

Brasses and Mural Monuments in Shinfield Church and Links with Tavistock, Ely, and Exeter.

By META E. WILLIAMS.

THE following notes deal with three monumental brasses and four mural monuments belonging to the parish church of Shinfield. The three "brasses" no longer remain there. They seem to have been lost sight of when the floor was neatly paved with tiles at the so-called restoration by Sir Gilbert Scott in 1855-57. Fortunately Ashmole copied the inscriptions upon them.

Two of them belonged to the pre-Reformation period and bore names that are not Shinfield names. The third was the Woodcock brass, probably pre-Reformation and re-used. Only one was dated—1527—and dedicated to the memory of Richard Lybbe, "de Tavistock in Co. Devon."

The Lybbes were a very old Tavistock family. In Worth's Calendar of the Tavistock Parish Records, which begin in 1385, the name Lybbe, Libbe, Libba or Libbey occurs on nearly every page in connection with a certain festival, the "Feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross"; also with gifts, obits and church fines; and with secular matters, as witnesses or principals concerned with leases of lands in the common fields, and the boundaries of other townsmen's messuages contiguous to their own tenements and gardens. Richard was a favourite name in the family. In 1497, Richard Lybbe was "maoris de Tavistock." Two entries in the year 1500 show tenements conveyed to John and Richard Lybbe along with other persons. At that time the wool trade was booming and quantities of Tavistock kersies were sold at the two town fairs and further afield. This "Richard Lybbe Gen(erosus)" may have come to Berkshire as a wool merchant. An anniversary was paid at Tavistock, whether for him or another, in 1538-9 "for Richard Lybbe viiid."

The date of this brass is earlier than any mention of a member of the Lybbe family outside Devon. The name had come to stay. Less than fifty years later, the Manors of Checkington (Checkendon) and Hardwick (Oxon)¹ had been purchased by Richard Lybbe, son of Richard Lybbe and grandson of "Richard Lybbe of Taston Co. Devon,"² and the woods at the back of Hardwick House became and remained "long a favourite spot with the inhabitants of Reading," who were "permitted to range there" through the kindness of successive proprietors.³ The names of Lybbe, Lybbe-Powys and Powys-Lybbe have belonged for four centuries to the counties of Berks and Oxon. The disappearance of the Shinfield brass is greatly to be regretted.

The inscription on the other undoubtedly pre-Reformation brass commemorated some minor official of the Honour of Wallingford of the name of Nelowe; therefore the brass must have been earlier than 1540. It was evidently much worn when Ashmole tried to copy it and it is doubtful if he was successful. The name "Nelowe" is not found in P.R.O. Calendars of State Papers, nor in Hedges' History of Wallingford. Neither does it appear in Harrison's "Surnames of the United Kingdom." The latter, however, gives a name not dissimilar, occasionally found in State Papers, "Neleme" O.E. aet than elme, at the elme (tree), in the Hundred Rolls Latinised as Ad Ulme and de Ulmo." The real name may yet come to light.

Several considerations point to the possibility of the third brass—the Woodcock brass—having been a re-used one. The pious ejaculation "*Cujus anime*" was already in Queen Mary's reign being written in English. Wood and Rawlinson's Parochial Collections show three instances in English for one in Latin. By the end of Elizabeth's reign it was passing out of use altogether, and William Woodcock died about 1600. No previous William occurs in the Woodcock pedigree (which is, however, fragmentary and does not appear in the Harl. MSS.) until the marriage of Anne Hyde of Denchworth and George

¹ V.C.H., Berks.

² Burke's *General Armory*.

³ Snare's "Tour round Reading."

Woodcock⁴ (c. 1560?), who named their son after his maternal grandfather and great-grandfather. Their brasses and that of his great-grandfather are still in Denchworth Church, and this seems to have been the example followed on this one occasion, for no other Woodcock monuments appear to have been placed in the church. The grandfather's brass at Denchworth is known to be a palimpsest, having on the under side the foundation inscription of Bisham Priory in the year 1333⁵. William is called "generosus," not "armiger," though many of his contemporaries used arms with less right to be considered landed gentry; and there were other Woodcocks who used arms.⁶ But this ancient family seem to have been unostentatious people; and Mary Woodcock, last of her line, appears on the Benefactors' Board at Shinfield Church as Mrs. Mary Spier only. Their name might almost be forgotten in the neighbourhood, were it not for Woodcock Lane. Since this brass was legible and read by Mr. Snare in 1843, only twelve years before it vanished, the loss is inexcusable.

The Hydes of Denchworth are still represented by the Hydes of Creg, Co. Cork. Having received from Queen Elizabeth some two thousand acres of land forfeited by the Earl of Desmond, they settled in Ireland and their castle, Carriganeeda, is still standing, though a ruin. Another representative of the Hydes of Denchworth is Prebendary Hyde of Exeter, whose wide knowledge of foreign heraldry is at the service of every enquirer.

So much can be said concerning the three "lost" brasses, any of which may even yet come to light.

The four old mural tablets in Shinfield Church commemorate three families who must have known each other very well. The earliest, on the west wall, which looks so different from the rest, has been somewhat of a mystery. There is no local tradition as to how it came there. It has associations with a village in Suffolk, bears the name of Steward, not a local name, and has an array of coats of arms that cast those of the Berkshire gentry into

⁴ V.C.H., Berks.

⁵ V.C.H., Berks.

⁶ Oxford Record Society, 1830.

the shade—quartering the *cross flory* and doves, attributed to our Saxon kings; the *fess checky* of the royal Stuart coat; and another coat suggesting the lilies of France. A crest without a helmet suggests that the person commemorated may have been only a boy. (Plate I.)

