

THE BRASSES OF MIDDLESEX

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II.

ACTON (*contd.*)

THE Cavell brass at Acton was illustrated in the last Part (p. 268) from a heelball rubbing. The shield of arms was not clear in this illustration and is therefore reproduced again, this time from a pencil tracing subsequently inked and coloured. The calf and fleur-de-lys are filled with red pigment on the original brass.

BOW, OR STRATFORD-LE-BOW

I. Inscription and two shields—Grace, daughter of John Wylford, Alderman of London, wife of John Amcottes, fishmonger, 1551, had two sons, Hammond (died 1551), Harry, and one daughter, Grace, mural, south aisle.

This typical Tudor mural memorial consists of a freestone tablet in two bays with cinquefoiled crocketed and traceried heads, shafted outer jambs and enriched cornice, with two brass shields of arms in the bays and a brass inscription plate below. The whole composition is illustrated on Plate 103 of Volume 5 (East London) of the *Royal Commission Inventory of the Historical Monuments in London* (1930) and also on Plate 27 facing page 29 of O. C. Hills, *St. Mary Stratford, Monograph 2 of Memorials of Greater London Survey* (1900).

Hills describes the monument as the oldest remaining and the one with perhaps the most artistic merit in the church. Though small, it is intricately carved and is an excellent example of this type of Tudor monument. It is still on the south wall of the south aisle of the nave and has not been affected by the structural damage suffered by other parts of the church during the war.



THE CAVELL BRASS.



Here under the hipped Grace the daughter of a John Wylford
 late Alderman of London and which she found the wife of John
 Amcott of the same Citie firste moner by whom he had a sonne
 named Hamond & havy & a daughter named Grace the which
 Grace the mother decessid the xiiij of July & her sonne Hamond de-
 cessid y^e viij of August following in A. d. m. 1551 & the which buried with
 his mother whole dethes and vertuallis ende have ye in Remem-
 brance in calling to p^raising God for p^r forgiveness of no^r sinnes

GRACE AMCOTTES, 1551.

The inscription plate measures 19 in. by 5½ in. and has upon it eight lines in black-letter which read as follows:

Here under lyethe buried Grace the dowghter of M^r John Wylford late Alderman of London) and whyle she lyvyd the wyffe of John Amcotts of the same Ciette ffysbemonger by whome he had ii sonēs namyd Hamond & Barry & a dowghter namyed Grace the whiche Grace the Mother decessyd the xiii of July & her sonne Hamond decessyd y^e vi of August folloyng in A^o Dⁿⁱ. 1551. & lyethe buried with bis Mother) whose detbes and vertuows end^s have ye in Remembrawns in Calling to y^e lyvvyng God for ye fforggyvenes of yo^r synnes.

A note suspended in the church records the following entries in the Register of Burials for the year 1551:

“Grace Amcott wife of John Amcoote was Buried ye 13th day of July.”

“Hammond Samcoote, sonne of John Samcoote was buried 6th day of August.”

Three variations of the surname at so short a space of time provide an interesting commentary on the latitude in spelling of personal names at that period.

The two shields each measure 6½ in. wide and 7¾ in. high. They are spaced side by side with a clearance of 4½ in. between them and are immediately above the inscription plate.

The dexter shield has the following quarterings:

1. *Argent a tower triple turreted between three standing cups covered azure*, for Amcotts.
2. *Argent a fess between three escallops gules*, for Kenthorpe.
3. *Argent four bars gules, a lion rampant sable crowned or*, for Wasthouse.
4. *Gules a tower triple turreted or within an orle of ten goutts d'eau*, for Hamborough.
5. *Gules on a bend argent cotised three escallops sable*, for Dawtreay.
6. *Argent on a bend cotised sable three griffins heads erased of the field beaked or*, for Solaye.
7. *Gules three bars ermine*, for Kirton?
8. *Argent three chaplets in bend between two bendlets gules*, for Saxton.

The sinister shield bears the above eight quarterings of Amcotts, impaling *gules a chevron engrailed between three*

leopards heads or, a crescent on a crescent for difference, for Wilford. The genealogical table of Amcotts of Aisthorpe, in Lincolnshire,¹¹ shows clearly how the first five quarterings are introduced. There are difficulties in accounting for the further quarterings. One William Amcotte married twice. By his first wife Agnes, daughter and co-heir of William Solaye of Astrop, he had issue Alexander, who succeeded to the Lincolnshire estate and who had a confirmation of arms and crest by Sir Chris. Barker, Garter, on 5th October, 1548.¹² These arms were quarterly of six.

