



On a palimpsest brass recently replaced in Binfield Church, with notes on other palimpsest brasses in Berkshire.

By Mill Stephenson, B.A., F.S.A.

BINFIELD.

Elias Ashmole in his *Antiquities of Berkshire*, volume II., p. 444 (octavo edition, 1723), notices a brass to Richard and Katherine Turner, 1558, as then existing in the church, "in a little chapel on the south side of the chancel near the east end." He gives a transcript of the inscription and notes that "over the man's head (figured in a long habit)" is this verse :

"Miserere miserator, quia vere sum peccator
Ideo precor velut reus, miserere mei deus."

And over the woman's head this verse :

"Thy mercy, O God, hath ever been my desiring
Trusting thereby to enjoy life everlasting."

Against each others side is this :

"Terram terra tegat, demon peccata resumat
Mundus res habeat, spiritus alta petat."

In July, 1904, the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield, F.S.A., Hon. Secretary of the Berkshire Archæological Society, sent me a photograph of the two sides the inscription and in response to an enquiry for further particulars referred me to the Rev. Canon Savory, who had recently resigned the living of Binfield, but in whose custody the fragments of the brass temporarily remained. Canon Savory most kindly sent for my inspection eight pieces of the brass, all of which proved to be palimpsest. The eight fragments comprise the Turner inscription in three pieces, the upper portion of the centre piece bearing the surname is unfortunately broken and the piece lost ; the verses "Terram terra tegat," etc., also in three pieces and now imperfect, the end piece being lost ; and two fragments of scrolls, one in Latin, from over the head of the man, the other in English, a mere fragment, from over the woman. The reverses show that no fewer than three older memorials were utilised in the making up of the remains of this brass. Had the figures of Turner and his wife

remained in existence it is probable that more light would have been thrown on these remaining pieces. The explanation is, however, easy; at the time of Turner's death the brass-makers' shops were filled with old material, spoil from the destruction of the great monastic churches and from the suppression of the chantry chapels. Other examples occur in Berkshire as will be shortly noticed. The plate bearing the Turner inscription measures 29 × 8 inches and reads thus, the missing words being supplied from Ashmole and enclosed in brackets :

Here lyeth the bodiez [of Richard Churnor and Kate]ryne
his wyfe
whiche in this parisshe sumtyme lybed m[an and] wyfe
but nowe dethe hathe them rabseshed theire lybes past
and gonne
Theire bodyes lyeth here covered under this marbulle
stoone
wiche (*sic*) Richard died the xxij day of October in the
yere of our
lord god Mⁱ W^o lbiiij and the sayd Katergyne dyed
the xiiij day of
Aprill the yer' of o'r lord god Mⁱ W^o xxxix whose
soules Jhu pardon.

On the reverse of this inscription is the greater part of the lower half of a figure of an abbot in full vestments. His feet are encased in embroidered sandals and he wears the albe, the lower orphrey of which appears between the feet; the stole, the fringed ends of which appear on the albe and just below the tunic which in this case is plain; above the tunic is the dalmatic with its fringed edge, and over this the chasuble with an orphrey running round its edge. From the right arm hangs the maniple which is unusual, its proper position being on the left arm. In his left hand, on which is an embroidered glove, he holds a book enclosed in a bag or cover, the neck of which is grasped by the hand. Figures of ecclesiastics holding books are rare, but this figure is unique, as there is no other example on a brass of the book being enclosed in a bag. The staff of his crosier encircled by the vexillum runs the whole length of the remaining portion of the figure. This very interesting fragment may be dated between the years 1400 and 1420, but it is useless to speculate as to the identity of the abbot commemorated. Turner's brass was no doubt engraved in London at a time when, as before

stated, the brassmakers' shops were filled with old material from all parts of the kingdom.

