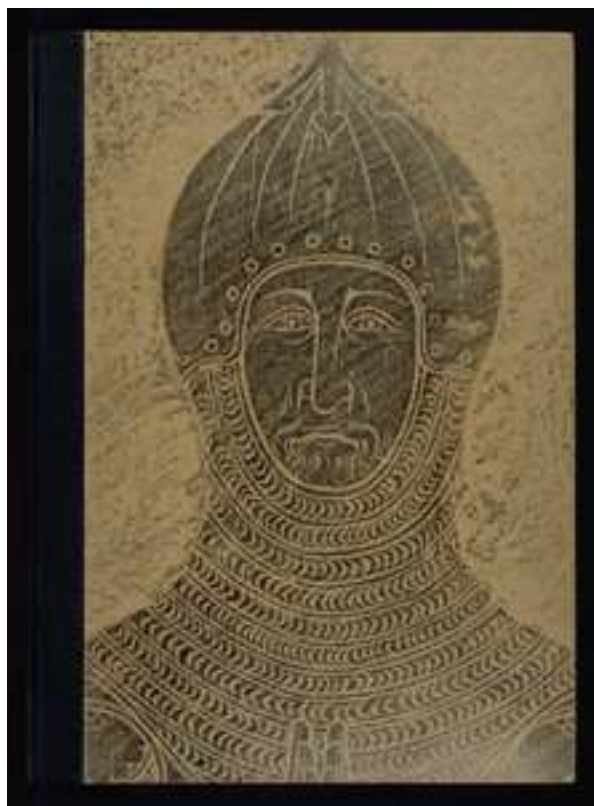




v. 769

A digital facsimile of Walters Ms. W.769, English Brasses
Title: Brass rubbings



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Published 2013

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Shelf mark	Walters Art Museum Ms. W.769
Descriptive Title	English Brasses
Text title	Brass rubbings
Author	<i>As-written name:</i> Woodcock, John
Abstract	Calligrapher John Woodcock handwrote, illustrated, and bound this book on English brasses. The manuscript contains drawings of brass rubbings of many knights and nobles, including Sir John d'Abernon, Thomas de Hope, and Nichol de Gore, as well as noblewomen such as the wives of Reginald de Malyns, Nicholas Wadham, and Nicholas Wotton. The names and dates in the titles for the images are based directly on the green ink inscriptions accompanying the illuminations.
Date	Dated 1949 CE
Origin	Kingswee, Surrey, England
Artist	<i>As-written name:</i> Woodcock, John
Scribe	<i>As-written name:</i> Woodcock, John
Form	Book
Genre	Historical
Language	The primary language in this manuscript is English.
Colophon	<i>fol. 8r:</i> Transliteration: Written & illuminated & bound by John Woodcock 1949
Support material	Paper White bond paper; watermark "J Green"
Extent	Foliation: 12 Eight numbered folios; one blank folio in front and three blank folios in back are unfoliated, but integral to quire structure and therefore not flyleaves; modern pencil foliation in upper right corners of rectos
Collation	Formula: 1(12)

Catchwords: None

Signatures: None

Comments: Manuscript comprised of one single large quire

Dimensions

28.3 cm wide by 39.0 cm high

Contents

fols. 1r - 8v:

Title: Brass rubbings

Contents: Brasses of English nobles; each illustration with description of English brasses during particular time period

Hand note: Text in adapted versals

Decoration note: Manuscript comprised of drawings of brass rubbings; black ink with yellow tint; seven initials with raised or burnished gold; black ink headings in Roman capitals; green ink used for captions

Decoration

Upper board outside:

Title: Sir John d'Aubernoun the Younger on upper board outside

Form: Brass rubbing mounted on upper board

fol. 1r:

Title: Thomas de Hope

Form: Drawings of brass rubbings

fol. 2r:

Title: Jon Mulsho and his wife Joan

Form: Drawings of brass rubbings

fol. 3r:

Title: Bishop Yso von Wilpe at Verden, Hanover, 1231

Form: Drawings of brass rubbings

fol. 3v:

Title: Sir John d'Abernon at Stoke d'Abernon, Surrey

Form: Drawings of brass rubbings

fol. 4r:

Title: Sir Robert de Setvans, Chartham, Kent, 1306

Form: Drawings of brass rubbings

fol. 4v:

Title: Reginald de Malyns and his two wives, at Chinnor, Oxfordshire, 1385

Form: Drawings of brass rubbings

fol. 5r:

Title: Pictorial compartment below the feet of Adam de Waisokne, 1349, King's Lynn, Norfolk

