



[From a photograph by R. S. Morrish.

THE SURCOAT RESTORED.

THE FUNERAL SURCOAT IN STOKE
D'ABERNON CHURCH.

*I. The Condition and Repairs, with a note on
the Funeral Helmet.*

BY

MARY ANTROBUS, F.R.S.A.

WHEN the surcoat from Stoke d'Abernon Church came into my hands for preservative treatment, it was tattered, incomplete, and indescribably dirty. It is made of a plain, bright-red silk fabric painted all over with armorial bearings, with a coarse linen lining. The painted coats were indistinct and the lower portions of the front and back and part of one sleeve were missing. Fortunately, however, the other sleeve was fairly intact and on it the sequence and identity of the quarterings could be recognized. The larger pieces were merely held on by a few overcast stitches. The following treatment was applied :

First, the tattered fragments were detached from the lining and then I endeavoured to get them flat enough to distinguish the remains of the painting. After tacking them on to a backing I soaked them in clean cold water ; this restored the silk to a certain extent. Then I applied a special cleansing solution which does not harm fabrics or colouring, and I managed to clean the silk sufficiently to enable the various devices to be identified. I then sewed the fragments securely to a suitable background (a seventeenth-century material made of red worsted), arranging them in their original positions, and finally I mounted the pieces with their red backing on to the old linen lining.

As the surcoat was to be hung up again in the church, it was necessary to cover the fabric with a very fine but very strong waxed silk gauze. To give an idea of the original

appearance of the surcoat, I made a careful reconstruction of the heraldic coats and painted them on to this gauze covering. The original paintings on the silk were not accurately drawn, but in my painting on the gauze I have drawn the charges correctly. A photograph of the restored surcoat is shown in Plate IV. My additions are readily recognizable as such and they were made for the sole purpose of preserving what remained of this interesting relic. The surcoat has now been hung on the old iron bar in its original position in the Norbury Chapel.

The helmet from the church was also entrusted to me for cleaning, and I am taking this opportunity of publishing two of Mr. R. S. Morrish's photographs of it (Plate V). The actual cleaning was done by Mr. G. T. Friend, who is a recognized expert in this work. He was able to preserve the very few traces of the original gilt which he found underneath the accumulations of rust and dirt.

II. *The Heraldry.*

BY

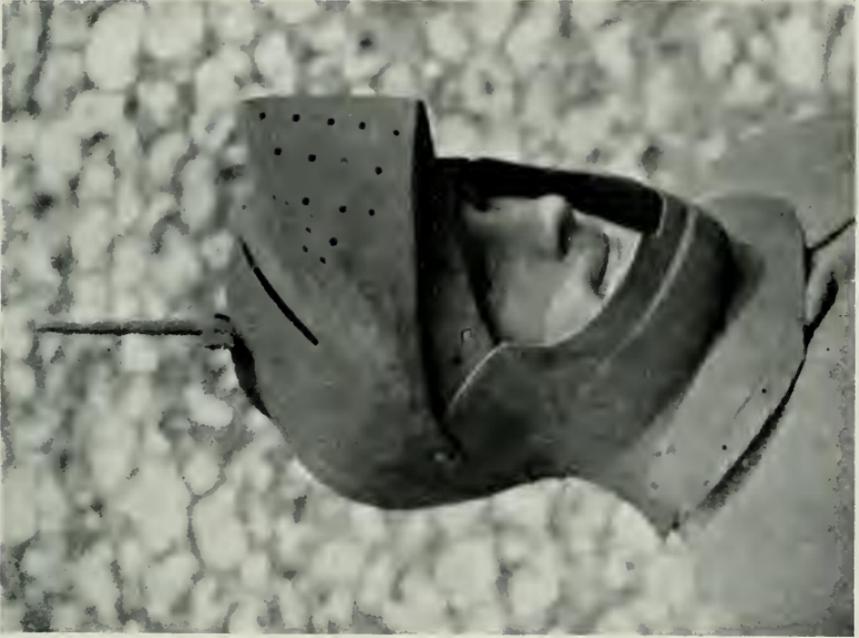
L. B. ELLIS, M.A.

