

## NOTES

**BOARSTALL TOWER:** In order to ensure the preservation of this important example of military architecture, the only one of its kind in Bucks., the owner has made it over to the National Trust, while retaining a life interest in it, and accepting responsibility for repairs.

For some time the condition of the fabric has been a source of anxiety to those responsible for its upkeep.

Inspections made in 1947 showed that while the lead roof was in good condition and the main walls reasonably sound, much of the exposed stonework above roof level was in an advanced stage of decay and in a dangerous condition.

This superstructure consists of four hexagonal corner towers, each surmounted by an embrasured or castellated parapet containing some concealed flue casings, and four intermediate and lower parapets (the three on the north, east, and west being open balustraded and that on the south solid). In addition, there are four high octagonal single-flue stacks of a much later date than the rest of the building.

It was decided that preservation work should be carried out by stages, the first of which is now completed. This stage has embraced the reconstruction of the three open balustraded parapets, the rebuilding of two of the original flue casings, and the renewal of the two high stacks on the north. The reconstructed flues have been lined to protect the stonework.

It was found that this stonework was so perished that nothing short of renewal would be of lasting benefit, although it was found possible to re-use a little of the old stone in the parapet flue casings. Clipsham stone has been used, and this will be left to weather naturally.

The south parapet wall and its two high stacks are in reasonable condition, but the repair of the embrasured parapets of the four towers must form the next stage of restoration, and it is hoped that this work will be undertaken in the near future.

The stonemasons employed were Messrs. Axtell & Perry Ltd., of Oxford, working in conjunction with Messrs. Collett & Rogers Ltd., Builders, Wootton, nr. Oxford, under the supervision of Messrs. Burgess, Holden & Watson, Chartered Architects, Beaconsfield, Bucks.

**GREAT HAMPDEN:** Palimpsest brasses were found recently at Great Hampden Church, Bucks. The memorial to Sir John Hampden and family, 1533, has proved to consist of fragments of at least five older brasses turned over and re-engraved on the back. Most of them appear to have come from London City churches plundered at the Suppression of Chantries.

The possibility that Sir John Hampden's brass might be palimpsest was suggested to the rector by Mr. David Rutter. Removal of the Hampden inscription plate disclosed an earlier inscription on the reverse, to Richard Tabbe, 1490, and Agnes, his wife. Tabbe was a citizen and stationer of London. His memorial brass, of which this formed part, probably lay in the Stationers' Church, dedicated to St. Faith, beneath Old St. Paul's.

A heraldic fragment, used to lengthen the Tabbe inscription when it was re-engraved, bears the arms of Sir John Tate, Lord Mayor of London in 1514. This Sir John died in office, and was buried, according to a Bodleian manuscript, 'at ye french church'.

The Hampden shields have been cut from two older brasses. One shows on reversal an armoured figure, c. 1520, the others a black-letter inscription, beginning, 'Here lyth before o' lady of pytty, John Lynde and his wyffe Margery. . . .' Search among the Patent Rolls has revealed that in 1433 Lynde was churchwarden of St. Mary Aldermary, London.

Of particular interest is a representation of the Trinity, which has been turned and re-used at Hampden for a group of children. In this fragment, God the Father sits holding a life-sized crucifix surmounted by a dove. The style of engraving suggests affinity with the Kyngeston monument, 1514, at Childrey, Berks.

After receiving treatment from Mr. Reginald Pearson, F.S.A., of the Monumental Brass



*Per Messrs. Nicholls and Clarke.*

PLATE 6. LANGLEY MARISH, *Bucks.* Panel of glass in the Kederminster Chapel with arms of Kederminster and Wentham. Early 17th century

Society, the palimpsests have now been relaid at Great Hampden. Rubbings to show both obverse and reverse sides will be placed in the church for the benefit of visitors.

LANGLEY MARISH: The following extracts are taken from a report on the church walls, prepared by Mr. E. Clive Rouse:

Brushing and washing down of the walls in St. Mary's Church, Langley Marish, has revealed extensive evidences of painting of several periods. No wall painting has previously been recorded in the church: and the fragments which survive are therefore all the more important.

#### SCHEDULE

The painting now visible is as follows:

*Chancel*. N. side: elaborate painted strapwork, etc., associated with the Kederminster monument, on the wall behind and flanking it, some of the features of the carving being repeated in paint on the plaster. Late sixteenth/early seventeenth century.

Below this layer, especially on the W., are traces of pink pigment of medieval date.

*Nave*. Above chancel arch, and flanking it on S.: at top, traces of subject-matter; next, the sacred monogram I H C, executed on most unusual lines; below this, the Resurrection, with our Lord, holding the *Vexillum*, stepping from the tomb; below again, another subject, with apparently two panels, not at present identifiable. The wall has been powdered with a small-scale brocade pattern, widely spaced, and apparently executed with a stencil, in black. The date of this work is probably late fifteenth century. The section of wall on the S., below this again, has much good red pigment of medieval date, with traces of a second layer of painting on top of it: and at the base are the remains of a post-Reformation text in a frame.

E. jamb of S. door: fragment of black-letter text or inscription—sixteenth/seventeenth century.

Above the door: frame and scroll bordering; fragmentary.

