PRESENT STATE OF THE MONUMENTS IN THE CHURCH OF EAST WINCH, IN THE COUNTY OF NORFOLK.

By the Rev. George Munford.

It is little more than two centuries since Weever in the epistle to the readers of his "Funeral Monuments," laments that the memorials "of the dead within these his Majesties dominions are to the shame of our time barbarously broken downe, and utterly almost all ruinated, their brazen inscriptions erased, torne away, and pilfered, by which inhumane deformidable act the honourable memory of many vertuous and noble persons deceased, is extinguished, and the true understanding of divers families in these realmes (who have descended of these worthy persons aforesaid) is so darkened, as the true course of their inheritance is thereby partly interrupted." And it is grievous to think how little the "studie and travels" of this laborious antiquary availed in arresting the destructive progress of time, and the sacrilegious hand of man.

The present state of the funeral monuments in many a sacred edifice visited by Weever, when compared with what they were in his time, will bear ample witness to the truth of this remark. And an inquiry instituted with a view to this comparison would be highly interesting, though not unaccompanied with painful feelings.

The number of churches that Weever described is not very large, and it would be no difficult matter for the resident clergyman of the several parishes he visited to furnish the required information, by barely describing the present state of the funeral monuments in their respective churches.

It is with this view that the following account of the church of East Winch, in the diocese of Norwich, is drawn up.

The village itself has no small degree of interest attached to it as having been the original settlement, and long the residence, of the noble family of Howard.

But, before entering upon a description of the monuments of this family that formerly existed in the church, it may be well to give the descent of the Howards during the time of their being connected with East Winch, extracted and compiled from "Indications of Memorials, &c. of the Family," by Henry Howard, of Corby Castle, Esq.

Alice, daughter of Robert de Ufford, 1st wife, ob. s. p.; buried in the Howard chapel, East Winch.

= Sir William Howard, Knt. Chief Justice, living at East Winch in 1306. He was the son of John Howard, and grandson of Robert Howard, of Terrington and Wiggenhall, private gentleman. Sir William was the first of the family who possessed property in East Winch, and was buried in the Howard chapel there in 1309.

= Alice, daughter of Sir Edmund Fitton, Knt. 2nd wife; buried in the Howard chapel, East Winch.

Sir John Howard, Knt. ob. 1331. Buried at East Winch.

= Joan, daughter of Richard de Cornwall, ob. 1341. Buried at East Winch.

Sir William Howard, Knt.

= Joan, dau. and heir of Saer de Huntingfield, and left Alice, only dau. and heir, wife of John Peach.

Sir John Howard the second, Knt. Admiral for the North Seas, was alive in 1388, and is buried at East Winch.

= Alice, dau. and heir of Sir Robert de Bosco. She was probably buried at East Winch. Her arms (Ermine, a cross sable) are on the font in East Winch church.

Sir Robert Howard, Knt. ob. before his father in 1388, and was buried at East Winch.

= Margaret, daughter of Robert de Scales, of Newcells; buried at East Winch.

John Howard, of whom no memorial remains.

1. Margaret, dau. and heir of Sir John Plaiz, ob. 1381. Buried at Weeting.

= Sir John Howard the 3rd, Knt. Sheriff of Essex 2nd Henry IV.; died at Jerusalem 1437. Buried at Stoke Neyland.

= 2. Alice, dau. and heir of Sir Wm. Tendring, ob. 1426. Buried at Stoke Neyland.

Edmund Howard, ob. s. p. probably buried at East Winch.

Robert Howard, ob. s. p. probably buried at East Winch.

Margaret Howard, married to Wm. de Lisle.

Catharine Howard, probably ob. s. p.

Sir John Howard the 4th, Knt. eldest son, heir to his father and mother, and carrying to his daughter Elizabeth much of the ancient family estates. He died in his father's lifetime, and was buried at Weeting.

= Joan, daughter of Sir Richard Walton, ob. 1424.

Sir Robert Howard the 2nd, Knt. from whom descended the Dukes of Norfolk, his son John being the first Duke of the family, having married Margaret, daughter and coheir of Thomas de Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk.

Elizabeth Howard, only child; born in 1410, and married in 1428 to John twelfth Earl of Oxford, then under age, without royal licence, for which the Earl had to pay to the King a fine of £2,000. She having inherited East Winch with a great part of the ancient Howard property, passed it into the hands of the De Veres. She was buried at Earl's Colne, in Essex.

= John de Vere, Earl of Oxford.

The memorials that are described by Weever, but of which no trace now remains, will be enumerated, and references made to the first edition of the "Funeral Monuments," which was published in 1631.

