

PALIMPSEST BRASSES IN SURREY.

By MILL STEPHENSON, B.A., F.S.A.

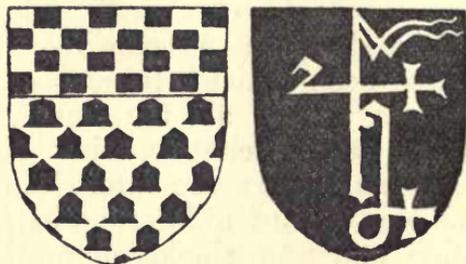
A PALIMPSEST BRASS is one which has been previously laid down to one person, and subsequently used for another, consequently both sides of the plate are engraved. At one time such examples were called "double-faced" brasses, but the late Mr. Albert Way applied the term "palimpsest" to this class of memorial, and the name, although not strictly correct, has now continued in use for many years. Palimpsest brasses may be divided into two main classes, which again may be subdivided into various heads. The first and larger class consists of plates turned over and re-engraved. It is, of course, only possible to discover this when the plates become loose, but numerous examples have been noticed throughout the kingdom. To this class belong all the Surrey examples except one. The second class consists of examples in which the original plates are altered in order to suit the style and costume of a later period; generally a new inscription and new shields of arms were added or the old ones turned over and re-engraved. No example of this treatment has been noticed in Surrey. Under this class may be placed the cases of appropriation pure and simple, as at Horley, where a new inscription has been added to a figure at least 100 years earlier. The first class consists (1) of wasters from the workshops, unfinished pieces, or pieces rejected from faults in the engraving, as at Walton-on-Thames, (2) spoil from the destruction of the monasteries and chantries at the time of the Reformation, as at Cheam and Cobham, and (3) fragments of foreign brasses, mostly Flemish, imported

into this country in consequence of the religious troubles in the Netherlands during the sixteenth century, as at Camberwell, St. Giles. Twelve palimpsest examples have so far been noticed in Surrey, viz., at Betchworth, Camberwell (2), Cheam (3), Cobham, Horley, Sanderstead (3), and Walton-on-Thames. The Betchworth example is in private hands, two of the Cheam examples are relaid and fastened down, as also are two at Sanderstead, and the third from this latter place is now lost.

In describing the examples the term *obverse* is used to denote the later side, and the term *reverse* the earlier work.

BETCHWORTH.

In the *Archæological Journal*, Vol. XII, p. 293, is the following communication from Mr. Albert Way: "Impressions from a palimpsest brass escutcheon, found, in a very decayed condition, amongst rubbish in the churchyard of Betchworth, Surrey. The two faces of this



FOUND AT BETCHWORTH. SURREY.

plate are here represented. The more ancient, possibly engraved about the commencement of the fifteenth century, presents a merchant's mark, composed of the letter H, terminating at top in two streamers, which cross so as to resemble a W. The upstroke is traversed by a bar terminating in a cross at one end, and at the other in a symbol of frequent occurrence in these marks, which bears resemblance to the Arabic numeral 2.

"The obverse of the escutcheon found at Betchworth presents the bearing of the Fitz-Adrians, who held the manor of Brockham in the parish of Betchworth, under the Warrens. In the Visitation of Surrey by Clarencieux, *temp.* Henry VIII (Harl. MS. 1561, p. 3), the arms of

Adryan, Lord of Brockham, are given thus: *Arg., two bars nebuly sa., a chief chequy or and az.* The chief was doubtless derived from the Warrens, whose feudal tenants, the Fitz-Adrians, or Adryans, appear to have been. The fashion of the escutcheon here represented, however, is of much later date than the time when the male line of the Adrians failed, according to the statement in Manning and Bray's *History of Surrey*, Vol. II, pp. 209, 211, namely, between 1356 and 1378, when Thomas Frowick, who married the heiress, succeeded them.

“The south side of the chancel at Betchworth has belonged from time immemorial to the manor of Brockham, and the plate may have been one of several coats affixed to some memorial of the Frowicks, there interred.”

Mr. Way also communicated an account of the discovery, with an illustration of the plate, to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. XLIII, N. S., 1855, p. 270.

The shield measures $5\frac{1}{2}$ by $4\frac{5}{8}$ inches, and was for many years in the hands of the late Mr. Albert Way. The charge on the obverse side is clearly *vair, a chief chequy*.

CAMBERWELL, ST. GILES.