W. of S. door: open strapwork and scroll frame containing probably more than one text in Roman script. The passage visible is from the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew vii. 21. Early seventeenth century.

W. wall, S. side: traces of scroll frame similar to the last, with another over it. The texts not decipherable. Early seventeenth century.

W. wall, N. side: as above.

N. wall, W. of W. bay of arcade: black-letter text in straight line frame—sixteenth/seventeenth century.

The beam or wall plate on the S. (which is in part made up of moulded plaster) has been painted to represent a moulded wood cornice, on the samelines as in the Kederminster Chapel.

*North Aisle*. Both cornices or wall plates have been painted to represent moulded wood as on the S. wall of nave.

On a stone of the W. jamb of the NE. window is some red ornament, of a cinquefoil with curved lines at the side; and a black star lower down. The date of this is uncertain, as the windows have been re-set: but it is possibly medieval.

Every care should be taken to preserve these fragments of painting, for they are evidence of the former existence and extent of medieval work, as well as the elaborate scheme of decoration, and texts in frames with which the earlier work was obliterated at the Reformation and later, (The Visitation of 1637 records that 'Sentences were lacking in ye Chancel and south aisle'.)

The medieval work above and flanking the chancel arch is of particular interest, and should be uncovered, cleaned, treated with a preservative, and recorded. Few of the other areas of painting would seem to justify much work; but the text and frames in the SW. corner would probably respond to treatment. At the same time any plaster failures in the vicinity of the paintings should be made good in the proper manner.

It is unfortunate that all the brushing and washing down were done without supervision or without any suitable authority being informed. A good deal of damage has been done; and painting destroyed or rendered indecipherable.

The work undertaken by the County Council in the Kederminster Library and the family pew and chapel, at Langley, has been successfully completed. The hoped-for step of recovering Lady Kederminster's portrait from beneath the brown paint with which it was covered, has been accomplished. It was clear, on the removal of the obliterating paint, that the portrait had become in poor condition, much of the delicate detail having perished. It had then been 'touched-up' by an amateur hand with such grotesque and disastrous results that the late Sir Robert Harvey had had the whole portrait wiped out. It was possible to remove some of this over-painting; but some had to be left, or there would have been nothing underneath. The features are still, therefore, somewhat mask-like. The detail of the high lace collar, the stomacher, and the net or lace sleeves tied with red ribbons, is still quite good; and the panel, damaged though it is, now forms a better counterpart to Sir John than an expanse of brown paint.

The panel of armorial glass, formerly in the great south window, which was broken before the war and further damaged by blast during the war, has been repaired and replaced. A deplorable scheme to remove all broken pieces and substitute modern reproduction glass for these and for areas where the original enamel was flaking, was fortunately prevented. It is curious that this panel is not listed by the *Royal Commission on Historical Monuments*, or in the *Victoria County History*, or elsewhere. As it does not appear in Mr. Lamborn's *Armorial Glass of the Oxford Diocese* either, it may be briefly described here. In the centre is a shield bearing *Quarterly 1 and 4 Azure two chevronels or between three bezants*, for Kederminster: 2 and 3 *Gules a saltire between four fleurs-de-lys argent*, for Wentham. The shield has a strapwork frame with foliage, fruit, ribbons, and tassels intertwined, and is surmounted by helmet, crest (*a falcon salient on a cap of maintenance*) and elaborate mantling. The sides of the panel are flanked by classical pilasters with scrollwork bases: and at the top corners are bunches of fruit. It is almost entirely in enamel colours, the blue as usual showing signs of failure, and is of about 1625. (Plate 6.)

WYRARDISBURY, King John's Lodge or Place Farm: Reference is made elsewhere in this issue (p. 212 *et seq.*) to the stained glass formerly in this house. It is pleasing to be able to record that the formidable task of restoring this important timber-framed building, which was a wreck when last referred to in *Records of Bucks.*, vol. XII, pp. 159 *et seq.*, has been steadily proceeded with by the owner, Mr. W. P. Kilton. The great hall has been opened up to the roof, and other original features exposed at the south end of the hall. A further stone fireplace was discovered: and all these features tend to confirm a late fifteenth-century date for the early portion of the house. It was inevitable that some evidence should be obscured in making the house habitable; but the general result is a definite gain.

WINSLOW: In the course of redecorating one of the rooms in his house in Horn Street, Winslow, Mr. W. G. Chowles noticed traces of mural decoration. A sample of the painted plaster was sent to the museum at Aylesbury and proved to be part of a most interesting scheme of eighteenth-century stencil design. The work is in two colours—a dark and light green, and black, on a brown ground. It seems to have consisted of a 'wallpaper' pattern of small, curved lozenges in black outlined by black dots, with a light scroll and foliage border of black dots and green and black leaves. It is almost precisely similar to one from Market Hill, Saffron Walden, Essex, recorded by Mr. F. W. Reader in the *Archaeological Journal*, vol. XCV, pp. 119 and 120, and plate VII A. A record has been taken of the design.

For BOURNE END, and CHALFONT ST. GILES, see Notes on Recent Accessions, p. 226.