Except for the bottom right-hand corner, all but the top of what we may call the front of the surcoat is missing; the lower part of the back has also gone, though more of its middle portion remains. Fortunately, however, one sleeve is almost complete, and shows nine quarterings arranged in three rows. The bottom corner of the front is valuable in that it gives us the full length of the garment and shows that front and back, like the sleeves, had three rows of quarterings. As the quarterings which remain are the same as those on the sleeve and are arranged in the same order, we are justified in assuming that the vanished quarterings were also identical.

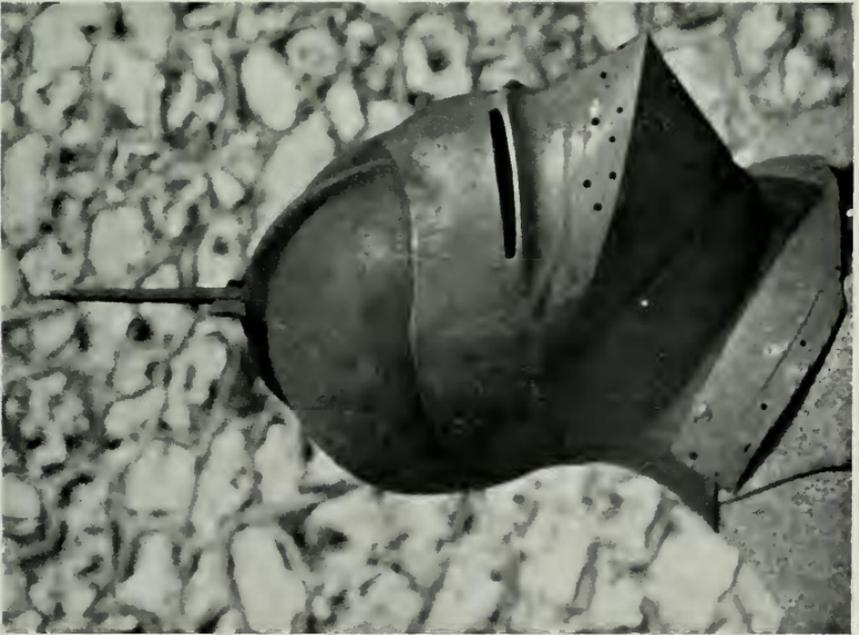
The nine quarterings are as follows :

- i. *Azure, three quatrefoils argent*, with the badge of a baronet in the canton . . . VINCENT.

It is important to note the badge of a baronet—the red hand of Ulster—in the Vincent quarters.



[Photographs by R. S. Morrish.
THE HELMET OPEN.



THE HELMET CLOSED.

The same number and sequence of quarterings, the first also with the badge of a baronet, are to be found on an achievement of arms (Plate VI) which now hangs high upon the south wall of the Norbury Chapel to the east of the Lyfeld brass. It seems possible, therefore, that surcoat and achievement both represent the same baronet, probably the first. For, as we shall see, quarterings 1 (without the badge), 2, and 3 belonged to Sir Thomas Vincent, Kt., and quarterings 4-9 inclusive were brought to him by Jane Lyfeld, his wife; their son, SIR FRANCIS VINCENT, 1ST BARONET, would correctly quarter his mother's quarterings with his paternal coat, as she was an heiress in the heraldic sense.

SIR FRANCIS VINCENT, 1ST BARONET, was descended from an ancient family which was settled at Swinford in Leicestershire as early as 1317. There are several manuscript pedigrees¹ of this family in existence and Manning and Bray have printed one in their *History of Surrey*, Vol. II, p. 725.

2. *Argent, three horse barnacles sable, . . .* BERNAKE.

About 1409 Thomas Vincent of Swinford moved to Barnack in Northamptonshire, on marrying Joan, daughter and heir of SIR JOHN BERNAKE.² This marriage accounts for the second quartering, which is an example of canting heraldry.

3. *Argent, a cross gules with five mullets or, . . .* SEMARK.