Form: Drawings of brass rubbings

fol. 5v:

Title: Sir Nicolas Hawberk, 1407, third husband of Lady Joan Cobham, Cobham, Kent

Form: Drawings of brass rubbings

fol. 6r:

Title: Illustrations (from left to right) include Nicholas Wotton with his wife and family, 1490, at Boughton Malherbe, Kent; two knights and two ladies, 1490-1510, at Writtle, Essex

Form: Drawings of brass rubbings

fol. 6v:

Title: Robert Langton DCL, 1518, Queen's College, Oxford

Form: Drawings of brass rubbings

fol. 7r:

Title: Thomas Hawkins, Broughton-under-Blean, Kent, 1587

Form: Drawings of brass rubbings

fol. 7v:

Title: Sir Nicholas Wadham and his wife Dorotheie, 1618

Form: Drawings of brass rubbings

fol. 8r:

Title: Colophon with Nichol de Gore, priest, 1320, Woodchurch, Kent

Form: Drawings of brass rubbings

Lower board outside:

Title: Sir John D'Aubernoun on outside lower board

Form: Brass rubbing mounted on lower board

Binding	The binding is original. Original hand-made, hot-pressed wove tan paper; black Nigerian goat quarter cardboard cover; two rubbings from Stoke d'Abernon, Surrey adorn front and back covers
Provenance	John Woodcock (1924-2011) of Kingsweed, Surrey; manuscript completed 1949; see colophon (fol. 8r)
Acquisition	Gift of John Woodcock, 1960
Contributors	<i>Catalogers:</i> Bucca, Lauren; Dutschke, Consuelo; Walters Art Museum curatorial staff and researchers since 1934 <i>Editor:</i> Herbert, Lynley <i>Copy editor:</i> Joyal, Stephanie <i>Conservators:</i> Owen, Linda; Quandt, Abigail <i>Contributors:</i> Bockrath, Diane; Emery, Doug; Noel, William; Tabritha, Ariel; Toth, Michael B.



v. 769

J GREEN

GREEN

Hic iacet dominus Thomas de hop



Thomas de flope 1346, Rector of Kemsing
from 1341-46. Kemsing Kent

J. GREEN

EN

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J. GREEN

ENGLISH BRASSES



ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT:—

Bishop Yso von Wilpe, 1231,
at Verden, Hanover.

Sir John d'Abernoun, 1277,
Stoke d'Abernon, Surrey.

Sir Robert de Setvans, 1306,
at Chartham, Kent.

Reginald de Malyns and
his two wives, 1385,
Chinnor, Oxfordshire.

Pt. of Adam de Waisokne,
at King's Lynn

Sir Nicholas Hawberk
at Cobham, Kent.

Two knights & ladies,
Writtle, Essex.

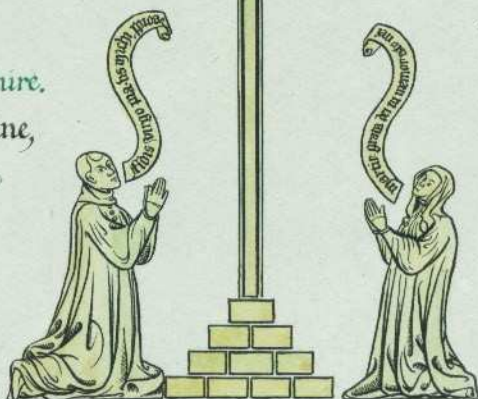
Nicholas Wotton and
his family, 1490,
Boughton Malherbe.

Robert Langton, 1518,
Queen's College, Oxford

Thomas Hawkins, 1587,
Broughton-under-Blean.

Nicholas Wadhams, 1618,
Uminster, Somerset.

A cross brass to John
Mulsho Esq. and his



wife Joan, 1400, Newton-by
Geddington, Northants

THE CLERICAL BUREAU



J. GREEN

THE EARLIEST BRASSES (BEFORE 1350)

MONUMENTAL brasses were first laid down early in the thirteenth century. The oldest brass in existence at the present day is that to Bishop Yso von Wilpe, 1231, at Verden, Hanover. An English brass of 1208 formerly existed at Bedford but is now lost. Probably the use of brasses arose from several causes. The stone effigies of the previous century were cumbersome, costly, and subject to damage from varied causes, and in the case of the Eastern counties the carriage of a heavy mass of stone would cost more than the amount charged by the mason for his labour.

During the twelfth century enamelled brass had been used for book covers and reliquiaries and the transition from a book-cover to a brass effigy was but an elaboration of an existing process. There is little doubt that many early brasses were richly enamelled although the colours have by now mostly disintegrated.