I. An inscription, measuring $20\frac{1}{2}$ by $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches, to Edward, son of John Scott, Esq., 1538, reads thus on its *obverse* side:

Of [yo^r charite p^y for y^e soulle] of Edward Scott on of y^e
sones of John
Scott Esquier whiche Edward decessyd y^e xxixth day of
Septēbr Ano dñi
M^occcc^oxxxviiith [on whose soulle & all xpen soull' Ihu
haue mercy].

The words in brackets have been defaced, but so lightly as to be easily legible. In London and the neighbourhood it is usual to find these clauses so

defaced; it was probably done by the friends of the family in order to save the memorial from destruction.

This inscription is made up of two pieces of brass, one piece, 4 inches in length, is blank on the *reverse* side; the other piece, 16½ inches in length, is cut out of an older inscription to one John Ratford, citizen and glover. The fragment reads thus:

Hic iacet Joh' Ratford Civis et Cirot
 obiit xxix^o die mens' Septembris cuius ai

Cirot . . . = cirotecarius or chirothecarius, a glover, from chirotheca, a glove or gauntlet. There is no date on the fragment, but the style of lettering places it in the last half of the fifteenth century. Of John Ratford himself the writer has been unable to find any information.

II. An inscription and shield of arms to Margaret, daughter of Matthew Keleatt, gent., of Surrey, and wife of John Dove, by whom she had five sons and four daughters, and died on April 22, 1582.

The inscription, 16½ by 5 inches, is as follows:

Here lyeth buried the Body of Margaret Dove
 wyfe to John Dove daughter of Mathew Keleatt
 of Surrey Gentleman, and had Issue by the said
 John v Sonnes and iiij Daughters & decessed
 the xxij daye of Aprill Anno domini 1582.

The shield, 6¼ by 5½ inches, bears the arms of DOVE, *Per chevron (az.) and (vert) three doves volant (arg.), impaling KELEATT or KELLET (arg.), on a mound (vert) a boar passant (sa.)*.

This inscription and shield of arms are cut out of portions of a large Flemish brass of very late fifteenth or early sixteenth-century work. On the *reverse* of the inscription is a portion of an ornamental border containing two small figures of monks as "weepers," and

a portion of a Latin inscription on a scroll with a twisted



PALIMPSEST BRASS, CAMBERWELL.

end. Only four words remain, as follows:

Bis + hinc + mense + Secund'

The background is filled with a diaper of foliage work.

On the *reverse* of the shield is a mere fragment of a figure. The groundwork is divided into large squares, and resting on this is a naked foot and the end of some drapery, most probably a portion of a figure in a shroud. The base and portion of a shaft of a canopy also appear. An early example of a brass of this type occurs in the Cathedral at Bruges, to Joris de Munter and wife, 1439. It is figured in the Rev. W. F. Creeny's *Monumental Brasses of the Continent of Europe*, p. 25. In the church of St. Jacques, in the same city, is another to James and Kateline Bave, 1464, and at Lubeck is one as late as *c.* 1550, to two unknown persons.



PALIMPSEST BRASS, CAMBERWELL.

The palimpsests at Camberwell are now fixed in oak frames on hinges and fastened to the backs of the choir stalls on the north side.

CHEAM.

I. A man in armour with collar, *c.* 1480, and two shields. Wife and inscription lost. This may be the much worn brass mentioned by Lysons, with small effigies of John Yerde, who died in 1449, and wife Anne, who died in 1453. If so, it must have been laid down some years after the date of their death, for the costume certainly points to a date between 1475 and 1480.

One of the shields is palimpsest, on the *obverse* it bears the arms of Courtenay impaling Yerde. On the *reverse* is a merchant's mark of simple design which may be intended to form the initials T. H. This has now been fastened down, the small figure of the man and the two shields having been inlaid in a new stone. Both sides of the shield are illustrated in the *Collections*, Vol. III, p. 339, in the late Major Heales' article on "The Brasses in Cheam Church."

II. Thomas Fromondes, Esq., 1542, in civil dress, and wife Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of John Yerde, Esq., with six sons and four daughters, all kneeling, a representation of the Holy Trinity, an inscription, and three shields of arms, two of which are lost.