John Amcotte, the husband of Grace, was grandson of this same William by his second wife, and it is evident from this pedigree that the sixth (Solaye) quartering appears on this brass not by right, but by assuming the arms of the head of the family. According to the Lincolnshire pedigree,¹¹ William's second wife was Agnes, daughter and heir of John Sutton by Alice, daughter and heir of John Saxton. The last two quarterings might therefore be expected to be Sutton and Saxton. The eighth is indeed Saxton, but the seventh coat corresponds to the arms of another Lincolnshire family, Kirton. The introduction of these arms is obscure; they are probably derived from the Solaye connection and should not rightly appear with this branch of the family. O. C. Hills, who copies the blazoning of this shield from Lysons, gives this seventh quartering as Kirton, but without explanation. Both wrongly attribute the second to Sutton and the eighth to Dawtrey, leaving the fifth unnamed. In the Middlesex pedigrees, as collected by Richard Mundy,¹³ this shield in Bow Church is noted, but only the first four quarterings are described. Arms are also quoted from a visitation of Lincolnshire in 1592 by Richard Lee and Robert Cooke,¹⁴ quarterly of six, in which there is no mention of Kirton (or Kenthorpe). Lee and Cooke give the arms of Saxton as *argent three chaplets in bend gules cotised sable*, whereas Burke gives *argent three chaplets in bend between two bendlets gules*. It is not possible from remaining evidence on the brass to distinguish between these.

The Amcotte family was much connected with the business and trade of the City of London and with the City livery companies. This brass indeed reveals an interesting medieval example of the movement from country to town; the presence in London of an extensive family connection of fishmongers in the 16th century deriving from an armigerous Lincolnshire

family with records two to three hundred years earlier. Not only was John Amcotte, the husband of Grace, "free of the Fishmongers"; his uncle James and the two husbands of his aunt Cecily were also fishmongers. Another aunt had married a dyer of London, while the eldest uncle, Sir Henry, a stock fishmonger, had three years before Grace's death been Lord Mayor of London.

The family of Wilford is recorded in the visitations both of Surrey and of Essex, the arms being those shown on the brass with the addition here of a crescent on a crescent for difference. Coming originally from Devon, the various branches of the family spread around London, Surrey, Kent and Essex. There is mention of James Wilford, a sheriff of the City of London, in the early 16th century, a son of Robert Wilford of Devonshire. James married Elizabeth, daughter of John Bettenham of Pluckley, in Kent, and they had a John among their children.¹⁵

John Wilford, a merchant tailor like his father, was elected alderman in 1538 and died about February, 1551.¹⁶ His will¹⁷ was made on 6th February, 1550/51, and he is described therein as of St. Bartilmewe the lesse, London, and Mycham, Surrey. Grace, his daughter, is among the beneficiaries.

Another Wilford, Sir James, of Hartredge, in Cranbrook, Kent, who married Joyce, daughter of John Barrett of Aveley, Essex, died in 1550, and was buried in the City church of St. Bartholomew-by-the-Exchange. A mutilated and palimpsest shield with the Wilford arms impaling Barrett, thought to be from his tomb, is now in the Guildhall Museum.¹⁸

BRENTFORD

I. Henry Redman, 1528, in civil dress, and wife Joan, with two daughters, kneeling. Mural, west wall of nave.

This brass, in the parish church of St. Lawrence, New Brentford, is in poor condition. It is worn, pitted with corrosion, and mutilated. The inscription is in places worn right through. The roughened surface indicates corrosion in the past. The monument is now framed and glazed and is on the wall of the church.

The central feature of the composition was a representation of the Trinity, which has long since disappeared. Kneeling to this, on either side, are the figures of Henry Redman and

his wife, with two daughters kneeling behind their mother. The brass is illustrated as a drawing facing page 61 in Faulkner, *Antiquities of Brentford, Ealing and Chiswick*, published in 1845. The Trinity is shown as missing on this drawing. The head of the male effigy is now missing, though this was not so when Faulkner's drawing was made. Beneath the figures is a black-letter inscription of eight lines in English, the letters of which are still filled with a black resinous material. The inscription plate is 16 in. wide and 8½ in. high. The male effigy was about 7½ in. high and that of the lady 7 in. The over-all height of the original composition is 20½ in.