Page 842—849. "On the south side of the chancell of East Winch church, is an ancient chappell, called Howard's Chappell, in which are these monuments following:

"In the south wall of the said chappell this monument, as it is here set forth (see the plate in Weever), divers of the escocheons being decaied (which are left blank) and only this inscription now remaining thereon . . . . animabus Domini Roberti Howard militis et Margerie uxoris sue . . ."

This was the monument of Sir Robert Howard, son of the second Sir John Howard, Admiral for the North Seas: he died in 1388. On it were the arms of Sir Robert, of Margaret his wife, daughter of Scales, of Newcells; of Edward the Confessor, and of others.

For bearing the arms of Edward the Confessor, Henry Earl of Surrey was attainted and beheaded in 1546-7. The author of the "Indications" of the Howard family says, "Lord Surrey no doubt knew of the patent of 20th Richard II. which granted to the Mowbrays, whom he represented, the right to bear the arms of Edward the Confessor, and he had no doubt seen them on the archway tomb, in the Howard chapel, in East Winch church in Norfolk. It certainly appears to be a hardship that a person should lose his head for quartering the arms of one who had no arms at all, as was the case with Edward the Confessor."

The right of the Howards to bear the arms of Edward the Confessor was derived from the marriage of the second Sir Robert Howard, son of the third Sir John Howard, with Margaret, the eldest daughter and coheir of Thomas de Mowbray, first Duke of Norfolk, by his wife Elizabeth, daughter and coheir of Richard Earl of Arundel. As this marriage took place in 1417, this enarched monument could not have been erected till thirty years after the death of Sir Robert Howard whom it commemorated.

Weever next mentions, that "on the pavement of the said chappell, be these two stones as they are here defigured (see the plate,) whose inscriptions through time are decayed, or rather stolne away by some sacrilegious persons, a crime too frequent,

and too little punished; but without doubt these monuments were here placed for some of the ancestors of this most honorable family, this being their peculiar chappell and place of buriall.

"In the east window of the aforesaid chappell, this ancient effigies (see the plate) of late was perfectly to be seene, the portraiture of the same being exactly taken by the learned Gent. Sir Henry Spelman, the memory thereof (as of divers other monuments, and by him preserved) in relation to which, this worthy knight writ these verses:—

"'Creditur has sacris candentem ardoribus ædes
(Quas dicat hic supplex) instituisse Deo.'

"This ancient chappell of the Howards hath of late yeeres beene most irreligiously defaced by uncovering the same; taking off the lead, and committing it to sale, whereby these ancient monuments have layne open to ruine: but now in repairing by the order of the most honourable preserver of antiquities (as well in general as in his own particular) Thomas Earle of Arundell and Surrey, Earle Marshall of England, and the chief of that most honourable family.

"To this I also offer in observation, both that the posture (of the figure in the east window), fashion of the armour, and coate of arms (wherein it is habited) denotes great antiquitie, and it should seem by the banner-fashioned shield, that this was the portraiture of some Banneret, ancestor of this illustrious family; for that banners, and the manner of this bearing of armes, were only proper to Bannerets, Knights of the Garter, Barons, and higher nobility."

The author of the "Indications" supposes this to have been the portrait of Sir John Howard, son of Sir William Howard, Chief Justice.

"In this church of East Winch is a very faire font of ancient times, erected by some of this family, as appeareth by their armes being disposed in divers places of the same; the which for the curiosity of the work, considering the antiquity, gives me occasion here to present the true forme of one part thereof unto your view." (See plate.)

This is Weever's account of the church of East Winch as it appeared when he visited it early in the 17th cent.; and although

at that time many of the rich memorials of the noble family of the Howards were spoiled and fallen to decay, yet its state was splendid then, compared with that which it now presents.

The Earl of Arundel probably arrested the destruction of this chapel for some time; but it could not have been for long, as Parkin, the continuator of Blomefield's History of Norfolk tells us, that about a century afterwards things were in a worse state than in Weever's time. The shields and inscriptions upon the enarched monument were defaced, and great part of the monument itself destroyed; the two grave-stones also, and the figure in the east window, mentioned by Weever, had shared the same fate. Many of the older inhabitants of the parish remember its being a ruin in their boyhood; and as such it was actually inhabited by several successive paupers, who dwelt in the gloomy abode till the mouldering walls were entirely removed. The last inhabitant died about fifty years since, and was called by her neighbours, "Old Church Betty."

At this time no memorial of the stately family of Howard exists in the church of East Winch, except two shields of arms upon the font. Enarched tomb, monumental brass, and pictured window have all disappeared, and "left not a wreck behind."