Robert Vincent of Barnack, fourth in descent from the Vincent-Bernake marriage, married Catherine, 2nd daughter and co-heir of THOMAS SEMARK, and the third quartering registers this marriage.

4. *Or, a chevron gules charged with three slipped trefoils or between three demi-lions gules, . . .* LYFELD.

David Vincent,³ seventh in descent from the Vincent-Bernake marriage, moved to Long Ditton, Surrey, in the time of Henry VIII. His son, Sir Thomas Vincent, Kt., married

¹ Harl. MS. 1467, f. 67 v.; Harl. MS. 1561, f. 48 (printed in *Harl. Soc. Publications*, XLIII, 55); Add. MS. 6409, f. 10 v.

² For an account of this family see *V.C.H. Northamptonshire*, II, p. 464 f.

³ He "was Keeper of the Wardrobe at Richmond 22 H.8, where also he was buried after his decease which happened anno domini 1585." (Add. MS. 6409, f. 14 v.)

Jane, sole heir of THOMAS LYFELD of Stoke d'Abernon, and the Lyfeld arms occupy the fourth quarter of the surcoat. All the quarterings that follow were brought in by her through her mother, Frances Bray, and they epitomize the passage of the manor of Stoke d'Abernon from the d'Abernons to the Vincents by marriages with heiresses. The marriages of these heiresses, namely, Elizabeth D'ABERNON, Anne CROSIER, Anne NORBURY, Jane HALEIGHWELL, Frances BRAY, and Jane LYFELD, are recorded in the inscription on the Lyfeld brass (*S.A.C.* XX, p. 48) and the coats of arms of these families are emblazoned on the achievement which surmounts this brass in greater detail than on the surcoat, as we shall see later.

5. *Argent, a chevron sable between three eagle's legs erased of the same . . . BRAY.*

This quartering was brought in by FRANCES BRAY, mother of Jane Lyfeld, and daughter of Jane Haleighwell. Of all the heiresses, Jane Haleighwell made the most brilliant match in marrying Sir Edmund Bray, created 1st Lord Braye, nephew and heir of the famous Sir Reginald Bray, K.G.¹ Their son, John, 2nd Lord Braye, died in 1557; "he left behind him his wife Anne, daughter to Francis Earl of Shrewsbury, then living, by whom he had no child, and so died without issue, and made no will, but committed the order of all things to his mother Dame Jane Braye, late wife of Edmond Lord Braye."² He was buried at Chelsea with his father; there is an account of his funeral in the Heralds' College and

¹ For an account of Sir Reginald Bray see *Ancestor*, Vol. VI, "The Brays of Shere."

² From the account of his funeral in MS. I, xv., f. 279 in the College of Arms, printed in Lyson's *Environs of London*, Vol. II, p. 93 f (spelling modernized), whence also: "Then next after the corpse, as chief mourner, went Sir George Brooke, K.G., Lord Cobham, after him his son, Mr. Thomas Brooke, and Mr. Edmond Verney; then Mr. John Brooke, and Mr. Thomas Lyfeld; and last Mr. Edmond Braye, and Mr. Halshe." The following extract illustrates the manner in which surcoats, helmets, etc., were given to a church: "Then Mr. Garter . . . delivered the coat of arms to Mr. Thomas Cobham and Mr. Verney, who with Richmond before them, offered the same, which Rouge Dragon at the priest's hand received, and placed on the altar. . . . And the morrow the hatchments and banners were set up in the chancel at Chelsea accordingly."



[*Photograph by R. S. Morrish.*

THE ACHIEVEMENT IN THE NORBURY CHAPEL.

there is a drawing in the British Museum¹ of his tomb and mortuary gifts in Chelsea Church as they once were (surcoat, banner, pennons, etc.). At the death of John, Lord Braye, the barony fell into abeyance between his six sisters and their representatives. Of these Anne, first sister and co-heir of her brother, married George Brooke, Lord Cobham, and was buried in the church of Cobham, Kent, under a splendid monument, where the Bray arms and quarterings are many times displayed.

6. *Vair, three bendlets gules*, . . . BRAY (2).