Although we speak of 'brasses', the material used was not brass but latten, a compound of copper, zinc, lead, and tin. The slabs



*Bishop Yso von Wilpe
1231, Verden, Hanover*

of latten were manufactured mainly around Cologne and shipped to English East coast ports where they were shaped, engraved, and

Sir John d'Abernon,
at Stoke d'Abernon,
Surrey



laid by English workmen.

The early plates were thick and heavy and the effigies life-size or even larger. Large surfaces were made up of two or more latten plates neatly joined.

The earliest brasses were nearly all to the memory of ecclesiastical dignitaries, mostly archbishops and bishops, but for some reason or other not one of them has survived to the present day. The three-thirteenth century brasses now in existence in England are effigies of knights: Sir John d'Auberon at Stoke d'Abernon; Sir Roger de Trumpington at Trumpington; Sir Richd. de Buslingthorpe at Buslingthorpe, Lincolnshire.

A great many fourteenth century figures are life-size (that is, from about four feet ten inches upwards). It was unusual at that period to represent the figures otherwise than in a recumbent posture. They were often placed under single,

double, or three-bay canopies which in some examples were of two tiers and in rare cases even of three. The whole design was then surrounded by a fillet or border from one and a half to two inches wide upon which the name, description, and date of decease of the person memorialised were cut in Lombardic letters—usually fairly plain in character and easily readable. In the earliest brasses the inscription was placed round the edge of the slab in which the brass was set, and each letter was cut separately out of the brass and sunk in the stone, but this method was not very satisfactory, and at an early date the letters were cut on a narrow border of brass. French was the language generally used in inscriptions.

The development of armour is illustrated very fully by the effigies of knights on brasses.

Between 1250 and 1325 was the period of the reinforced chain mail or surcoat. The earliest of this type is the brass of Sir John d'Aubernoun. The armour consists of hauberk (shirt), mail coif, chausses (stockings), and gloves of mail. Steel knee-cops, surcoat, & shield complete the armour.

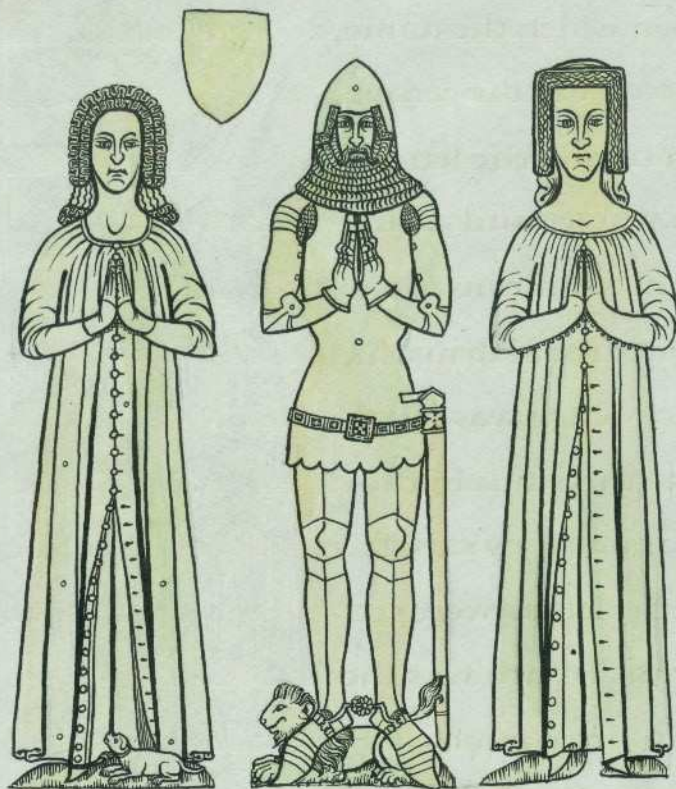


Sir Robert de Setvans,
Chartham, Kent,
1306

THE PERIOD BETWEEN 1350 AND 1400

IN the latter half of the fourteenth century the design & workmanship displayed in brasses are very fine. The figures are usually from four

Reginald de Malyns
and his two wives,
at Chinnor, Oxford
shire, 1385.



to five feet in height and both male and female figures usually have an animal at their feet; a lion for the gentleman and a dog, sometimes two, for the lady. In some cases the little pet dog is no larger than the hand of the lady. There are two dogs at least which have names given them on the brass; thus

at Ingham, in Norfolk, we have Jakke, and at Deerhurst, in Gloucester, we still can read the name Terri. It is curious that nine out of ten figures of animals at the feet of effigies face towards the left of the spectator.