The Victoria County History queries the first word of the inscription and throws no light on it. It looks as if it ought to be historical; but what has history to say about the Stewards of Lakenheath? History little: heraldry much.

To the eye of an expert the whole thing is fantastic; a design adapted from the seal pattern so common in the middle ages—here a broad sixteenth century shield hanging, not by a strap, but by a stout rope from a lopped tree, which supports two halves of a broken sword crossed *saltirewise*. The point of the shield is treated after a foreign fashion, rare in English heraldry; and upon it "*enté en pointe*" is the royal Stuart coat, and in pretence a lion debriused by a ragged staff, now scarcely visible; otherwise this tablet could hardly have remained, as it has done, so long perdu. For this is the identical coat which "Robert Steward or Styward, alias Wells" "last Prior and first Dean of Ely,"⁷ had emblazoned on the Valor of his priory when he surrendered; and which he drew in many volumes still in the cathedral library.⁸ (Plate II.)

A whole literature of comment and criticism has gathered round his story of the origin of these arms. It is told and retold in all good faith in old-fashioned works on heraldry.⁹ An echo has even reached the schoolroom in text books stating that Oliver Cromwell and Charles I. were distantly related. It has recently been disproved "up to the hilt" by scientific genealogists, especially Mr. Walter Rye¹⁰ and Dr. Round.¹¹

⁷ Venn's "*Alumni Cantabrigiensis*."

⁸ Chapman's "*Sacrist Rolls of Ely*."

⁹ Delamotte's "*Historical and Allusive Arms*," Betham, Burke, etc.

¹⁰ "*Two Cromwellian Myths*." "*Alleged Royal Descent of the Steward Family*."

¹¹ "*Studies in Peerage and Family History*."



*Mural monument to Huick Steward in St. Mary's Church,
Shinfield.*

The original version of the tale, told in the historical(?) genealogy of "this Robert," which Wharton copied into *Anglia Sacra*, was meant to prove the royal Stuarts to have been really Stywards, the Styward Stuarts, and the Stuart arms an official "augmentation" to be dropped or resumed at pleasure. These coats were said to have been combined when Sir Andrew Stuart, descended from a *second* son of Margery Bruce, a mythical ancestor of the Stywards, felled Balliol with a cart lever, his sword being broken, in a duel fought to vindicate the Bruce claim to the throne, in the presence of Charles IV. of France; who afterwards granted the hero's son, Sir Alexander, in memory of his father's feat, a shield of arms, bearing his own Stuart coat with the Styward lion in pretence, with the compliment:—

"Singula cum valeant sunt meliora simul"—

("When singly good; they're better jointly borne").

A picture produced to convince dubious heralds, and reproduced in a window long lost from Ely Cathedral, represents Balliol in symbol as a lion and prostrate as a knight; the hand of the French king from above, bestowing upon the real hero a shield thus blazoned. A Jesse tree surrounds the picture with fourteen vignettes of named ancestral knights in armour in the branches.

This picture survives in a copy upon the pane of heraldic glass, rescued from Stuntney Manor House, near Ely, when it was demolished about 1750. It set the ball of criticism rolling in 1786.¹² It has been published several times.¹³ The central group of the knight and the lion has also been reproduced on the relief below the tablet to Sir Nicholas Steward, Bart., in Hartley Mauduit Church, who died in 1707. (Plate III.)

It was engraved long before, on the Worsley Ring (Pl. VIII. in Jones's *Finger-ring Lore*), an heirloom of the Stewards of Hartley Mauduit. Both these objects refer to another version

¹² *Archaeologia*, Vol. VIII. "Some Accounts of an Ancient Painting on Glass," Rev. R. Masters.

¹³ "Studies in Peerage and Family History," Ed. 1901, *Archaeological Journal*, Vol. XXXV. *The Genealogist*, N.S. X.

of the story which makes Sir Alexander slay the lion and earn the compliment Dean Steward framed into a motto :—

" Francorum Carolus voluit sic Stemma ferri," etc.

Two of the knights in the Jesse tree are named Johannes and one must be meant for the mythical Sir John Stuart, the "Scottish Englishman"—"Scotangle"—founder of the Styward branch of the royal Stuarts; said to have been shipwrecked off the coast of Norfolk along with his kinsman, Prince James of Scotland, although the Prince was not wrecked and a man named Nicholas Styward was one of his captors.

To return to the tablet in Shinfield Church (Pl. I.). Simon "Steward armig : de Lakingheth in Com : Suff : " was a brother of the Dean; king's bailiff, not squire, of Lakenheath, and tenant on a long lease of Stuntney, no longer a priory manor. On his splendid tomb at Lakenheath he is called "Armiger . . . Simon . . . Styward(us)," a peasant surname, smacking of villeinage; but the Stuart, Styward and other coats of arms are grandly displayed. His seventh son bought Hartley Mauduit from James I. "Marcus filius" was his third son, and had already inherited Stuntney from the eldest, Robert, on whose gorgeous tomb at Ely¹⁴, the colours are still bright. The Mark Stywards were, however, living in Shinfield parish in 1575; a detail is preserved by the merest chance, in a famous astrologer's notebook—to wit, the "Private Diary of Dr. John Dee," who jotted down, no doubt, with a view to casting a horoscope in that year :— "July 31st : Simeon Stuard, natus ante diluculum per horem 11½ at Shinefelde; his grandfather by the mother was Dr. Huyk the Queen's physician"¹⁵. This entry throws light on the presence of the tablet in the church, and on the puzzling first word of it, and shows that whatever connection the Stewards had with Shinfield it was "by the mother," for Dr. Huick was a Berkshire man.¹⁶

Unfortunately, neither in college registers nor in the licence for his second marriage does Dr. Huick state his birthplace.

