

**AN ENDEAVOR TO CLASSIFY THE
SEPULCHRAL REMAINS IN
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, OR, A
DISCOURSE ON FUNERAL
MONUMENTS IN THAT COUNTY**

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Funeral Monuments in That County by Charles Henry Hartshorne

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CHARLES HENRY HARTSHORNE

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THE
SEPULCHRAL REMAINS IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE,
OR,
A DISCOURSE ON
FUNERAL MONUMENTS,
IN THAT COUNTY,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE MEMBERS OF THE RELIGIOUS AND USEFUL
KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY, AT NORTHAMPTON.

Hinc maxima cura Sepulchris
Impenditur. PRUDENTIOR.

BY THE
REV. CHARLES HENRY HARTSHORNE, M.A.F.S.A.



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TO THE
MARQUIS OF NORTHAMPTON.

My Lord,

WHEN the observations in the text of the following pages were written, I did not remotely contemplate setting them forth in print. But having had it intimated to me by several, that if they were published, they might help to make more generally known the objects of the Society before which they were delivered, and perhaps also be the means of awakening more attention to an interesting yet much neglected subject of inquiry, I could not under such circumstances refuse listening to the suggestion.

There is no one, to whom they can now with so much propriety be addressed as to your Lordship, whose refined appreciation of whatever is VENERABLE, and BEAUTIFUL, and TRUE, will lead you to regard with indulgence the most humble efforts when they aim at their illus-

tration. And if I could suppose that your Lordship deemed it needful for me to adduce other motives for thus coupling your name with the present volume, I should with greater significancy request to offer it you, as a small acknowledgment of the very grateful sense I entertain of your kindness to me as a neighbour and a friend.

I have the honor to be,

My Lord,

Your most faithful and much obliged Servant,

CHARLES HENRY HARTHORNE.

COOKNOE OF COGENHOE RECTORY, NEAR NORTHAMPTON,
Dec. 7, 1840.



FROM having undertaken to speak to you about Funeral Monuments, you may with justice accuse me of selecting a subject more adapted to depress the mind and fill it with morbid associations, than one that is capable of supplying you with agreeable and light amusement. When you look around at the dark and cheerless forms that are suspended from the walls, you will, I am afraid, become instinctively seized with dismal apprehensions, and anticipate that the matter of this evening's lecture will be sombre and gloomy. Nor can I delude you under the hope that it will be otherwise; or that I shall so far change its complexion, as even to preclude the chances that the images of these mysterious and unembodied forms may rise up in magnified horror and disturb your sleep. For I am intending not only to introduce you to the personal acquaintance of these grim and ghastly figures, but also, if you will concede me a confiding attention, to carry you with me in imagination to the very graves and cemeteries

from whence they have been snatched ; and I fancy I hear some of the departed exclaim,

What call unknown, what charms presume
To break the quiet of the tomb?
Who is he with voice unblest
That calls me from the bed of rest?

I would prevail on you to accompany me to the narrow resting-places of the dead. Let us enter reverently, as such spots should ever be approached, and contemplate the silent sanctuaries where the great and the good lie entombed. Their bones are mouldering into dust, and the monuments that decorate their shrine partake of the same fate. The hoary hand of time has spread mildew on the busts and effigies that have escaped the ravages of human despoilers, and with difficulty their fair proportions can be traced. We shall behold the pomp of marble mutilated and overthrown, and monumental brass corroded and defaced. Yet amid this scene of havoc and death, we shall find still lingering the vestiges of genius and taste, and see the creations of the artist struggling for preservation, rising as it were superior to the shocks of dissolution and decay. Many a damp and neglected edifice yet testifies, by its shivered and disfigured monuments, that these places of worship were once more religiously guarded; they present vivid proofs of the piety of those whose names may be forgotten, but whose charity in erecting them is still a blessing. Nor, if we enter these holy places with a sober and chastened mind, shall we fail to gather therein some godly reflections, which will teach us to moralize on the vanity of earthly greatness, that will shew us our kindred with corruption, and remind us that we ourselves once bore a more intimate and close resemblance to a brighter image, though now it is dishonoured and broken.

The study of Funeral Monuments may at first seem to you fatiguing and distasteful: even the very name of the subject is forbidding and chilly, and the bare suspicion

of this, has, I must confess, rather increased the difficulties against which I have to contend at present. If, however, it should fortunately transpire in the sequel that your fears have been diminished, and your repugnance to entertain the thought of such melancholy pursuits has been overcome; if I can succeed in shewing to you that these enquiries are both profitable in the best sense of the word, interesting and instructive,—I shall then have just grounds for congratulating myself that our time has been occupied in their investigation; and the more so, if they originate reflections that carry the mind to higher subjects, and add in any degree, however small, to the stock of truth and human knowledge, or in promoting the innocent pleasure of my hearers.

There is still another difficulty that presented itself when I thought about the present discourse; and this arose mainly from the great extent of the subject itself. For knowing how comprehensive and varied was the field of our enquiry, I felt that it would be quite impossible to glance over the whole of it, even in a very general and superficial way. It therefore occurred to me that it would be most advisable to select some particular branch of Sepulchral Monuments, to which the attention should be chiefly confined. No part of this ample subject stood forth so prominently, or appeared marked by such interest to ourselves, as those Funeral Remains that exist either in this or the adjacent counties. By this you will understand that it is my intention to invest the present observations as far as possible with a local character.

The earliest modes practised for the Burial of the dead in Great Britain were,

1. Under CAIRNS or heaps of stones.
2. Under CROMLECHS, which are monuments consisting of three or more upright stones, with a flat one lying across the top.
3. Within CIRCLES or enclosures of upright stones.
4. Under TUMULI or BARROWS.