Some of the finest bracket brasses date from this period and the first years of the next century, and are reckoned among the

prizes of the collector. Variations on the more usual type of monument are cross brasses, of which the religious troubles have left us very few. Cross brasses fall into three groups: floriated crosses with a long stem, enclosing within the head the figure of the deceased; octofoil crosses with figures in the head; and crosses without figures. Among the third class the variety is endless.

The language employed in inscriptions was changed during the century from Norman French to Latin.

This century was a most excellent one for brasses; the drawing was conventional without stiffness, the folds few and graceful, the types of armour faithfully copied, and the lines well engraved. No attempt was made at shading and every line had its purpose. In early examples especially it would be found difficult to strike out any line without spoiling the whole design. About the middle of the century small brasses commemorating petty tradesmen heralded the rise of the middle classes to prosperity.



Pictorial compartment
below the feet of Adam
de Waisokne, 1349,
King's Lynn, Norfolk

THE PERIOD BETWEEN 1400 AND 1450

Sir Nicolas Hawberk
1407, 3rd husband
of Lady Joan Cobham,
Cobham, Kent.



SOME of the most excellent of our brasses were produced during this period. The effigies were simply well-conceived outlines owing little to ornamentation or extraneous items. Canopies and figures were now made smaller but were beautifully drawn and equally well cut.

The inscription fillet was often omitted, a plate being substituted at the feet of the figures. People began to perpetuate the number and sex of their offspring by little effigies placed beneath the inscription label or alongside their parents.

Floriated crosses with figures in their heads ceased about the end of this period; foliated crosses or crosses fleury took their place. Bracket brasses became very rare.

Figures were invariably drawn full-face or directly facing the spectator. The portrayal of kneeling figures commenced at this time. Knights were nearly always depicted with the bascinet & only towards the end of the period are effigies bareheaded.

THE PERIOD BETWEEN 1450 AND 1500

DURING this period armour was brought to the point of absurdity and in order to keep pace with the flourishings of the armourer the engraver was apt to overstep the simplicity of his elegant lines in an attempt to produce something ornate. Figures were now much smaller. Knights were shown without helmets; ladies were attired in grand dresses and astonishing headgear. The butterfly headdress caused the figures to be drawn three-quarter face for the first time. Shading or cross hatching came into vogue & with it a period of degeneracy began.



Two knights and two ladies, 1490-1510, at Writtle, Essex.



Nicholas Wotton with his wife and family, 1490, at Boughton Malherbe, Kent. Typical representation of children on a brass.



hic iacet Nicolaus Wotton Aung & Elizabeth vxor eius quondam dñs de Botton Malherbe qd obiit x die Aprilis a dñi m cccc lxxxvii qd aetate obiit de annis

THE PERIOD BETWEEN 1500 AND 1550

ENGRAVERS of this period tried to attain effect by means of a mass of detail on small figures. The figures lost their wonted grace, were

Robert Langton DCL
1518, Queens College
Oxford.



often ill-proportioned, frequently drawn in three-quarter view to show off their fine attire, and overburdened with cross-hatched or line shading. Thus came about a collapse of the art from which it never recovered.

Portraits were sometimes attempted but were seldom successful. The little mummy-like figures of children (chrysons), swathed in bandages, were shown sometimes alone, sometimes in the arms of adults.

Mural brasses first became general at this time, frequently showing figures kneeling on tessellated pavements or on a cushion before a prayer desk. Children, in some cases, were portrayed kneeling in serried ranks behind their parents, the girls behind their

mother and the boys behind their father. One redeeming feature of the period was the introduction of the heraldic tabard and emblazoned mantle which were always well drawn & engraved.

THE PERIOD BETWEEN 1550 AND 1600

A VERY poor time for brasses. The number laid down between the death of Henry VIII and the accession of Elizabeth decreased enormously and they were small in size and decadent in design. The reign of Elizabeth saw a great increase in quantity, though not in quality. The plates were now manufactured in England but were so thin that the later brasses are by now very battered. Only the increasing popularity of the mural brass has preserved intact any of the monuments of this period. The drawing was weak and uncertain, with a great deal of erratic shading, and the cutting was very shallow.

There were no new developments of any interest; the old traditions were continued though there is a larger proportion of the curious brasses, such as the series sometimes called 'Bedstead Brasses', commemorating women who died in childbirth. The old use of religious symbols disappeared under the influence of the Reformation: allegorical symbols replaced them.