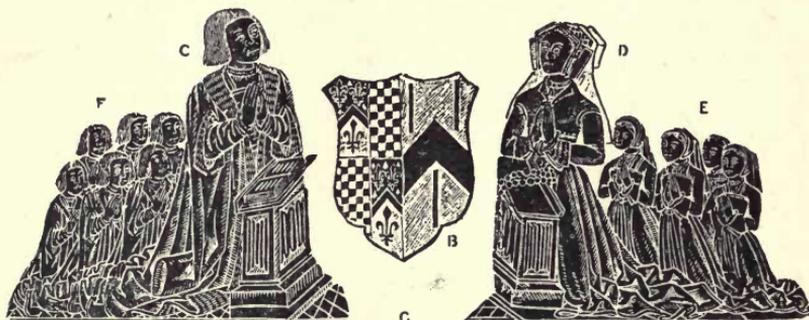
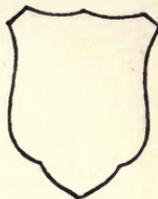
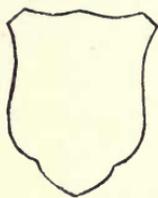
The whole of this brass is palimpsest, being made up of various fragments. These are respectively lettered A, B, C, &c., on the accompanying illustration.

A. *Obverse.* The representation of the Trinity.

Reverse. Two hands issuing from clouds and holding a heart, inscribed: *Ih̄c est Amor m̄r'*. This is again encircled by a scroll, inscribed: *libera m̄c d̄n̄e de morte*, and in the upper angles are the words, *Ih̄u m̄'cy*.

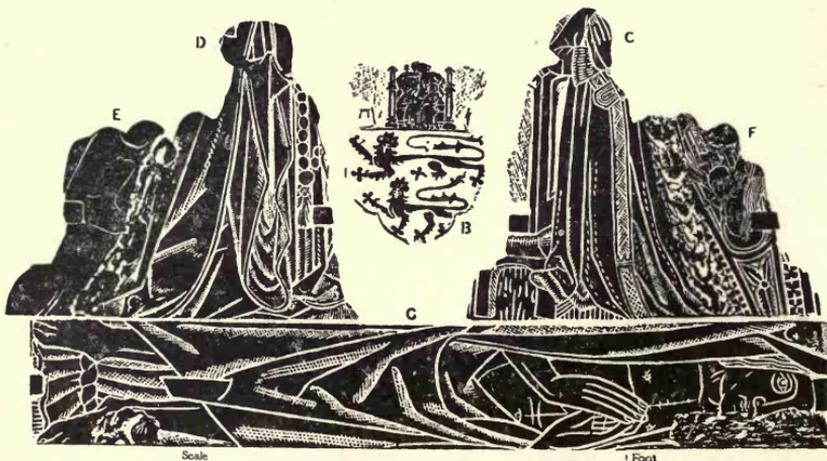
B. *Obverse.* Shield of arms, with Fromondes quartering Ellenbridge and impaling Yerde.

Reverse. A fine early shield bearing the arms of the See of Lincoln.



Pray for the Soules of Thomas Fromond Esquier & Elizabeth his Wyffe
 daughter and heper of John yude Esquier whiche Thomas deceyde the
 xxxi day of marche the yere of o lord God m^o c^o lxxii and in the xxxiii yere
 of the kyngme of kyng Henry the vth on whole soules ihu haue gr^o a

OBVERSE OF BRASS TO THOMAS FROMONDES, CHEAM, SURREY.



REVERSE OF BRASS TO THOMAS FROMONDES, CHEAM, SURREY.

- C. *Obverse.* The figure of Thomas Fromondes.
Reverse. The right elbow, hands, and lower portion of a lady kneeling at a desk. The girdle with its long pendent end is well shown.
- D. *Obverse.* The figure of Elizabeth Fromondes.
Reverse. The lower portion of the kneeling figure of a civilian with long gown and rosary hanging from belt.
- E. *Obverse.* The four daughters.
Reverse. A few engraved lines making the outline of a face, probably only scratching on a waste piece of brass.
- F. *Obverse.* The six sons.
Reverse. A small piece of canopy work with about three-quarters of the figure of St. John the Evangelist.
- G. *Obverse.* The inscription.
Reverse. The greater part of a shrouded figure of a man.

All the fragments, with the exception of the arms of the See of Lincoln, may be dated between 1500 and 1520. The shield bearing the arms of Lincoln is much earlier, probably about 1420.