¹⁴ Bentham's *History of Ely*, Pl. XXXVIII.

¹⁵ *Camden Soc. Publns.*, Vol. XIX, ed. J. O. Halliwell.

¹⁶ D.N.B.

decorando psallam tibi.

Qui das saurum regibus: qui redimisti dauid
seruum tuum: de gladio maligno eripe me.
Et erue me de manu inimicorum altitudo quorum os
locutum est uanitatem: & dextera eorum digne
uocatum fuit: sicut nouelle plantationes in u
uerunt sua.

Ille eorum compollet: articulat ut similes
Pompauaria eorum plena: trutantia ex hoc in
illud. O us eorum fuisse abrumdantes in gra
tis: suis: donis eorum crasse.

Non est ruina matris: neque uisus: neque da
mor in placis eorum.

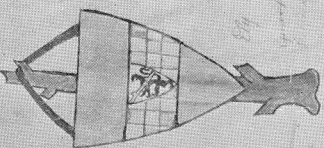
Ecce dixit populum cum hoc sunt: uox
populi cum dicit deus eius.

Eratabo re as meus: & uindicta no
tuo in scilicet & in scilicet scilicet.

Etingos dicit benedicam tibi: & laudabo no
men tuum in scilicet & in scilicet scilicet.

Magnus dominus & iudicabit nuntius: &

Alonso Nolasco olim teneat et per Jesu Maria
Prioratus de Elvo Anno 1499
Regie etiam tricesimo secundo



Alonso Nolasco olim teneat et per Jesu Maria
Prioratus de Elvo Anno 1499
Regie etiam tricesimo secundo

The "Robert Steward or Styward" drawing.

Two entries in the Parish Registers of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, 1568-1619, connect the name of Huick with that parish and show that the name was often pronounced Hook. "Rob'tus Huicke (buried) 1575." "Burials. Mrs Hooke ali's Huicke, May 29, 1578."

Dr. Huick lived in the same parish. He would probably accompany the Queen on some of her visits to Reading, one of which occurred in 1575. This was the year in which his grandson Simeon was born and the great news reached his parents at Shinfield that after efforts spread over some fifty years full heraldic sanction for the Styward family to "resume" the name and arms of Steward had at last been obtained from Clarencieux, King-of-Arms. No doubt the local families, the Martyns and the Bekes, offered congratulations; not to mention the Woodcocks. It may be doubted whether Dr. Huick and his daughter Anna were on the best of terms, since he had twice tried to divorce her mother, and this year, 1575, married again. Foster's "London Marriage Licences" records the following:—"Huycke: Gen. Lic. 2 Nov. B. Huycke Robert, doctor of medicine of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields and Mary Woodcock of the City of London, spinster."

The name of Woodcock at once suggests a possible relationship with Shinfield; but it was not an uncommon name. "Hook" is a county name as well as a common one in Berkshire and Hampshire, inseparable from Earley Court, near Reading, and the Manor of Hook in Titchfield. But the four escallops of Hooke of Earley Court and of Bramshott, Hants. (1610), are not found on any Steward monument. "For Hooke of Hook no arms are tricked."¹⁷

The Stywards had been incontestably Stewards for one year when Huick died and the tablet was erected, the arms on the shield being displayed, as happens fairly often at this period, without strict adherence to heraldic rules. Arms and tinctures have been verified, as far as possible, in Berry's *Encyclopaedia Heraldica* and in Papworth and Burke. They are:—

¹⁷ Harleian MSS.

Crest—A Roebuck in his proper colours.

Coats—on the Dexter half :—

No. 1. (Styward) Steward of Ely.

Thomas Styward of Swaffham Market, who held no manor ; also his son and grandson, bore a lion debruised by a bar sinister, in 1432, 1456, and 1511 A.D. (a) As drawn by Dean Steward—a lion debruised by a bend raguly.

No. 2. *Stuart*.

Or a fess checky argent and azure.

No. 3. *Baskerville*.

Argent a chevron gules between 3 hurts.

(Cecilia Baskerville ; grandmother of Mark Steward.)

No. 4. *Bestney*.

Per pale sable and gules (or azure and Gules) a lion rampant guardant argent, crowned or.

(Joan Bestney, mother of Mark Steward.)

No. 5. *Brogrove* ?.

Gules 3 lions passant guardant (in pale gules, in Herts, Lincs, and London).

Margaret Steward, sister of Mark, married John Brogrove of London. (Tinctures as on Mark Steward's tomb at Ely.)

No. 6. *Payne (of Swaffham)*.

Azure a chevron or between 3 leopards' heads erased sable.

(Catherine Payne married William Steward, cousin of Mark.)

Sinister half.

No. 1. *Boreley*.

Vert 3 boars' heads couped argent, armed or (in Leicestershire, Wilts and Hants).

Claim to relationship with Stywards not substantiated.

No. 2. *Welles* ?

Argent a lion rampant sable.

(Styward or Welles ; Styward of Wells ?)

No. 3. *Edward the Elder*.

Azure a cross flory or between 4 doves of the second. (the Saxon princess Margaret=Malcolm III.)



Relief below mural monument to Sir Nicholas Steward, Bart., in Hartley Mauduit Church.

This coat, together with No. 4, appears in the same order on every Styward-Steward monument.

No. 4. Coat unknown to British heraldy ; not found in Rietstap's *Planches de Armorial Général*—4,000 figures. Blaze kindly invented by Dr. Barnard, formerly Head Master of Reading School : " argent, fretty per pale and per fess sable, in each interstice a fleur de lys of the last." (Tinctures visible at Ely.)