Thomas Hawkins,
Broughton-under-
Blean, Kent. 1587

THE PERIOD OF 1600 AND BEYOND

AFTER the reign of Elizabeth, brasses became rarer and even poorer than before. Almost the only tolerable examples are

Sir Nicholas Wadham
& his wife Dorothea,
1618, at Ilminster,
Somerset.



the brasses of Samuel Harsnett
Archbishop of York, 1631, at
Chigwell, Essex, and of Sir Edwd.

Fulmer, 1629, at East Sutton, Kent.

Very few brasses were laid down
during the seventeenth century
and none are of much interest.

In the eighteenth century the
brass seemed to disappear.

Either the engraving of brasses
became a lost art after a period
of decadence, or a fashion began

which demanded a different
type of memorial, whether the

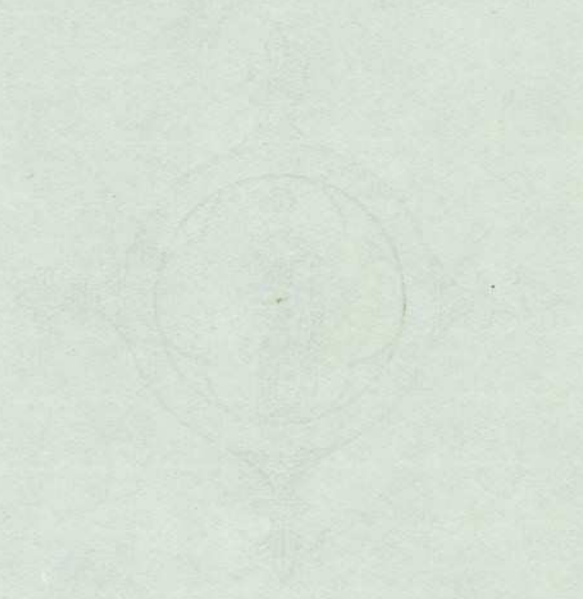
mural monument or the stone
slab, usually with heraldic

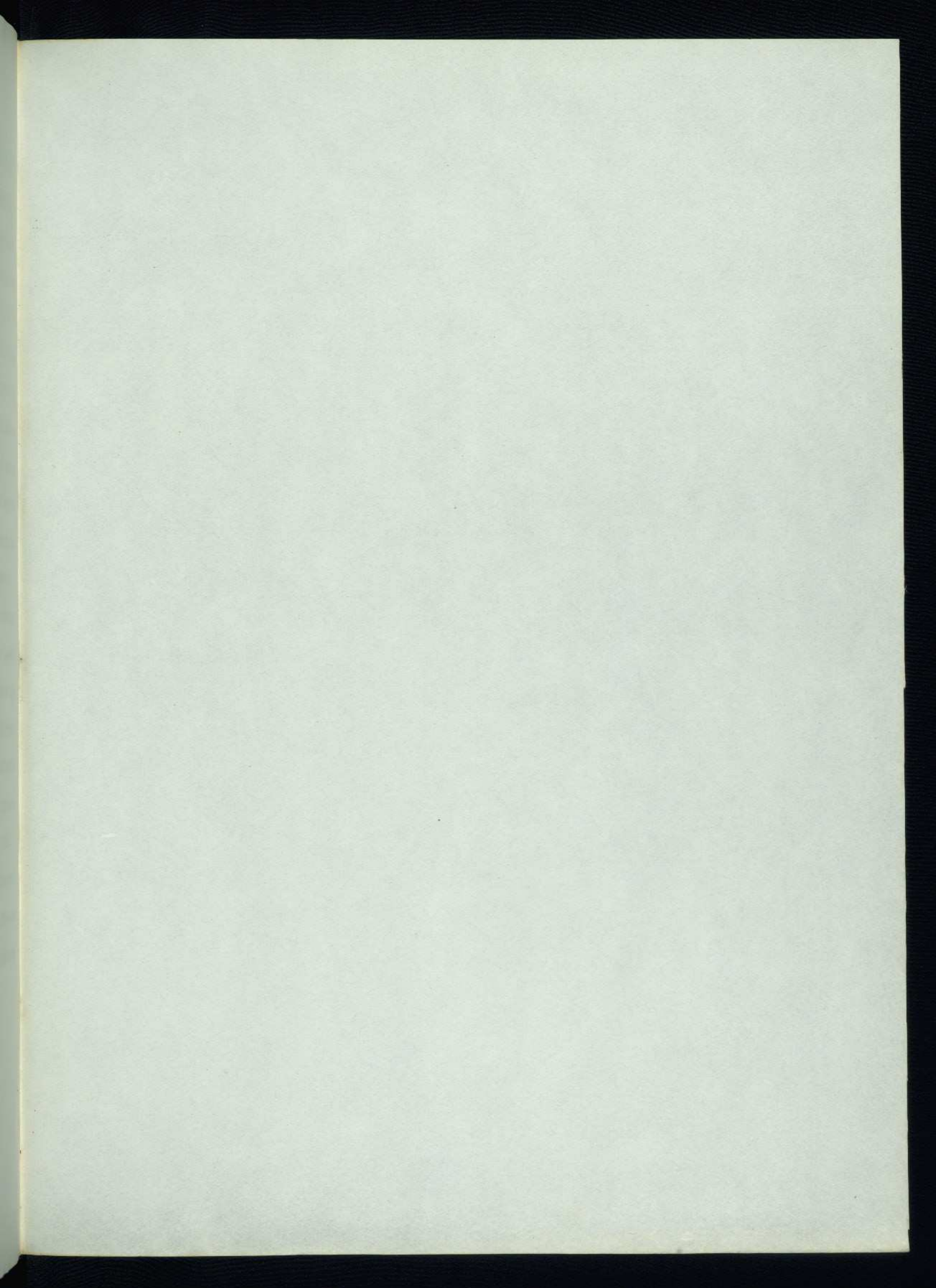
bearings, set into the floor of nave or chancel. For these reasons
the eighteenth century has produced only four brasses. Nineteen-
th century brasses were mostly archaistic imitations of old styles.

