act of treachery on the part of the successful warrior to whose glorification it was dedicated. In the representation of Harold's oath to William in the tapestry, the former is standing between two uncovered reliquaries, and touches both with his outstretched hands. These reliquaries are placed on separate altars, which are heavily draped; and the larger and probably the more sacred of the two—that nearest to William—which the right hand of Harold touches, is undoubtedly a portable feretory, the two spokes by which it was borne being distinctly shown, as we see them in middle-age illuminations and sculptures.

In the accounts of the movements of Duke William we hear more than once of "his relics;" and it is by no means an extravagant supposition that this feretory, which had played so important a part in laying the foundation of his claims on the crown of England, was that containing the relics of St Valéry, subsequently exhibited to encourage his army before sailing for England, and that it was carried with him on his expedition. For it seems undoubted that from its contents were selected those more potent relics which he wore upon his person on "the day of the great slaughter."[1] And it appears more than probable that this also was the *feretrum* presented, by his deathbed command, to the church which he had founded, and on which, as it is stated, he had previously bestowed those memorials of his conflict and his triumph—the sword he wore as an invader at Hastings, and the robe in which, surrounded by death and conflagration, he donned the kingly crown at Westminster. It is also more than probable that it was the feretory, the sacrilegious

[1] Matthew Paris.

spoliation of which by Henry,[1] second Abbot of Battle, between 1096 and 1102, rendered it necessary for Abbot Ralph,[2] between 1107 and 1125, to make a new shrine to take its place, as narrated at large in the Chronicle.

Taken together, then, I think we are warranted in regarding these gifts, made either by himself or in obedience to his express command, as intended to be visible symbols of the conqueror's claims on England—the Pallium (which, probably, in the case of monarchs as of ecclesiastical dignitaries, was the direct gift of the supreme Pontiff) representing his divine right through royal consecration and investiture; the feretory, with its sacred contents, representing his right through the oath of Harold; his "own good sword," as he called it on his death-bed to his son and successor, representing his right through conquest—the only right which he ventured to assert when at last brought face to face with the grim potentate, in whom, for the first time in his long and triumphant career, he had to own a master yet sterner and more inexorable than himself,—an inquisitor under the cold scrutiny of whose eyes the splendid mendacities of his life had to confess themselves the paltry shams they were.

Of the ultimate fate of this second receptacle for the relics of the Conqueror—like the first, as the Chronicle informs us, a gorgeous effort of the goldsmith's and jeweller's art—there does not appear to be any record. But if it survived till the dissolution, as in all likelihood it did, we may only too easily infer what that fate must have been. The "enlightened spirit of the age" which ruthlessly despoiled the venerable shrine of Edward the Confessor at Westminster, and the yet more sacred tomb of the heroic Harold at Waltham, as here in Scotland it sacked and overturned the tombs of our patriot Bruce and our saintly Margaret, was not likely to resist the temptation held out to its selfish greed by the gold and silver, the jewels and the gems, of the feretory of Abbot Ralph.

Of the fate of the sword and robe something more definite is known. At the dissolution they fell into the hands of Sir Anthony Browne,

[1] Between Gausbertus, first abbot, and Henry, Browne Willis places an Abbot Ralf, 1089—v. vi. p. 178.

[2] Between Henry and Ralph, Browne Willis places an abbot, Gaufridus, who, he states, governed for three years—v. vi. p. 178. According to the Chronicle, he was *governor* only, no successor to Abbot Henry having yet been appointed.

Master of the Horse to Henry VIII., to whom the Abbey, with the lands, lordship, and manor of Battle were granted in 1538, at which date "the church, and some other portions of the Abbey, were destroyed by the authority of the Commissioners."[1] At a subsequent period, the sword and robe, and, it is believed, the original document known as the Roll of Battle Abbey, which under the care of the monks had survived the vicissitudes of five centuries, were taken to Cowdray House, near Midhurst, Sussex, by Lord Montague, a descendant of Sir Anthony Browne; and there is every reason to believe that at the burning of that place in 1793 all three perished.

Having thus indicated the history of the sword presented by the Conqueror to the Church of Battle, and at the same time ventured to guess at the reason of its being so presented, it is now necessary briefly to inquire into the *raison d'être* of the sword before us. It is clear that from the first the great Norman had determined to make the monastery of the Place of Battle—the earliest of his ecclesiastical establishments in England—serve not only as a monument of his victory over Harold and his conquest of the English crown "by his own good sword," but, at the same time, as an unmistakeable token to all whom it might concern, the existing English hierarchy in particular, that he, "William the Bastard" (as with something of the bravado of the parvenu he styles himself), had resolved henceforth to be lord and master in ecclesiastical as in civil affairs. It was no doubt in furtherance of this object that he conferred on the abbot his royal privileges,—above all, the privilege of absolute independence of every authority, spiritual or temporal, save that of the Crown,—a privilege which the abbots of Battle long valued so highly and guarded so jealously. And it is clear from the terms of the Chronicle that while he lived he regarded the preservation of this independence by the Abbot of Battle as a point closely affecting his own royal dignity. Looked at in the light of these facts, and of the fact already alluded to—of the prominent place occupied by a sword in the arms of the Abbey, it seems a fair inference that the sword of the Conqueror was meant to be regarded by the abbots as a sort of tenure-sword, the symbol of their independence of all authority save that of the king alone. And in this light it can scarcely be doubted it was religiously viewed. After the lapse of three