To explain the presence of two Bray coats on the surcoat and elsewhere, I quote the following passage from Manning and Bray: "This family, according to Guillim,² hath, at different times borne two different coats of armour; viz. *argent, a chevron between three eagles legs erased à la cuisse sable, armed gules*. And, on other occasions, *vairè three bends dexter, gules*. The coat depicted for Sir Reginald, as Knight of the Garter,³ and that in the window of Malvern Church, exhibit only the former of these; which looks as if this was the true paternal coat of the family."⁴ But in a manuscript in the College of Arms⁵ the shield of arms of Sir Reginald's father shows "the true paternal coat" in the second and third quarters, with the other coat in the first and fourth. The second Bray coat is usually given as *vair, three bendlets gules*, and so it appears in the achievement in the Norbury Chapel (Plate VI). But in the achievement over the Lyfeld brass and in some other places it is emblazoned *gules, three bendlets vair*, possibly because it was easier to draw thus. So it appears, for example, repeated many times on the tomb of Lord and Lady Cobham in Cobham Church, Kent, and it is described as *gules, three bendlets vair*, in one of the manuscripts⁶ from

¹ Lansdowne MS., 874, f. 58 v.

² Guillim, *Display of Heraldry*, p. 382, ed. 1666.

³ *Id.*, Reg. of K.G., No. 249.

⁴ Manning and Bray, *History of Surrey*, I, p. 519.

⁵ Vincent 129, f. 400.

The window in Malvern Church referred to above is reproduced in G. Mc.N. Rushforth, *Medieval Christian Imagery as illustrated by the painted windows of Great Malvern Priory Church*, Fig. 183. For other reproductions see p. 400, note 2, of this book.

⁶ Harl. MS. 6587, f. 127.

which this tomb was restored¹; so also is it drawn in the sketch² in the British Museum of the banner, surcoat, pennons, etc., which once adorned the tomb of Edmund Lord Braye in Chelsea Church. And thus it seems to have been painted on the surcoat in Stoke d'Abernon Church, so far as one can judge from the traces that remain.

7. *Gules, a fess checky argent and sable between six crosses pattee fitchy or, . . .* BOTELER.

The Haleighwell and Norbury quarterings are absent from the surcoat, though the Norbury heiress is not entirely omitted, since BOTELER is present. For the Norburys represented the great house of Sudeley, through the marriage of Sir John Norbury, "Treasurer of England in the time of King Henry IV" with Elizabeth, "eldest sister to Sir Raphe Butler, Lord Sudeley, and Lord Steward of the Household to King Henry Sixth, the which Sir Raphe was son and heir to Thomas Butler Lord Sudeley. And the said Thomas was son and heir to Sir William Butler who married the daughter and heir of John Lord Sudeley, lineally descended of Harold whom William the Conqueror slew in the field."³ Ralph Boteler, Lord Sudeley, died without surviving male issue in 1473, when the Barony of Sudeley, created 1299, which he had inherited through his grandmother, Joan de Sudeley, fell into abeyance between his two heirs, of whom one was Sir John Norbury.

8. *Gules, two bars ermine, . . .* PANTULF, LORD OF WEM.

This quartering was also brought in by the marriage of Sir John Norbury with Elizabeth Boteler, as one of her Boteler ancestors had married the daughter and heir of PANTULF LORD OF WEM.⁴

¹ See "The Lords of Cobham: Their Monuments and the Church," by J. G. Waller in *Arch. Cantiana*, XII, p. 166.

² Lansdowne MS. 874, f. 58 v.

³ From the inscription on the Lyfeld brass, with spelling modernized.

⁴ The details of this marriage do not seem certain, cf. Harl. MS. 1561, f. 258 r., with G.E.C. *Complete Peerage*, Boteler of Wem, and Burke's *Extinct Peerage*, Boteler Lords of Oversley and Wemme.

There is also conflicting opinion about the husband of Joan de Sudeley: according to Harl. MS. 1561, he was Sir William Boteler, son of William Boteler, 3rd Baron of Wem, but *The Complete Peerage* quotes Courthope to the effect that he was a younger son of William, 2nd Lord Boteler of Wem (see under Sudeley), whilst the 3rd Baron left Elizabeth, daughter and heir (see under Boteler).