No. 5. *Walkfare*.

Or a lion rampant sable in a bordure engrailed argent.

The Walkfares, Sir Robert, Sir John and Sir Richard, appear in state documents of the XIVth century, in *Feudal Aids*, *Cal. Inquis*, *p.m. Edw. III.*, and in Rymer's *Foedera*, etc. They held manors in Norfolk, Essex and Hertfordshire, but nothing *in capite*. Sir Richard served in King Edward's Scottish war and in France. Sir Thomas, who does not appear in *Feudal Aids*, etc., and Sir Richard were officials of the Black Prince in Aquitaine. Sir Richard died in 1362 leaving two married daughters but no son. In the XVth century the name disappears from state documents. They bore for arms " or a lion rampant sable " (Papworth, Norfolk). Their name is missing from the Styward-Steward pedigree ; but their arms with the bordure engrailed is on all the monuments. Their name died out early. It is not found in Harrison's "Surnames of the United Kingdom."

No. 6. For ?

crusily ? a lion rampant. Not repeated elsewhere.

No. 13. Stewart with Styward in pretence "*enté en pointe*," now for Steward of Stoke Park, Suffolk.

The name of the boy, "sepultum apud Shinfeilde juxta Redinge," is "Henricus" in the "curious pedigree" Mr. Rye published in 1884.¹⁸ when his attention was first drawn to it, and Dr. Round pointed out that it emanated from Ely, though he still supposed the family to belong to Norfolk. Had this clue

¹⁸ "Oliver Cromwell's Descent from the Steward Family." *The Genealogist*, N.S., Vol. I.

to Shinfield been followed up, the tablet must have been discovered; and, depicted on it, the ragged staff and crossed sword-ends which Harvie Clariencieux refused to grant the Stywards for a crest, as well as the meaningless capriole in his proper colours, he gave them (Pl. I.). More interesting to Mr. Rye would have been the date, which would have ended his doubts¹⁹ as to whether Simeon Stywardus was a brother or the father of the Dean. If his attention had been attracted to Berkshire, he could have found this date, with less trouble, in Ashmole's "History and Antiquities." But since the "curious genealogy" mentions monuments at Hartley Mauduit and none at Shinfield, the tablet was missed. When in tracing Dr. Dee's connection with Norfolk²⁰, Mr. Rye came upon the approximate date he needed, the connection of the Stewards with Shinfield seemed to him inexplicable. Dr. Huick's connection is far from obvious still. It is, however, only fair to point to one or two circumstances which may, or may not, warrant a conjecture. If Dr. Huick belonged to the Hampshire family, Hooke of Hook, there would be no maternal arms on Huick Steward's tablet, and there are none. It is, on the other hand, impossible to say whether he was or not; for no pedigree of that family is given in the *Visitation of Hants* (Harl. MSS. 1600). The V.C.H. does not mention them, as Hook belonged to the Wriothsesleys, whose tenants the Hookes were. Yet they were people of position; for in the pedigree of another Hampshire family, that of Rigg, Thomas Rigg is stated to have married "Constance, daughter to Richard Hooke in the Co. of Southampton"; while in the pedigree of Forster of Aldermaston, "Eustace Hooke of Hook in the Co. of Southampton" married — Dolman, daughter of Humphrey Dolman, a granddaughter of Thomas Dolman and Margaret Forster, daughter of the Sir William Forster who died in 1574. This would bring Eustace Hooke and his wife into the XVIIth century, and a "Eustace Hooke, Gent." was buried at Shinfield, Sep. 3.

¹⁹ "Two Cromwellian Myths"—alternative pedigrees, indecisive.

²⁰ "Norfolk Mystics."

1664.²¹ The following year was that of Ashmole's *Visitation*, and Mr. Hooke was summoned to appear at the Herald's assize at Reading. The record under Shinfield reads :—" — Hooke (crossed out) mort. He was eldest son to Hooke of Hook, in Co. Hants."²² Later on, in the parish register, under burials for the year 1685, there is another entry :—

" Mrs. Hook, December 22, affidavit —"

Memorand^a no aff. brought, which was certified to the Churchwardens and Overseers, Jan. 1st. and they according to the direction of the Act for burying in woollen, divided the money forfeited and distributed it among the poor."

These are the only records concerning persons named Hooke in the Register. They occur a century later than the date of the tablet ; yet they show that people named Hook, related to the Hooks of Hook, and kinsfolk of the Forsters of Aldermaston, had interests in Shinfield for a considerable time. Had this anything to do with the brilliant marriage of Mary Steward, Anna Huick's daughter, to William Forster of Aldermaston ?

Whatever the connection with this part of England, it lasted a long time. Mary Steward was Lady Forster, or dowager Lady Forster, of Aldermaston for sixty-seven years. Her father was M.P. for Stockbridge in 1597-8, when he was quite an old man. Her brother, Simeon, married Grace St. Barbe, daughter of Edward St. Barbe, of Ashington, Somerset, and Francis Fleming, heiress of Broadlands, Hampshire, once the property of Romsey Abbey.

At least seven remarkable monuments were erected to members of the Steward family in about thirty years, at Ely, Lakenheath, Shinfield and Swaffham—all fine, for the Stywards were nothing if not artistic—but only one has Mark Steward's allusive device upon it—the tablet at Lakenheath to the memory of his mother. The number of quarterings is bewildering ; increasing with time, as fresh relationships were formed and the family tree

²¹ Parish Registers, beginning 1649.