[1] Gleanings respecting Battle and its Abbey.

centuries and a half, however, the venerable and venerated relic, in all likelihood a rude and unadorned weapon, such as we see represented in the tapestry and other contemporary records, may well have fallen into a state of dilapidation discordant with the gorgeous ideas of an abbot of the beginning of the fifteenth century; and so, for the honour of the Abbey and the glory of the royal founder, it behoved the good Abbot Lodelowe to have fabricated a new and more magnificent implement, to take its place in ceremonial processions, or on those solemn occasions when he held high court and administered justice as lord of the widespread liberties of Battle. Save on this supposition, *i.e.*, that the sword under notice was made to take the place, on public occasions at least, of the actual sword of the Conqueror, I confess my inability to account for its existence at all. At the date of the dissolution, as Sir Samuel Meyrick records, it was delivered, no doubt as a token of resignation, into the hands of Sir John Gage, one of the commissioners who received the surrender of the monastery of Battle. Some forty years ago the present venerable Viscount Gage presented it to the Goodrich Court collection, whence, in April 1872, it came into my possession. At one time I half ventured to believe it possible that this might be the actual sword of William, refurbished and adorned by the pious care of Abbot Lodelowe. And no doubt a certain foundation was afforded for this notion by its striking resemblance to a sword of the eleventh century preserved in the Museum of Artillery at Paris, to the swords carried by the knights in the Bayeux tapestry, and to the sword borne by the Conqueror on his great seal. But if the statement that the original sword was taken to Cowdray and there burnt in 1793 be accepted as correct, the pleasant dream must be dismissed.

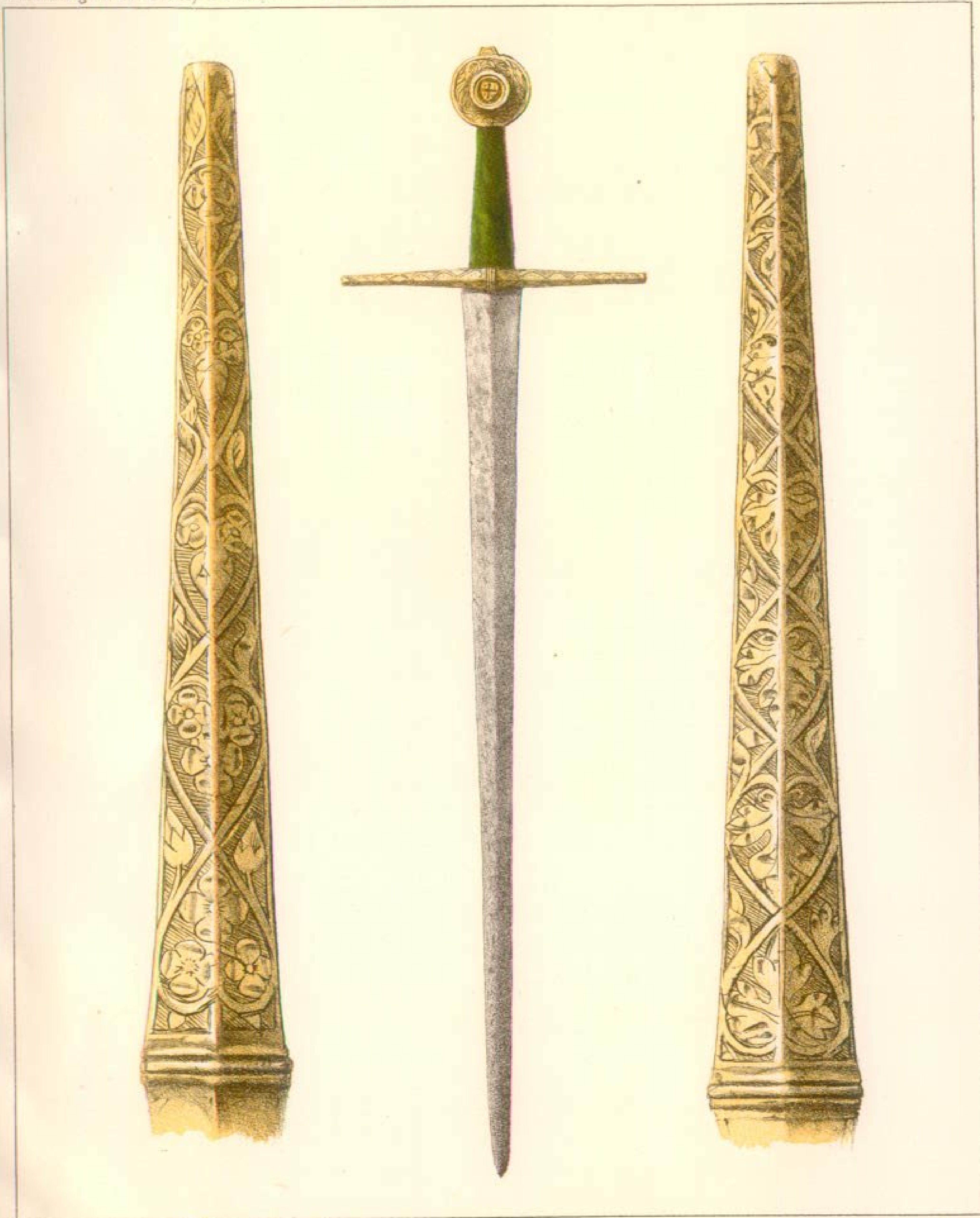
I have now briefly to refer to the arms of the Abbey, as engraved on the pommel of this sword—the oldest record of the bearings I have met with, although probably earlier representations are known. The charges on the sword are: A cross; in the 1st and 4th, a coronet of strawberry leaves; in the 2d and 3d, a sword, the point in chief. Here no tinctures are indicated; but the cross, which is channelled, has evidently been originally filled with enamel—no doubt *gules*. The next in date which I have met with occurs on the reverse of the seal affixed to the deed of surrender in 1538. This is the seal of the abbot; and the shield on which the arms