The cover of the font, which was of wood, and is engraved by Weever, is also gone; but the font itself remains, and is of much handsomer proportions than Weever has drawn it. It is octagonal in shape; the compartment facing the east is plain, having been probably so left to receive the shield of some future benefactor to the church; on the right of this are the arms of Sir John Howard, Knt. who erected the font, and on the left the arms of Alice de Bosco, wife of Sir John: each of the remaining five compartments is occupied by a rosette. Weever's plate of this font could never have been quite correct, as he places the Howard arms between two rosettes. Its cover of wood was very handsome, having been richly painted and carved, and adorned with the arms of Howard, Scales, Ufford, East Anglia, and the shield of the crucifixion.

Not a particle of stained glass now remains in the windows, but in Parkin's time there were several shields in the east window, among which was that of Vere Earl of Oxford; John de

Vere, twelfth Earl of Oxford, having married Elizabeth, the only child of the fourth Sir John Howard, Knt. and Joan, daughter of Sir Richard Walton, his wife. This marriage took place in 1428; and the Earl being then under age, and marrying without the royal licence, had to pay to the King a fine of £2,000.

The Countess of Oxford inherited East Winch with a great part of the ancient Howard property, which thus passed into the hands of the De Veres, and the connection of the Howard family with this parish ceased altogether, having continued about 120 years.

The only memorials of any other ancient family now existing in this church are two inscriptions to the memory of Owen and William Barnes.

Against the north wall of the chancel is a mural monument of marble, with the arms of Barnes, viz. Argent, two bars counter-embattled sable, in chief three pellets.

" Here lyeth under the foote of this wall, the body of OWEN BARNES, Gent. third son of William Barnes the elder, of this place, Esq. who, after he had Christianly lived the space of 52 years, changed this life for a better Anno D. 1670.

" Quis sim nosce cujus caro putrida nil nisi vermis,
Quisquis es hoc de me sit tibi scire satis."

Parkin says, that on the west wall of the Howard chapel there was formerly a neat monument of marble with the arms of Barnes impaling Shepherd: Argent, on a chief gules three Danish hatchets or; and Barnes impaling Hovell, Sable, a crescent or.

This monument is now on the outside of the south wall of the chancel, but the arms are gone. The inscription which remains is as follows:—

" Near unto this place lyeth the body of WILLIAM BARNES, Esq. son of Edward Barnes, of Soham, in Cambridgeshire, Esq. who first married Thomasine, daughter of Richard Hovell, of Hillington, Esq. by whom he had five daughters, after whose death he took to wife Thomasine, the daughter of Owen Sheaperd, of Kirby, in this county, Esq. and (removed his seat to this place) had by her five sons and eight daughters, and did for many years with great prudence and fidelity serve his King and countrey, in the office of justice of the peace; at length, such was

the iniquity of the times, that loyalty was esteemed a crime, when not allurements, or threats, from him who usurped the highest power, could seduce him from his constant adherence to his abandoned prince, and the persecuted Church of England; he retired to a private life, devoting himself wholly to the service of God and religion, and peacefully departed hence in the 77th year of his age 1657 expecting a joyful resurrection. To whose memory Frances Stanton, his second daughter by his first wife, out of her tender love and dutiful affection, erected this monument. Semper Idem."

The Barnes were lords of the manor of Grancourt in this parish, by one of whom, Thomas, the grandson of William, the manor was granted to his son-in-law William Langley, Esq. grandson of Sir Robert Langley, Bart. of Sheriff Hutton, in Yorkshire.

William Langley, Esq., second son, was succeeded in this lordship by Thomas Langley, Esq. his youngest brother, who upon the death of his elder brother, Sir Roger, in 1716, became a Baronet. He married Anne, daughter of Captain Robert Edgeworth, of Longwood, in the county of Meath, in Ireland, and had issue two sons and five daughters, and was living in this village in the year 1720, much reduced, and in a state of poverty. See Parkin's continuation of Blomefield's History of Norfolk.

The Parish Register books are in a very imperfect state, not commencing before 1678, and having no entries from 1750 to 1759.

There are several entries of the births, baptisms, and burials of the Langley family, and among them, "Dame Anne, the wife of Sir Thomas Langley, buried April 24, 1724." But the death of Sir Thomas is not to be found in the register.

In Burke's "Extinct and Dormant Baronetcies," Sir Thomas Langley, fourth Baronet, is said to have died 1st December 1762, aged 98 years. He was succeeded by his nephew Sir Haldanby Langley (of Shropshire?) upon whose death the Baronetcy expired.