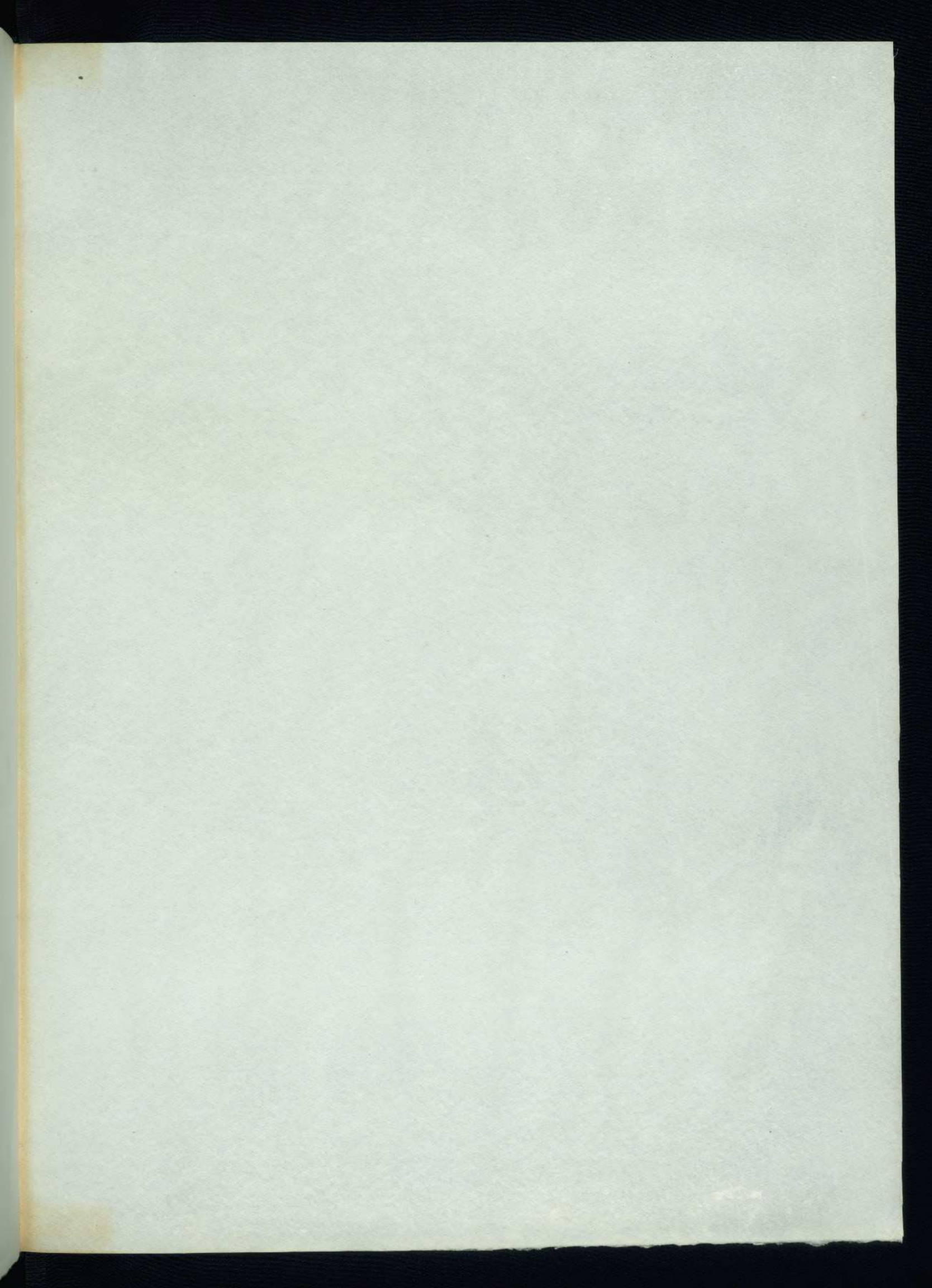
Nichol de Gore
Priest, c.1320, Woodchurch, Kent.