are represented—being only part of a complicated design—is necessarily very minute,—a fact which may account for the probably incorrect blazon of the arms by the author from whom I quote; for I have not myself had an opportunity of examining the seal. It is impossible, too, that in a space so small the tinctures could have been indicated, even had the custom of indicating these in the present way (said to be an invention of no earlier date than the middle of the 17th century) been then in general use, which I believe I am correct in saying was not the case.[1] The blazon of the arms as borne on this seal is given as follows:—"Gules, a cross, or, between four crowns, or." The blazon next in date, given in Fuller's "Church History," 1656, is—"Gules, a crosse, Or, between a crown, Or, in the 1st and 4th quarters; A sword (bladed Argent, hilted Or) in the 2d and 3d quarters." "Here," the author adds, "the armes relate to the *Name,* and both *Armes* and *Name* to the *fierce fight* hard by, whereby *Duke William* gained the *English Crown* by *Conquest,* and founded this Abbey. Nor must it be forgotten that the Text ✠ [an old English X] pierced through with a dash, is fixed in the navill of the *Crosse.* . . . This was the *Letter* of *Letters* as the received character to signify Christus." A yet later blazon of the arms of Battell is given about 1774 by Browne Willis.[2] "Argent, a Cross Gules, in fess a Mitre; in Chief and Base a ducal coronet; on each side of the Mitre a Monde." The only other blazon I have met with is that given in Burke's "Encyclopædia of Heraldry," ed. 1844, and is as follows:—"Argent, on a cross gules, a mitre or, between two regal crowns, in pale, and two mounds, in fesse, of the last." It is to this latest blazon I would chiefly allude as apparently a good example of that process of deterioration and transformation of heraldic ensignia, of which the archives of our own and other courts of armoury could no doubt supply so many illustrations. It is of course quite possible that between the accession of Abbot Lodelowe in 1417 and the deposition of the last abbot, John Hamond, in 1538, a new grant of arms may have been obtained. But such a thing is most unlikely. It is much more probable that the blazon given by Burke—like that given

[1] It is, however, to be noted that so early as 1220 marks have been traced on seals, which adepts surmise to be indications of tinctures.—Seaton's "Law and Practice of Heraldry in Scotland," p. 198.

[2] "Leland's Collectanea," vol. vi. p. 264.

as the bearings on the abbatial seal appended to the deed of surrender—is the result of a careless or ignorant reading of a blurred and originally obscure seal. It is to be observed that the arms as engraved on the sword about 1417 have, in 1st and 4th, a coronet of strawberry leaves—that is, a ducal coronet. In Burke's blazon this has become a "regal crown," and has been transferred to the cross, in pale. Then on the sword we find, in 2d and 3d, a sword erect. But from the exigencies of space, and the peculiar character of the sword of that early time (of which this is an unusually fine example), it will be observed that the pommel is rendered of a size so disproportionate as to give the guard and blade the appearance of a cross; and on a worn seal, which the later heralds may have taken as their authority, the resemblance to a *monde* with its surmounting cross, as Burke gives it—at the same time transferring it to the cross, in fesse—might be yet stronger. Further, the mitre or, with which Burke, along with Browne Willis, charges the cross, is, I cannot but think, only an inaccurate reading of the old English X "pierced through with a dash, fixed in the navill of the crosse," as blazoned by Fuller. From a historical point of view, the arms as blazoned by Burke are no doubt quite appropriate; but neither in the eyes of herald nor of man of taste can they be compared for fitness or simple beauty with the arms as engraved on the sword.



THE SWORD OF BATTLE ABBEY.

The Property of Sir J. Noel Paton, K[t]

Length of Sword from Pommel to point 41 inches, length of Guard 10¾ inches.

DETAILS OF ORNAMENT ON GUARD. ACTUAL SIZE.

THE SWORD OF BATTLE ABBEY.

The Property of Sir J. Noel Paton Kt.

DETAILS OF ORNAMENT ON POMMEL AND GUARD, ACTUAL SIZE.