In the *Collections*, Vol. III, pp. 340, 342, are lithographs, full size, of the *obverses* and *reverses* of A. and B., and at p. 342 is a woodcut of the figure of St. John. Both sides of the brass are reproduced in the *Portfolio of the Monumental Brass Society*, Part IV, plate 5. From this plate the accompanying illustration is, by permission, taken.

The brass is now hung in a wooden frame so that both sides can readily be examined. It is kept in the Lumley Chapel, the only part of the old church now remaining.

III. An inscription to Bartholomew Fromondes, "nuper de Cheym," 1579, with two shields.

The two shields are palimpsest, having on the *obverse* the arms of Fromondes, and on the *reverse* another coat charged with *two bends*. Both are alike. The shields are now fastened down, having, together with the inscription, been inserted in a new stone.

COBHAM.

Affixed by movable screws to a pillar in the south aisle is the figure of a man in armour, bare-headed and with long beard, of date *c.* 1550. Nothing is known of the person commemorated by this brass, but it has sometimes been attributed, on the authority of Manning and Bray,¹ to one James Sutton, "bayle" of the lordship, who died in 1530. The figure is 24¼ inches in height.



PALIMPSEST BRASS AT COBHAM, SURREY. *c.* 1550 AND *c.* 1510.

¹ *History of Surrey*, Vol. II, p. 738. "In the chest is preserved a brass with the figure of a man bare-headed, long beard: *Of your charite pray for the soules of James Sutton tyme bayle of*

On the *reverse* of this armed figure is another figure, almost complete, of a priest in eucharistic vestments holding a chalice and wafer. On the wafer is the word *Ihs*. The chalice, which is of large size, is inscribed on the bowl with the words *Esto in Ihs*. The date of this figure is *c.* 1510.

This brass has been engraved in Brayley and Britton's *History of Surrey*, Vol. II, p. 408, and in Haines' *Manual of Monumental Brasses*, Introduction, p. xlvi.

HORLEY.

On the floor of the chancel, but removed from the north aisle, is the large and fine brass of an unknown lady, possibly some member of the Salaman family. The figure of the lady measures 4 feet 6½ inches in height, and stands under a fine single canopy, the size of the whole composition being 7 feet 7 inches by 2 feet 5 inches. The lady is represented wearing a large horned head-dress and veil, an undergown with turned back collar and full sleeves gathered into a broad band at the wrists, a high-waisted overgown also with a turned-back collar and very large surplice sleeves. Round her neck is a small collar of SS. with a trefoil-shaped fastening. The date is *c.* 1420. At the feet of the figure, on her right-hand side, was originally the small figure of a child, most probably her son, but this is lost; the only indications left being the rivets which held the figure, the small mound upon which it stood, the indent of one foot on the lady's gown, and the square cut in the folds of the dress for the bottom of the tunic. A similar instance of a son standing beside his mother occurs on the fine brass to Lord and Lady Camoys, 1419, at Trotton, in the adjoining county of Sussex.

this Lordshippe and Mawde his wyfe which the xii day of July y^e yer of o^r Lord God M.V^cxxx. and the sayd M the day of ——— the yer of our Lord God M.V^c ——— This inscription is now lost.

The original inscription, measuring 23 by 5½ inches, together with two shields between the pinnacles of the canopy, is lost. At some period or another, possibly in 1516, another inscription has been added at the feet of the figure, so that it now purports to represent one Joan, the wife of John Fenner, gent., who died in 1516. This later inscription, measuring 18 by 5½ inches, reads thus :

Of go^r charite pray for the soule of Johān Fenner
late wyf of Johā Fenner gent' whiche Johan
decessed the ii day of July in the yere of our Lord
M^ob^rvi on whose soule Ihu haue mercy amen.

Strictly speaking, this brass should not be classed as a palimpsest, because there is an absence of proof as to the date at which the Fenner inscription was placed below the figure. If placed there in 1516, it is a palimpsest in the sense of appropriation; but, on the other hand, the inscription may have been throwing about loose in the church, and have been placed in its present position through ignorance.

The figure of the lady, together with the canopy, but without the Fenner inscription, is reproduced in the *Portfolio of the Monumental Brass Society*, Part III, plate 4.

SANDERSTEAD.

I. A group of ten sons, *c.* 1520, now placed above the inscription to Nicholas Wood, 1586, but probably belonging to the brass of John and Dyones Awodde, 1525.