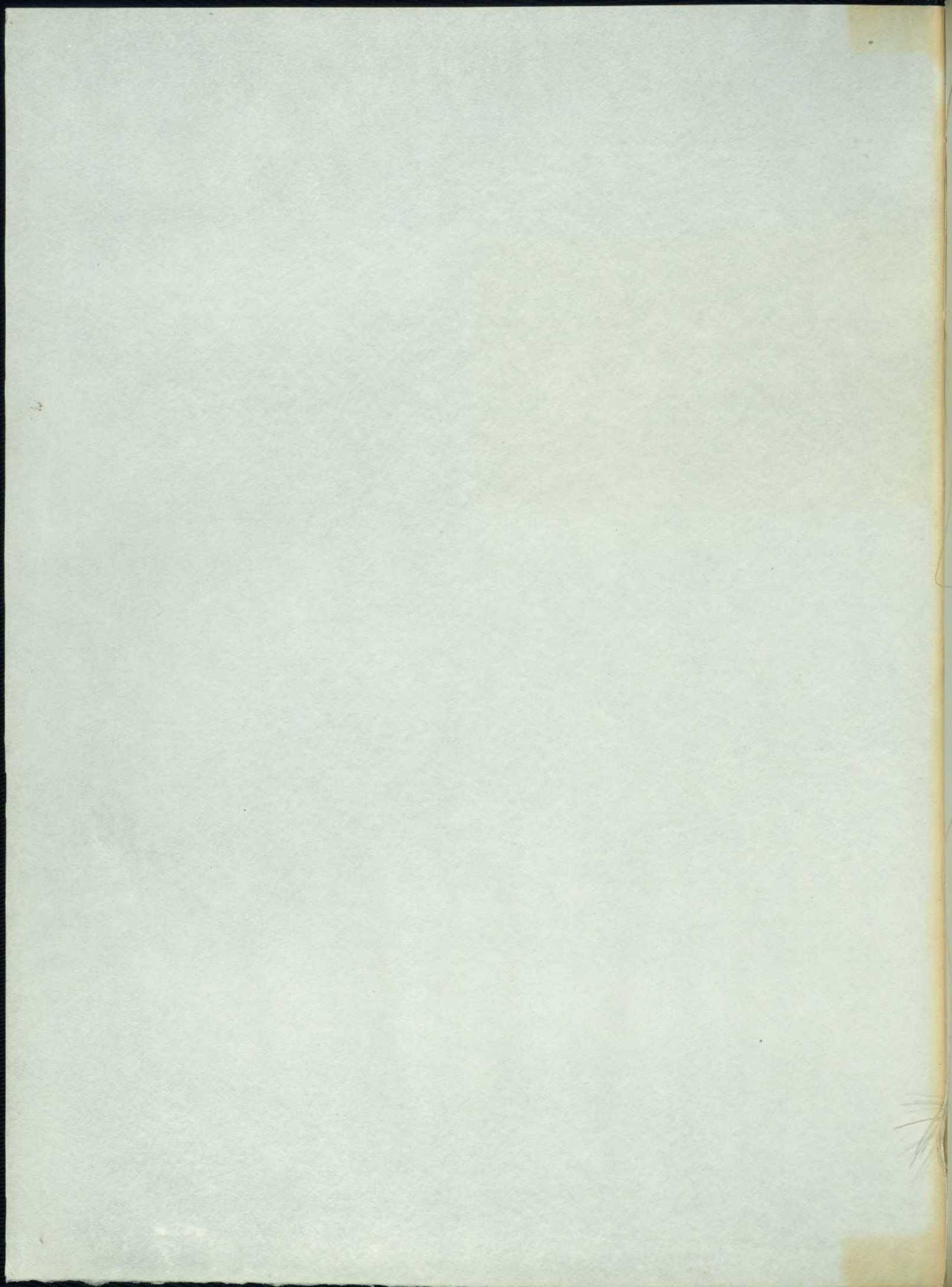


Written & illuminated
& bound by John Woodcock
1979

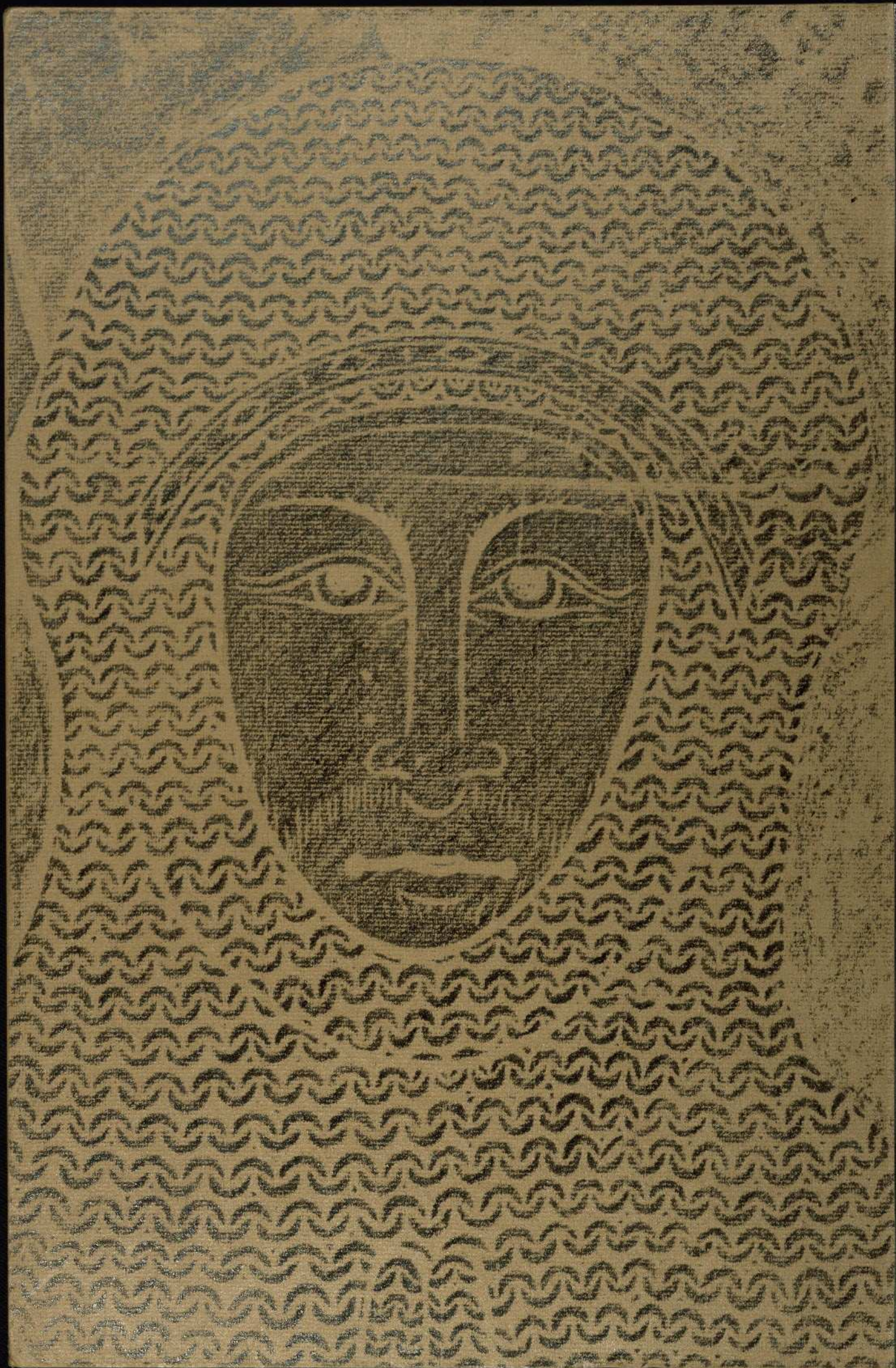








Acquired Jan. 1960.
from the calligrapher









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