Terram terra tegat demon peccat
mundus res habeat spiritus alt

here him peccator
mundus res habeat

here him
mundus

Orate pro aia Willi Brampt
et Stokfishmonger london cui

here him
here him

here both the bodie
whiche in this parish church were layed
but nolbe othe hath them ransched there
there bodie both here covered under this marvill stoon
whiche richard died the xxiii den of October in the yere of our
lord god in vth 1401 and the lady katherine died the xiii den of
April the vii of o^r lord god in vth 1413 whose soules shal parden



PALIMPEST BRASS, BINFIELD, BERKS.

The smaller plate containing the verses is now imperfect ; in its present condition it measures $12\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ inches and reads thus :

Terram terra tegat demon peccat [a resumat]
mundus res habeat spiritus alt [a petat]

The words in brackets supplied from Ashmole.

On the reverse is another inscription to one William Brampt[on, citizen] and stockfishmonger of London, but undated and now imperfect. It is as follows, the portions in brackets being a conjectural completion :

Orate pro aia Willi' Brampt[on ribis]
et Stokfishmonger London cui[aie ppiciet' d's]

At first sight one was tempted to attribute this inscription to one William Brampton, citizen and stockfishmonger, who died in 1406, and was buried in the church of St. Magnus, London Bridge, where his monument was seen by Stowe, but the lettering is of later date, more in the style of the second half of the fifteenth century. On close examination several of the letters appear to be unfinished, although the plate itself shows signs of wear and has been much indented and hammered, probably at the time of its conversion into a part of Turner's memorial.

Of the two scrolls recorded by Ashmole, fragments only remain, the larger piece, 8 × 2 inches, bears the words :

. *here sum peccator*
 *⁊ miserere mei deus.*

and was originally over the man's head. The smaller piece, 3 × 2 inches, bears only the words [d]e*ixing* and [everla]sting*ge*, being originally over the woman's head. Owing to the small size of these fragments it is impossible to say more than that these scrolls have been cut out of a large draped figure of late date, apparently of about the end of the fifteenth century.

As the original stone bearing the indents for the Turner brass has disappeared, Canon Savory has had the remaining fragments of the brass mounted in a brass frame so that both sides may be inspected. By courtesy of the present rector the brass now hangs on the wall of the south aisle as nearly as possible over the place of the original stone. Canon Savory has kindly supplied me with the following extracts from the parish register :

"Catherine Terner was buried the 13th daie of April, 1538."

"Ricd. Terner was buried the 30th daie of October, 1558."

There is a discrepancy of a year between the date of Catherine's death as recorded in the register and engraved on the brass, possibly an error in transcription in the register.

Richard Turner's will is preserved at Somerset House in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (70 Noodles). It is an interesting but lengthy document bearing date 10 September, 1558, and proved 11 November in the same year. He desires to be buried in the chapel of our Lady St. Mary in the parish church of All Saints, Binfield, "under the stone there provided for the same." Much money and silver plate is divided amongst various legatees as well as much household furniture. Altogether the testator appears to have been a man of substance and to have belonged to the old faith.

Other palimpsest brasses noted in Berkshire occur at Blewbury, Cookham, where part of a Flemish brass has been re-used, Denchworth, and Reading, St. Lawrence. The two latter undoubtedly spoil from monastic houses, the one from Bisham Priory, the other from the Charterhouse, London.

The term *obverse* is here used to denote the later or more modern side of the brass, and the term *reverse* the earlier work.

BLEWBURY.

John Latton, Esq., of Chilton, 1548, in tabard, and wife Anne, with six sons (now lost) and nine daughters; effigy of another wife lost; inscription and four shields of arms, Chancel floor.

A few years ago a portion of the inscription became loose and was found to be palimpsest. It was examined and recorded* by Mr. W. H. Richardson, F.S.A., to whom the writer is indebted for the information, but unfortunately fastened down again before any rubbing or any note of the reverse was made.

COOKHAM.