²² Harl. MSS. Berks. Vol. II, p. 41.

was conned over. There are no arms, it is true, on Dean Steward's own gravestone, but the matrices of five little shields are there. There are six on his brother's tomb at Lakenheath, the new arms of his wife's family being added. Dame Joan herself has, with one exception, the same coats as the Shinfield tablet, four new ones and a second crest. (Plate IV.)

As far as identification may be hazarded these arms seem to be as follows, all on the sinister half of the shield :—

Crest—a castle triple towered masoned sable.

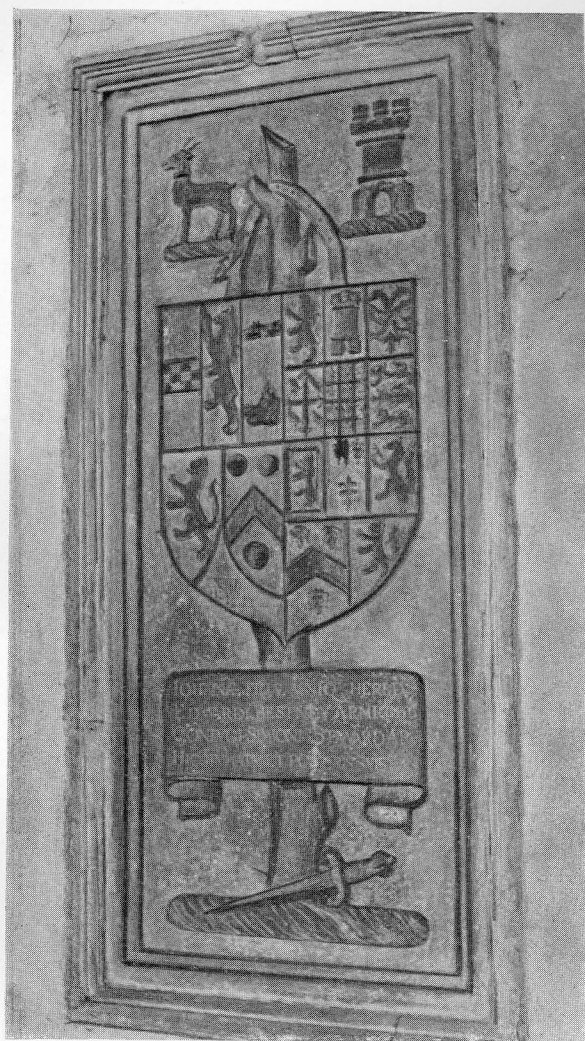
No. 2. Same coat—for Linaxei, probably, Lindsay.

No. 3. An eagle displayed or ; for Shouldham of Marham. John Steward married Anne, daughter of Humphrey Shouldham of Marham.

No. 8. A chevron between 3 leopards' heads jessant de lys ; not in Berry, Burke or Papworth, nor in Rietstap,

No. 9. A griffin segreant ermine armed or, for Baker of Chester and Shrewsbury. Nicholas Steward married Frances Baker, of ?—

A better memorial of Dame Joan lay in the church chest—three deeds, still extant—setting forth her purchase for £30 of 20½ acres, “in several pieces,” in the common fields, from husbandmen who had inherited them, in order that she might bequeath them to the parish for the benefit of the poor ; the savage laws against vagrancy prompting her, like many other kind folk all over the country, to do something for “the poor.” One of these deeds has the remains of a seal with a lion rampant device. A fourth was probably executed after her death, by which her son Thomas, as her attorney, handed on, before his own death, the responsibility to his brother John. They are all very interesting, but they belong to the local history of Cambridge. The writer of this paper is indebted to the Rev. Isaac Morris, Vicar of Lakenheath, for describing them, and for the loan of copies of them.



*Mural Monument to Dame Joan Bestney in St. Mary's Church,
Lakenheath.*

Exasperated genealogists wax wroth over a romance, full of blunders, like the Steward genealogy, passing muster for pedigree so long ; still more so over a mass of documents accumulated in attempts to substantiate it.²³ But this much may be said for Brother Robert—if such was his name in religion—that fate which made him a monk and a gentleman, not of coat armour, alas ! placed him in the midst of fine building, artistry and pomp, with a library and muniment room to hand, and leisure to dream romantic dreams and finally do for himself and his family what other folks were getting heralds to do for them. People smiled ; Wharton scoffed ; “ *cela fait rire* ” still ; but after all, there was nothing tangible to be gained, and the Styward-Steward saga is a romance in itself. Their record is as good as that of any other old English family down to the present day. The Prior’s political foresight was justified when the sovereign from over the Border, whose coming the reign of Elizabeth delayed, knighted together—doubtless amused at their pretensions to relationship—his nephew Mark and his great-nephew Simeon ; not the undergraduate of Trinity Hall tradition, but a man of eight-and-twenty with a son of his own three years old.²⁴ His arms were probably already “ fairly depicted in his chamber,”²⁵ the site of which is still pointed out, and the story of the shield, lost from “ over the chimney,”²⁶ repeated. If it displayed a whole crowd of coats, small wonder that Dr. Fuller did not describe the arms, as he is said to have done, but contented himself with copying the “ distich over them.” The shield may have hung from the ragged staff. On the top of Sir Mark’s tomb at Ely, a red lion holds it in one great paw and a golden shield in the other ; too high up to be visible except in a good light and unrecognisable in Bentham’s plate.

²³ B.M. Additional MSS, 15644.

²⁴ “ Alumni Cantabrigiensis.”

²⁵ Fuller’s “ Worthies.”

²⁶ “ Architectural History of the University of Cambridge,” Willis and Clark. “ History of Trinity Hall,” H. E. Malden. “ Trinity Hall Restoration and Reconstruction, 1928-1929,” W. C. Crawley. D.N.B., etc.