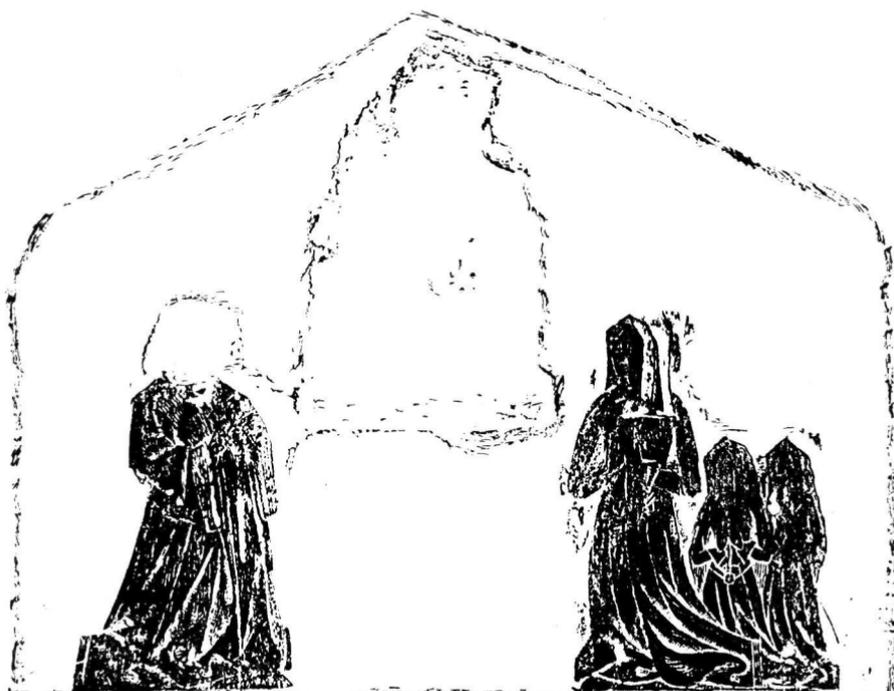
There is nothing about the worn and mutilated figures that calls for particular comment; the costume is contemporary. The inscription, however, is of considerable interest.

Þy for the soull^s of Henry Redman sūtyme chefe
 M Mason of y^e Kyng^s Work^s & Jobā his wyf spcāl
 benyfactor^s of this church whiche hath gyfyn ctanc land^s
 & tenemet^s ther to ī ānuall half stypende of curate thereof w
 more lād^s suffyciet for a ppetuall obyt & mīn[s] & a]ll repaci
 ons of y^e sayd land^s as it dotbe apete by ctan wrytyn^s in
 custodie of y^e church wardens remanyng whiche hery decessid
 y^e x dai of July an^o dñi xv^cxxviii o wbo^s soull^s 3hu have mcý

Redman's will is quoted at length by Faulkner, from a copy in the parish chest. In it, Redman leaves the George Inn and other premises in Brentford on trust to the parishioners for charitable uses. Part of the income was to maintain the property in repair, part to augment the stipend of the priest and the remainder for a perpetual obit. Joan, his widow, by a deed of enfeoffment dated 1529, also deposited in the parish chest, confirms his will. The existence of these documents in the keeping of the churchwardens is referred to in the inscription on the brass.

A short time later the obit was abolished, but the income from this charity, now £4 4s. od. per annum less lawyers' fees, is still divided between the incumbent's stipend and charitable bequests in the parish.

I am indebted to Mr. John Harvey, F.S.A., for an account of Henry Redman's activities as a builder. In an article on Cardinal College (Christchurch, Oxford) and its architects,¹⁹ he quotes Dr. John Higden's contemporary account of this last of the great Gothic buildings; that William Jonson, Redman



In the year of Henry Redman's lifetime he
 was slain of a kyng's death & John his wyf by all
 wayfaring of this church which was a good land
 & benedict they to a small hall for the use of the
 more land built for a perpetual obit & other good
 uses of the said land as it is expressed by the
 evidence of the church records remaining which here
 follow of July the 10th year of Henry the 6th

and Lubyns were "devysyng the beyldyng" and seeing "the platte with the grownde" in January, 1525. The Royal Commission book on the *Historical Monuments of the City of Oxford* gives the name mistakenly as Thomas Redman. An account²⁰ covering the period 16th January, 1525, to 19th December, 1527, refers to "John Lubbynys and Henry Redemayne master masons of the foresaid werks."