This group of children has been cut out of an earlier figure, but as only a few lines of drapery remain it is impossible to give a more exact definition. The brass has been relaid and the palimpsest part fastened down.

II. An inscription to Nicholas Wood, third son of John at Wood, of Sanderstead Court, who served Queen

Elizabeth from the second year of her reign, and died in 1586, leaving behind him a wife and nine children.

On the *reverse* of this inscription is another to Nicholas Pury, who died in 1585. It reads as follows:

xv die Marcii Ann^o dñi 1585.
 Clauditur hoc templo Nicolaus Purgus heros
 armiger et Templi qui medii socius erat.
 Beati qui in Domino moriuntur.

This brass has also been relaid and the palimpsest part fastened down.

III. An inscription to Henry Pollestedde, gent., of Pirllew, citizen and merchant-taylor of London, who died in 1556. This inscription is now lost. An impression preserved in the Collection of the Society of Antiquaries shows the plate as broken at one end. In its mutilated state it measured 16 by 5 inches. The missing words are given by Aubrey, in his *History of Surrey*, Vol. II, p. 74, and are here shown in brackets.

Here Restithe y^e bodge of Henrye Polleste [de late]
 of pirllew gentilmā Somtyme Cittezein & m[archant]
 taylor of Londo which Henrye deptyde y^e xx[v] daye]
 of decēber An^o M.VLV. o whose soule Ihū [haue mercy].

According to Manning and Bray, Vol. II, p. 576, this inscription had on the *reverse* another inscription to William Bycklay, who died in 1467. The inscription is thus given by these authors:

Bycklay Will'mus jacet hic sub marmore victus
Et hic regimen p' quo rogo funde p'cam'
Anno post B : : d'ni hic migrat ab urbe
MLXV. C. d'ni quater ij simul adde.

In Vol. III, Appendix, p. clviii, is the following note, "On looking over the effects of the Parish Clerk, who died suddenly, his friends found in his house the plate which had been on Pollestedde's gravestone broken in

two. It was afterwards given as a matter of curiosity to Mr. Barnes, who presented it to Mr. Glover. The plate has been returned by Mr. Glover to the church, and is now fixed in a frame, so that both sides of it may be inspected, and it is suspended against the wall." As before stated the plate is now lost.

WALTON-ON-THAMES.

Hanging on the wall of the chancel is a board to which is now fastened the brass of John Selwyn, "gent' Keeper of her Ma^{tis} Parke of Oteland' vnder y^e right honorable Charles Howard Lord Admyrall of England," 1587, and wife Susan, with their surviving children, five sons and six daughters. The brass is of an ordinary type; but one plate between the heads of the principal figures is of more than usual interest, as it displays a feat of agility performed by John Selwyn at a stag-hunt in the presence of Queen Elizabeth. It is said¹ that Selwyn, "in the heat of the chase, suddenly leaped from his horse upon the back of the stag (both running



No. 1.



No. 2.

PALIMPSEST PLATE, WALTON-ON-THAMES.

at that time with their utmost speed), and not only kept his seat gracefully, in spite of every effort of the

¹ *Antiquarian Repertory*, Vol. I, p. 1.

affrighted beast, but, drawing his sword, with it guided him towards the Queen, and coming near her presence, plunged it in his throat, so that the animal fell dead at her feet."

This small plate measuring $8\frac{1}{4}$ by $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches, contains two representations of this feat. No. 1, the *reverse* of the plate, shows Selwyn, with a short beard, without hat, and holding with one hand the stag's horns, whilst with the other he plunges the sword into its neck. This side is lightly engraved and appears to have been submitted for approval and rejected. No. 2, now the *obverse* of the plate, shows a much more spirited representation of the scene. Selwyn wears a hat and cloak, and keeps his seat without holding the horns of the stag.

Impressions of both sides of this plate are in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries, and the writer is indebted to Mr. George Clinch for the photographs from which the illustration accompanying this notice was prepared, and also to Mr. George E. Fox, F.S.A., for much careful work in the final preparation of the photographic prints. The brass is also figured, with both sides of this plate, in the *Antiquarian Repertory*, ed. 1807, Vol. I, p. 1, and without the palimpsest portion, in Brayley and Britton's *History of Surrey*, Vol. II, p. 328; *Illustrated London News*, Vol. X, No. 268; and *The Bazaar*, Dec. 8, 1893.

The original slab, said to have been dug up in the north aisle, has now disappeared.