III BRASSES AND MURAL MONUMENTS IN SHINFIELD CHURCH, ETC.

The Steward window can only have lasted eighty-nine years. Mr. Dowsing would not spare it when he "battered and beat down" the painted glass in Suffolk and Cambridge in 1643. In 1644 Cromwell was Governor of Ely; and, the monuments having escaped, no further damage was done. It is not generally realised that Cromwell had near relatives among the prominent royalist families of Berks and Hampshire; or that he had been brought up in an atmosphere of loyalty and excessive family pride. As Protector he was present at the wedding which connected, for one year, his family with the Bekes of Whiteknights, near Reading, when his niece, Lavinia Whetstone, married Richard Beke, great-grandson of Queen Elizabeth's equerry, Richard Beke, whose "faithful service" she rewarded with the manor of Haddenham, Bucks.

It is not often that two monuments to the same person are found in one church; but this has happened at Shinfield. On the north wall near the west end of the nave is the earlier of the Beke tablets, bearing a rudely cut inscription, rather out of keeping with the beauty of the monument itself:—"Here lyeth bereed the bodi of Master Henry Beke Esquier whoe desesed the 23 May 1580." Opposite is the oft-described cenotaph to Henry Beke, his wife and daughter, on the wall of the south aisle.

The Rev. P. H. Ditchfield, in writing of the church at Shinfield,²⁷ does not attempt to date this aisle, merely saying that the queen-post roof "is ancient." Since the arcade was of brick, it is unlikely to be earlier than the XVth century. It cannot well be referred to the XVIth—neither Christopher Lytcott, Henry VIII's. bailiff, nor any of that monarch's queens would be likely to have built it. The most probable time seems to be when Elizabeth of York was lady of the manor and Richard Smith her very religious bailiff. They were on friendly terms, and the Queen, being very religious also, was persuaded by him to make several splendid gifts to St. Lawrence's, Reading, to which he himself was a generous donor.

²⁷ V.C.H., Berks.

When the cenotaph was in its original position beside the tablet, it must have been more obvious that only one Henry Beke was commemorated. Before the window which occupies its place was made, the church must have been rather dark. Mr. Snare, who probably entered it by the stile and path leading by the south door into the aisle, now blocked, speaks of the date on this tablet as obliterated; of the other monuments as "no doubt" belonging to the Bekes; of epitaphs to the Hydes "almost obliterated"; whereas nearly all the tablets and the hatchments there now were already on the walls. If only he had left us a sketch of the church as it was with the musicians' gallery supported by its carved posts (chopped up at the 'restoration.') or Miss Mitford had given us a word-painting of the interior, as well as her description of the outside, with the limes and yews in the churchyard!

At the base of Henry Beke's tablet is a tiny widow's lozenge with three chevrons, and the inscription on the cenotaph tells us that the name of his wife was Jane Lewkenor. The well-known rhyming translation of its tangled Latin verse leaves out two phrases:—"pia iussa matris" and "Domus Hartley Curia."

To Hartley Court, Shinfield, Henry Beke brought his bride. Whether built by the Vachells or the Bekes, it was a new house and farm upon land which the last abbot of Reading but one had enclosed, leaving in two messuages "two poor people, a man and a woman," to avoid the penalties for conversion of arable land into pasture.²⁸ Having been always occupied and being relatively small, it has never become a show place; yet it has interesting features of the transition period between early Tudor and Elizabethan house-building; for the greater part of the old house is still standing. The solar is neither an upper room nor on the level of the hall, but is reached by three steps out of the hall.

Under the solar is a perfectly dry cellar, which, whether ancient or comparatively modern, is something very unusual

²⁸ Leadham's "Doomsday of Enclosures."

in a Berkshire farmhouse ; moats, though useless for defence, were customary and cellars naturally apt to fill with water. The moat at Hartley Court is at a fair distance from the house and runs half-way round the garden.

There are no staircases at each end of the house as is usual in Elizabethan houses ; but two, close together and very steep, were discovered recently in putting in electric light. Why there should be two is not obvious. A modern staircase leads to the top of the house, the third story, which in the old portion evidently consisted of one room, as at Mapledurham. This room is now divided into three by partitions as thin as if they had been cut out of old panelling, fitted picturesquely to the shape of the roof and with doors having hinges and latches of wrought iron. From the end room can be seen the old gables and plain Tudor chimneys, with no purpose-moulded brick in them.

Opening out of the middle room is a large, pitch-dark cupboard, possibly the sleeping closet of the mistress of the serving maids. There is a similar, but much larger, chamber, with a beautiful plaster ceiling, at Holcombe Rogus, Devon, with eight well-lit sleeping closets for eight young gentlewomen, whose tasks were superintended by the "mother of the maidens," her closet being larger and having a fine ceiling.