Harvey says (p. 146): "Of Henry Redman a great deal is known, and he was apparently the principal architect of all Wolsey's works, as well as holding important offices under the Crown. Coming of a family which had moved to London from the neighbourhood of Ramsey Abbey in Huntingdonshire, Henry was the son of Thomas Redman, master mason of Westminster Abbey from 1505 to his death in 1516. Henry visited King's College Chapel, Cambridge, with William Vertue, brother of Robert, in 1509, when they were given rewards for their advice (King's College accounts), and two years later he was surety for Vertue's performance of a contract to vault part of St. George's Chapel, Windsor. In 1516 he succeeded his father as master mason of Westminster Abbey, and designed the chancel, tower and porch of St. Margaret's Church, built between 1516 and 1523.

"Redman, with William Vertue and Humphrey Coke the carpenter, produced a 'platte' for work at Eton College in 1516, consisting of the west side of the court and Lupton's Tower, built two towers at Greenwich for the King in 1518/19, and on 12th September, 1519, was granted the office of King's master mason jointly with William Vertue, who had held the office alone since 1510. In the following year, Redman had an additional patent as chief mason of Windsor Castle, at 6d. a day. Meanwhile, he had been master mason in charge of Wolsey's great works at York Place from 5th February, 1514/15, and there appears to be no doubt that he was at the same time in full charge of the work at Hampton Court, the exact accounts showing that the two jobs were administered jointly.

"Wolsey's buildings at Hampton Court were nearing completion in 1522, but at York Place as at Cardinal College work was continuous up to his downfall on 24th October, 1529. At Oxford the position at the end of two years' work was described in a letter of 29th December, 1526. The buildings, thanks to the exertions of 'Mr. Lubbynys, Mr. Redman and Mr. Coke, were far advanced'."

It is interesting to note that one of the greatest architects of his time, and a prosperous one at that, should be commemorated by a brass of such mean size and unimpressive workmanship.

Of monuments, probably brasses, formerly existing in this church, Weever²¹ records the following inscriptions:

Here lyeth the body of Christopher Carhill, alias
Norrey, King at Armes, who died 1510.

Here lyeth Richard Parker servant in the Botre to
Henry the seventh and Henry the eight, and Margery
his wyf late (servant) to the Lady Maryes Grace
daughter to King Henry the eight, by Katherin his first
wyf daughter of Ferdinando the sixt King of Spayne.
Which Richard died 1545.

Hic iacet Wilielmus Clavel, Agnes, et Clementia
ux. eius: qui quidem Wilielmus obiit 1496.

BROMLEY-BY-BOW

BRASSES FORMERLY EXISTING.

1. *A rectangular plate on the chancel step with achievement for Topsfield, part of a brass to Henry Topsfield, 1557.*

The parish church of St. Mary was rebuilt in 1842-43; the previous church had been attached to a Benedictine nunnery dedicated to St. Leonard. Several monuments survived from the older church only to be lost without trace in the recent war. In the words of the vicar at the time: The church was blasted, bombed and finally demolished.

In Mill Stephenson's *List* (1926) this was the only brass remaining. The accompanying illustration is from a rubbing made by Stephenson in 1911, and reproduced by courtesy of the Society of Antiquaries, in whose collection the rubbing now is.

The plate measured 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. by 12 in. and had on it a shield of arms with helm, crest and mantling. The arms correspond with those of Topsfield of Norfolk as given by Burke, *Gules on a chevron ermine three martlets sable*. On the brass there is in addition *a crescent or* for difference. The crest also conforms with Burke's description of the Norfolk branch, *a talbot couchant guardant against a tree all proper*.



ACHIEVEMENT FOR TOPSFIELD, 1557, FORMERLY AT BROMLEY-BY-BOW.

It is not evident from the brass whether the martlets are *sable*, or *gules* as borne by the family in Sussex. It is curious, however, that the middle one of the three martlets is only just visible, as though it were lightly sketched in for cutting out and filling with colour, but then overlooked.

The brass is mentioned in the *L.C.C. Survey of London*, Vol. 1, p. 10, but without any name being attached to it. The arms are quoted as *a field sable*, etc. It is not mentioned by Weever,²² nor by Lysons,²³ Dunstan²⁴ or Strype's edition of Stow. Stephenson ascribes it to Henry Topsfield, gent., citizen and grocer of London, and says the inscription is now lost.