Obverse. Raffe More, Gent., 1577, in civil dress, and wife Mary, daughter of John Babham, Esq., with ten English verses and a marginal inscription, the whole much mutilated, North Aisle.

The marginal inscription, when complete, read thus:

+ Here lyeth the body of Raffe More Gent' who married Mary the daughter of John Babham, Esq. He purchased Whiteplace Bullocks and Shafseies and other lands in Cokeham and dyed without issue of his bodye on the feast day of St. James the Apostle in the yeare of our lorde God 1577.

Reverse. At the restoration of the church in 1860, three pieces of this brass were found to be palimpsest. The largest piece consists of the centre portion of the figure of Mary More from the waist downwards. This piece measures twelve inches in length and is cut out of a portion of a Flemish brass of late fifteenth century work. It bears a small portion of a head, apparently wearing a round topped bascinet, and surrounded with canopy and diaper work. The centre arch of the canopy is cusped below and crocketed with oak leaves, one of which is entire. The background is diapered with foliage, &c., in squares outlined by small roundels or nail heads. The smaller pieces consist of two portions of the marginal inscription, one, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length, bearing the words

* *Transactions Newbury Field Club*, vol. iv. p. 56.

"here lyeth the," has on the reverse a few Lombardic letters, **ODA + ET + R**, being a portion of a Latin inscription from an early Flemish brass. The other, 9 inches in length, bearing the words "and shafseies a," has on the reverse a few engraved lines, apparently part of a female face.

All are now fastened down and the brass nearly covered by the organ.

DENCHWORTH.

Obverse. William Hyde, Esq., 1557, in armour, and wife Margery [Cater, of Letcombe Regis], 1562, with twelve sons and eight daughters, ten English verses and incription, relaid and now mural, Chancel.

The inscription only is palimpsest. It measures $17\frac{1}{4} \times$ by $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and reads thus:

Quisquis transieris pro nostris ora aiabus

Et Iunctos tumulo tu prece Junge deo.

The whiche Wylm Hyde esquier decessyd the seconde day of Maye in the yere of our lorde God **MCCCCXXii** and the sayde Margery his wyfe decessyd the xxvii day of June in the yere of oure lorde God **MCCCCXXii**.

Reverse. The reverse of this inscription shows another inscription of great historic value, and fortunately complete. It is in French, and records the laying of a foundation stone of Bisham Priory by King Edward III., in commemoration of his victories at Berwick in 1333, and at the request of Sir William de Mountagu, the founder of the Priory.

Edward Roy Dangleit' qe fist le siege deuant la Cite de Berwyk & coquist la bataille illoqs & la dite Cite la veille seinte Margarete lan de gr̃e. M. CCC. xxiii. mist ceste pere a la requeste Sire William de Mountagu foundour de ceste mesoun

DENCHWORTH, BERKS.

The inscription is as follows:

Edward Roy Dangleit'e qe fist le siege deuant la Cite de Berewyk & coquist la bataille illoqs & la dite Cite la veille seinte Margarete lan de gr̃e M. CCC. XXiiii. mist ceste pere a la requeste Sire William de Mountagu foundour de ceste mesoun.

The capitulation of Berwick took place on St. Margaret's day, 1333, and Sir William de Montagu was one of the signatories to the treaty of surrender. The foundation charter of the priory of Bisham is dated 10th April, 1336.

The palimpsest plate is now fastened by movable screws.

READING, ST. LAWRENCE.