The old front door, now the back door, measures 83×43 inches and is 3 inches thick. Its key is $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and as heavy as a pistol. It opens on a flagged passage, showing the house to be one room deep and suggesting the usual later division of the hall into two rooms. But it may be original. The kitchen is to the right, and the way through the screens, to left, into the hall, where "Iana" "Roger Lewkenor milite nata" presided. Whose daughter was she? Sir Roger Lewkenor of Trotton (d. 1543) at once comes to mind, and he was the only Sir Roger known to the Sussex pedigree about the time of her birth ; when, if he was alive, he was 76 years of age and his eldest daughter, Jane²², had already been married three times, and had herself

²² "The Divorce of Sir William Barentyne," Frank Ward, M.A., *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, Vol. LXXVII.

a married daughter, when this Jane could not have been more than ten years old. Everything is known about his three younger daughters. In the West Dean branch of the Lewkenor family, there was a Sir Roger³⁰; but he was the uncle of the aged Sir Roger of Trotton; his wife was Mary West, a daughter of Lord de la Warr, and he had a son Roger, under whose name, "ob.s.p." is not written in the extant pedigrees; but he is not called Sir Roger, and only his younger brother Edmund's heirs are recorded. There was another, more distantly related, Roger, whose father was named Humphrey, but whose elder brother, Robert, alone left heirs. Against them must be set the fact that they belonged to the same generation as Sir Roger of Trotton, and apparently died young, and with Sir Roger of Trotton the name of Roger disappears from the Lewkenor family tree altogether. No possible Sir Roger is to be found in the "Book of Knights," in "Knights of England," "The Alumni Oxoniensis and Cantabrigiensis," Foster's "Inns of Court Register" and "Judges and Barristers," all of which record Lewkenors. Lord Curzon of Kedleston, with all the Lewkenor documents before him for his *History of Bodiam Castle*, adds nothing to the received pedigree and alters nothing. Mr. Frank Ward says (letter to writer): "I cannot place this Jane." Major General Fane Lambard, who has made a study of the Lewkenor Carpet³¹ with all the Lewkenor arms upon it, still preserved at Chawton House, Hants, writes: "I am very doubtful if she will ever be traced." The Public Record Office supplied from the unpublished "Chancery Inquisitions, Wills, and Feet of Fines of Berkshire" the disappointing information that "in the *inquisition post mortem* on Henry Beke (Ch. II. 194/7) the name of his wife is stated to be Jane but nothing is said as to her being the daughter of Sir Roger Lewkenor."

There being only one village of Lewkenor, the name never became a common one and is regarded as aristocratic; but

³⁰ Revised pedigree of Lewkenor, W. D. Cooper, M.A. Ibid, Vol. III. Harl. MSS., etc.

³¹ "The Lewkenor Carpet," S.A.C., Vol. LXX.

the "Feet of Fines for Oxfordshire"³² (1195-1291) show there were then Lewkenors who were not *the* Lewkenors. Some unknown Sir Roger, knighted by a sheriff only, may yet be discovered. At any rate, his daughter brought no land with her or her parentage would not have been forgotten.

The date of her daughter's marriage to Hugh Speke is not known; but the bridegroom came of age in 1583, and this marriage which united two of the oldest families in England probably took place when the country was anxiously looking forward to the coming of the Armada.

Compared with the Spekes, the Bekes were *nouveaux riches*, although there had been a Beke-Fettiplace marriage in the reign of Henry VI.³³ But the Especs had held lands in Normandy, in "Alun" (Laulne), "Ostella" (Lastille) and "Herlaix-Mesnil,"³⁴ and made grants to the neighbouring Abbey of Lessay, before the Conquest. Rivaulx Abbey and Kirkham Priory claimed them as founders; Bramford Speke and Wonford Speke near Exeter, and the Speke Chapel in the cathedral, keep in memory the name of these knights who held manors belonging to the earldom of Devon for 515 years. In the XVth century they also obtained by marriage the manors of Dowlish, Wake and Whitelackington, Somerset, and Sir George (d. 1584/5) was "of Whitelackington" when he bought half the manor of Sherfield-on-Loddon as a provision for his second wife, Dorothy Gilbert, and his second son, Hugh; his own estates being the heritage of the son of his first wife³⁵, Elizabeth Luttrell, of Dunster Castle, which still looks out from its crag towards the Severn Sea, and whose family name the Luttrell Psalter has made famous. Elizabeth Speke, with Whiteknights and Hartley Court at her disposal, was a good match, and Hartley Court seems to have been their favourite home for twenty-three years. The solar was probably already panelled, for the panelling is in

³² *Oxfordshire Record Soc.*, Vol. XII.

³³ *Topographer and Genealogist*, Vol. III. "Descent of the Family of Beke of Haddenham." Charles Beke. (1858).

³⁴ Cal. Documents preserved in France. Round.

³⁵ "The Speke Family," Matilda Pine-Coffin (*née* Speke). "Records of the Speke Family," Sophia Murdoch (*née* Speke).

the early rectangular style and the ceiling is plain. But the "full coat of arms of the Bekes" (Speke quartering Gilbert and impaling Beke, as on the cenotaph, probably) and the date 1599, "wrought in inlaid coloured woods"³⁶ in the centre of the "principal mantle-piece, carved in a beautiful and massive design in exact correspondence with that of the other chimney-pieces in the house," was obviously executed to their order.³⁷

They may have been present at the wedding of Anne Martyn and William Wollascott, which gave Shinfield seven generations of lords of the manor bearing a name derived from a tiny hamlet of two or three houses near Shrewsbury; once owned by Haughmond Abbey and called in the abbey pipe rolls, and in Salop tenure rolls, "Wiglaf's, Wilaf's, Willy's Cot."³⁸ But those days of villeinage were long forgotten when William Wollascott, Esq., "the elder," exchanged with King Henry VIII. the manor of Dalehall in Essex for lands in Shalford and Woolhampton, and settled in Berkshire.

It was in 1601 that Hugh and Elizabeth Speke parted with their Berkshire property and moved with their children, and, seemingly, with "*Mater Iana*" also, to Haslebury, Wilts; just two years before Edward Martyn became lord of the manor of Shinfield in the last year of his long life, coinciding with the momentous years of the Reformation. As Queen Elizabeth's bailiff he must have had to do with the pulling down of the rectory—a priest's house—when the Dean and Chapter of Hereford built the new one, more suitable for a family. At the same time, probably, he completed the church by adding the "Martyn chapel" to the south aisle, thus providing his own floor space when church floors were being apportioned among parishioners who stayed the service through; and "broyles about seates" were frequent.³⁹ The far from massive Tudor roof seems to tell of modest means, and has the interest

³⁶ V.C.H. and Snare's Tour.