2. *Roger Horton, 1556, and wife.*

In Stow's *Survey of London* (1720 ed., revised by Strype, Appendix, p. 108) appears the following:

"In the chancel still:

Upon the Ground, on a Brass Plate.

'Of your Charity pray for the Soul of
Roger Horton, Citizen and Goldsmith
of London, and Margaret his Wife.

Which Roger deceased the 15th Day of

January, A. Dom. MCCCC LVI

On whose Soul Jesu have Mercy.'

"The Effigies in Brass on this stone, is a naked Man, only wrapt in a Sheet, holding his hands together in a praying Posture. The coat of arms on the stone is the Goldsmiths' arms impaled with that of the Fishmongers."

Dunstan²⁴ says of the inscription plate: "The whole of this plate was perfect in 1840, but only a portion was remaining in 1842, when the old church was taken down. That portion is still preserved, and what is very singular, that upon looking at the other side, it is found that the same plate had been used for the like purpose at a prior date, for there is part of an inscription in Latin, bearing the date of MCCCCXX." No trace of this now remains.

3. *Thomas Graye, 1590, and two wives.*

Continuing from Strype's Stow:

"Near adjoining, on the ground, a man in brass between his two wives.

“Here lyeth the body of Thomas Graye, citizen and grocer of London, the eldest son of Alexander Graye. He had two wives, Elizabeth and Barbara. He had issue by his first wife four sons and two daughters. Elizabeth dyed the 5th day of Jan. 1580. The said Thomas dyed the 30th of Jan. 1590; when he had lived 62 years.’”

4. *Michael Barker*, 1599.

Also from Stow:

“Next this, on the ground, another stone with an effigies in brass.

“Here lyeth the body of Mr. Michael Barker, gentleman: who having lived 62 years, a quiet life in very honest fame, dyed in the faith of our Saviour Christ the 16th day of Aug. 1599; leaving only one daughter.’”

It is curious that there is no mention in Stow of Topsfield, nor is there mention of any of those recorded by Stow in Weever, nor, at a later date, by Lysons.

5. The *L.C.C. Survey of London*, Vol. 1, p. 3 (1900), records that:

“On the floor of the tower, partly hidden by the stairs, is a slab of Purbeck marble about 6 feet long and 3 feet wide with the matrix of a very fine brass with two figures, shields, and a border with inscriptions round the edge of the slab.”

This indent is also mentioned in the Royal Commission account of Historical Monuments in Middlesex (1939). There is, unfortunately, no trace now of this stone among the debris on the site of the church, nor is there, as far as I am aware, any illustration of this stone surviving.

The *L.C.C. Survey* says further:

“This is undoubtedly the slab formerly containing the figures of John de Bohun and his wife who were buried here in 1336.”

If indeed the brass was of this date and the indent was still clear in outline, it is surprising we have no mention of it in brass textbooks; the brasses of this date are few in number and of considerable interest and the armour distinctive in outline. Weever,²² who gives a considerable account of this John de Bohun, who was “buried at Stratford Abbey not

farre from London," says, "In this Abbey church (St. Leonards in Stratford Bow) sometime lay entombed the body of John de Bohun. . . ."

But Lysons²³ points out that Weever has evidently confounded the nunnery of St. Leonard at Bromley with the convent at Stratford. It seems more probable that this earl was buried at the latter place. The historical account of the family of Bohun, in Dugdale's *Monasticon* (Vol. I, p. 447), tends to confirm the supposition.

NOTES

11. Harl. Soc., Vol. 50, p. 14.
12. *Ibid.*, Vol. 66, p. 4.
13. *Ibid.*, Vol. 65, p. 133.
14. *The Genealogist*, Vol. 5, p. 187.
15. Harl. Soc., Vol. 43, p. 141 (Surrey); Vol. 13, p. 127 (Essex).
16. A. B. Beaven, *Aldermen of the City of London* (1908).
17. *P.C.C.*, 9 Bucke.
18. *Trans. Monumental Brass Soc.*, Vol. 6, p. 78.
19. *Oxoniensia*, Vol. 8/9, p. 145 *seq.*
20. P.R.O., E. 101/479/11, extracts from which appear in *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, Vol. IV, Pt. II, p. 3676.
21. *Funeral Monuments*, 1631, p. 526.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 541.
23. Lysons, *Environs*, Vol. II (Middx.) (1795), p. 63.
24. J. Dunstan, *Hist. of the Parish of Bromley St. Leonard*, 1862.