Obverse. Walter Barton, Gent., 1538, in civil dress, with inscription.



hic iacet Johannes propheta regibus quodam dñs de Turra in p̄uandua 7 dñs
de Chardesford de Bere ac de Abington 7 Albi in Anglia qui obijt .xiii.
die mensis .aprilis .anno dñi millimo CCC. lviij. Cuius anime p̄petuo or?

here ynd this double stone lict Walter barton gent which decesid y^e
xxv day of aprill in the yere of our lord God m^c l^v xxxviii on
whos soule and all crysten soules ihu haue mercy A m e n
Telesia quoda. vita qui dixerat ista. vñmb; ecce hater. in redeste hūano

Effigy $23\frac{1}{4}$ inches in height ; inscription plate $28\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

Reverse. The entire brass is made of portions of the brass of Sir John Popham, who died in 1463, and was buried, according to Stowe,* in the Charterhouse, London. The upper part of the figure of Walter Barton shows the pointed sollerets and a greater portion of a lion on which the feet rested. The lower portion of the figure shows the hilt of the sword and a portion of the tabard, giving enough to identify the two lower quarterings as those of Zouch and Popham.

The Popham inscription is fortunately preserved entire on the reverse of Barton's inscription and reads thus :

*Hic iacet Johis Popham miles q̄ndm̄ dñs de Turney in
Normandia & dñs
de Chardeford de Dene ac de Albyngton et Alibi in Anglia qui
obiit riiii^o
die mens' Aprilis Anno dni millmo CCC^o XLiii^o cui' aie
ppiciet' de*

The Rev. Charles Kerry, in his *History of the Church of St. Lawrence, Reading*, p. 136, says, "The old ledger on which Barton's brass was laid was undoubtedly the very slab which covered the body of Sir John Popham. In adapting it for a second memorial, the old matrices were chiselled out and the stone rubbed down, but the bottoms of most of the rivet-holes containing the leaded rivets remain, indicating the bearings of the original. The principal figure stood beneath a canopy. The knight was habited in a tabard of arms, and the fragment taken from the left-hand side of the figure exhibits the fourth and part of the third quarterings with the hilt of the contiguous sword. The tail of the lion passed under the foot of the knight and terminated in a graceful curve by the side of the sword. The sollerets, exhibiting seven laminæ, are finely pointed."

The arms of Popham, *arg., on a chief gu. two stags' heads cabossed or*, quartering Zouch of Dene, *gu., a chevron arg. between ten bezants, six in chief and four in base*, are on a brass to the Forster family in the neighbouring church of Aldermaston, and were also in painted glass in the windows of the Hall. Sir George Forster, of Aldermaston, who died in 1533, is described on his sumptuous tomb as "coson and one of the heyres of Sir Stephyn Popham."

* Stowe's *Survey of London*, ed. 1633, p. 478b.

The brass is now set in a hinged copper frame fastened to the north pier of the chancel arch. The obverse is engraved in *Views of Reading Abbey and Churches*, vol. i. p. 54, and the obverse and reverse in Kerry's *History of St. Lawrence's Church*, p. 134, and in the *Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society*, vol. iv. p. 8.

An Eighteenth Century Poet and his Environment.

By I. Giberne Sieveking.

How much his surroundings affect a writer ; his moods, his ways of thought, his mental colouring and focus, one can never gauge with any certainty : but that there is some intangible way in which its makes its lasting impress upon his personality ; tunes it to the melody of suggestive ideas, or sets the wires jarring discordantly, it is impossible to doubt. In some intimate, convincing sense the spirit of a place seems to reach the mind of the poet more especially ; strikes the keynote of his thoughts, and presently the full orchestra of his mind is discoursing sweet music. In the union brought about by the close living association of place with personality a poem springs to the birth.

About the writings of Gray, Cowper, Wordsworth and Keble, there is this distinguishing characteristic ; they are all supremely passionless.

There is no passion in Nature. For passion is, in its very essence, human. It is called into being by the irresistible demand rising from the depths of the soul for satisfaction, for fulfilment.

But if one drinks long at the "brook in the way"—Nature—its quiet placidity, its essential passionlessness, its spirit of aloofness from the fret, restlessness, and anxiety that possess so often the sons of men, sinks ever deeper and deeper into the inner consciousness, and there ensues a great calm.

Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" breathes throughout the spirit of this impersonal, passionless calm. And as one enters