9. *Azure, a chevron or, . . . D'ABERNON.*

ELIZABETH D'ABERNON, daughter and heir of Sir William D'ABERNON (died 1359), married Sir William Crosier and, in so doing, started the wandering of the manor of Stoke d'Abernon through the various families already enumerated.

The nine quarterings on the surcoat are but a selection from those to which the Vincents could lay claim. Jane Lyfeld, wife of Sir Thomas Vincent, Kt., inherited five additional coats from her mother, Frances Bray, as may be seen on the wife's side of the achievement surmounting the Lyfeld brass; this achievement may now be described for comparison with the surcoat, for only five coats are the same on both. In the achievement over the brass the Lyfeld arms are given pride of place, occupying the whole of the husband's side (the heraldic right, but the spectator's left), whilst the quartered arms of Frances Bray occupy the wife's half. On the surcoat, as we have seen, the Lyfeld arms are relegated to the fourth place.

The nine quarterings on the wife's side of this achievement are :

1. *Argent, a chevron sable between three eagle's legs erased of the same, . . . BRAY.*
2. *Gules, three bendlets vair, . . . BRAY (2).*
3. *Or, a bend gules charged with three rams argent, . . . HALEIGHWELL.*

These are the arms of SIR RICHARD HALEIGHWELL, father of Jane, wife of Edmund, 1st Lord Braye.

4. *Sable, a chevron between three bulls' heads caboshed argent, . . . NORBURY.*

These arms were brought in by ANNE NORBURY, wife of Sir Richard Haleighwell, and granddaughter of Sir Henry NORBURY and Anne Crosier.

5. *Gules, a fess checky argent and sable between six crosses pattee fitchy or, . . . BOTELER.*
6. *Or, two bends gules, . . . SUDELEY.*

7. *Bendy of ten or and azure*, . . . MONTFORT.

John Lord Sudeley, "lineally descended of Harold" according to the genealogical inscription below the achievement, was the son of Bartholomew de Sudeley and of his wife Maud, sister and co-heir of RALPH DE MONTFORT.

8. *Sable, a cross or between four bees of the same*, . . . CROSIER.

ANNE CROSIER, wife of Sir Henry Norbury, was the daughter and heir of William CROSIER, son of Sir William CROSIER and Elizabeth d'Abernon.

9. *Azure, a chevron or*, . . . D'ABERNON.

In addition to these representations, the Vincents could claim other coats through earlier marriages; there are two in the second and third quarters in the painted achievement on the pulpit in the church which I have been unable to identify (Plate VII), which should, by their position, stand for Vincent alliances preceding Bernake and Semark. There is an elaborate achievement of Sir Francis Vincent, 3rd Baronet, in a manuscript in the College of Arms,¹ in which there is a quartering for Paas or Pas, for Isolda, daughter and heir of Henry Paas of Barnack, and grandmother of Joan, daughter and heir of Sir John Bernake, who married Thomas Vincent of Swinford. (See *ante*.) But this quartering is not the same as either of the unexplained quarters on the pulpit. Geoffrey Bernake, husband of Isolda Paas, was the son of Sir William Bernake and of his wife, daughter and co-heir of Sir John Engayne of Blatherwick,² but this marriage does not help matters.³ I very much regret that I cannot solve this problem, and I trust that this compilation of scattered and somewhat inaccessible details may lead to its solution. As we see

¹ Bysse, *Visitations of Surrey*, f. 72.

² Harl. MS. 1467, f. 67 v.

³ A pedigree of Engaine is given in Bridges, *History of Northants*, II, p. 275, according to which Sir William Bernake, who in right of his wife possessed a third part of the manor of Blatherwick, left issue Sir John Bernake, who dying in the 11th year of Henry IV, was succeeded by John his son and heir, a minor of nine years old. Of this family the male issue failing, the part they possessed of Blatherwick devolved on John Broughton, who became their heir (p. 276).



[*Photograph by R. S. Morrish.*

THE ACHIEVEMENT ON THE PULPIT.