³⁷ Snare's Tour.

³⁸ Bowcock's "Shropshire Place Names."

³⁹ Churchwardens' Presentments for the Dorchester Peculiar. Peyton.

of a personal detail ; for no help would be forthcoming from the lady of the manor, Queen Elizabeth. Three distinctive ancient roofs are another interesting feature of the little church of Shinfield.

It is well that Ashmole copied the inscription on the Martyn tablet, then in this "chapel," and the figure of Martyn already lost. Workmen less used to Latin than their ancestors have turned one half upside down. Traces of colour remain on the arms above it—Martyn impaling Reade of Barton near Abingdon⁴⁰; without quarterings, though Mrs. Martyn's family claimed descent from John, lord Griffith of Wales (*sic*)⁴¹, several lords Hoo (there was but one in history) and Alexander King of Scots! Why Alexander in particular?

In "1626 Mrs. Eliz. Speak left by will 4¹: to be laid out in stocks the inter^t of which to be given yearly to the poor by the Overseers on the 2nd day of July,"⁴² and her son George placed the cenotaph, dated 1627, beside his grandfather's tablet, in compliance with his mother's pious injunction. She was evidently anxious that her mother's name should not be forgotten, as it certainly would have been but for the tablet, since it does not occur in the Harl. MSS, nor in extant Speke pedigrees. It seems probable that at that time the bronze inscription plate of the cenotaph matched one on Henry Beke's tablet; which, being lost, a stone cutter did the best he could.

The special interest of the little group of families whose arms adorn these early tablets, is that they were all really middle-class people, coming into prominence when the great Norman nobles and Norman monasteries had passed away. The Lewkenors always belonged to the lesser baronage; otherwise fewer "errors" might have "crept into" their pedigrees⁴³ and these might have been better kept. Had not beautiful Bodiam, out of date when it was built, come to them too late to be a desirable home, less might have been heard of them.

⁴⁰ Harl. MSS.

⁴¹ Harl. MSS.

⁴² Benefactions Board, Shinfield Church.

⁴³ Curzon's "Bodiam Castle," and V.C.H., Somerset.

The Spekes, in feudal times, belonged to the "bachelary" of Devon. In Somerset, in the reign of Elizabeth, they were among the most influential families in the county⁴⁴; and the provoking part of it is that Ashmole, the very man for the post of Windsor Herald, knowing the Berkshire gentry personally, but neither a genealogist nor a historian, never thought of asking George Speke's son, Sir Hugh, which Sir Roger Lewkenor his great-great-grandfather was. The Whitelackington branch of the family was eventually absorbed into the North peerage; the Haslebury and Jennings branches died out; yet Speke is still a name to conjure with; and, as is well known, the illustrious discoverer of the source of the Nile was a Speke of Jordans, and brother of the late Mrs. Sophia Murdoch of Wokingham. The Gilberts, Hugh Speke's maternal relatives, were city folk; the Bekes, Martyns and Stewards, bailiffs—now squires—Englishmen, descended, at best, from franklins: a class which has received less attention from historians than nobles, burghers and villeins, probably because of that shading of class into class, characteristic of English society, of which the most fantastic pedigrees are, in fact, evidence of the blending of Saxon and Norman into a nation.

Of the manor houses where the Martyns, Bekes, Stewards and Spekes lived, Haslebury still has the Speke arms on its gates. Hartley Court has, what Mr. Snare called, "a modern front"—rooms built on each side and over the hall, now spanned by a wide four-centred arch; the entrance at the outer end, and, at the other, a light Georgian staircase leading to the rooms above. Whether the original mantelpiece was removed from the solar then or earlier is not known, but the one there now does not harmonise with the panelling and stands against the wall without belonging to it. Mr. Snare saw "antique ornaments from the dismantled rooms, a carved door, etc., in what is now used as a stable." The present tenants, Sir Henry and Lady Head, have recognised Sir John Soane's style throughout, even to his favourite arrangement of the woodwork for the window

⁴⁴ "Somersetshire Wills," the Rev. F. Brown.

panes. The influence of his method and style is again evident in the "manor house" at Shinfield, the back wall of the rectory being the inner wall of a long hall spanned by three arches, out of which a Georgian staircase leads to the upper stories, built over the new front and the old living room and kitchen.

The decline of the vogue for elaborate funereal monuments and of interest in heraldry is well exemplified in Shinfield church. There is an interval of more than a century between the Beke cenotaph and the earliest (1746) of the modest modern tablets bearing the names of City families, clergy, local farmers, and retired Indian officials, all without armorial bearings until the nineteenth century, when the London family of Hulme claimed kindred with the Cheshire Holmes and the Breedons of Pangbourne, in antiquarian fashion, on their hatchments and arms. At the east end of the church, and in the Martyn chapel, the hatchment and shield of Cobham display, without claim to descent, coats borne by the historical Cobhams, revived by the Heralds College, to meet requirements created by a legal formula.

Consequently, the arms of Eleanor Cobham have found their way into a chapel built by a kinsman(?) of John Martyn, bailiff of Swallowfield, her escort part of the way to her prison at Peel; and, by circumstances wholly fortuitous, the names of Cobham and Martyn have come together there again.

The modern tablets are, in fact, as interesting as the old ones; but they are "another story."