

An Inventory of Church Plate in Somerset.

Part VIII. Additional Notes.

BY THE REV. E. H. BATES HARBIN, M.A.

AS an appendix to the Inventory of the church plate of the diocese contributed to Volumes XLIII—XLIX of the *Proceedings*, I am now able to add notes on the parishes of Bathampton, Kingston Seymour, and Stawley, and also an account of the old plate, which after an alienation of seventy years has been restored to Seavington St. Michael. It now appears that of the 489 ancient parishes in the county, 228 possess Elizabethan plate.

BATHAMPTON.—Elizabethan cup and cover by I.P. The cup is $7\frac{3}{4}$ ins. high, with two bands of the usual ornament round the bowl, and as many round the foot. Marks: 2 official, I.P., date letter for 1573. The cover has one band of ornament; the marks are not visible; on the button, the date, 1574.

A paten or alms-dish, diameter $10\frac{3}{4}$ ins., quite plain. Marks: 2 official; maker's mark, S.H. linked together in dotted circle, partly worn away; date letter for 1686. There are also two modern patens and a flagon. [From notes supplied by the Rev. J. George, vicar.]

KINGSTON SEYMOUR.—The Elizabethan cup and cover are by different makers. The cup is 7ins. high, with a single band of the usual ornament round bowl, and egg-and-dart ornament round the foot. Marks: 2 official; date letter for

1571 ; maker's mark, a bellows in shaped shield, which is found on several other pieces in North Somerset. The cover is quite plain, with 1571 on the button. Marks : 2 official ; letter for 1571 ; maker's mark H.S. interlaced, found in places so far apart as Portishead, Kelston, Ansford, and Winsham. The flagon is of the tankard pattern, with date letter for 1798. It is inscribed : The Revd. Wadham Pigott, Patron. There is also a modern paten, probably French, inscribed : The gift of the Rev. Wadham Pigott, Patron. These two pieces were formerly at Brockley. A pewter alms-dish. [From notes made by Colonel J. R. Bramble.]

STAWLEY.—The vessels now in use are plain electro-plate. They consist of cup, paten, plate and flagon. There were of course some older vessels, but even tradition is silent as to details.

BARRINGTON.—In addition to the older plate already described, the parish possesses a fine silver gilt chalice and paten of late mediæval design. The chalice is 8½ins. high, with a plain bowl, hexagonal stem divided by a spherical knop, and a hexagonal lobed foot. The date letter is for 1878. The paten is 6ins. in diameter slightly curved, and engraved with a Maltese cross on the underside. The date letter is for 1877. There is also a small silver spoon without any marks.

SEAVINGTON ST. MICHAEL.—In the early part of 1913, a firm of London silversmiths had on sale a communion cup and cover, which papers in their possession show were alienated from this parish in 1841.

The cup and cover belong to that fairly numerous class of plate principally of the 16th and 17th Centuries, which, from the absence of any official marks and by the singularity of design and workmanship, may be considered to have been made by some local silversmith. There was a succession resident at Crewkerne in this period.¹

1. *Victoria County History*, II, 361.

The cover is of the usual Elizabethan type, but with more metal than was usually allowed. The work is very rough. The only ornamentation is a band of three incised circles on the swell of the cover, the middle one being broken at four points and joined to the outer and inner circles alternately by diagonal lines. Round the brim is a narrow band of zig-zags.

On the outer edge of the flange is a band of dentelles. On the button is the date 1574, and rudely scratched on the inside: Richard Drewer Church Warden, 1654.

The cup is 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ ins. high; the bowl is V-shaped; round the lip runs a band of ornament formed of a series of thirteen semi-circles enclosing hatched rays. This ornamentation is repeated round the base of the bowl and the foot. The cylindrical stem is divided midway by an annular swelling. The circular foot is almost flat, perfectly plain, but strengthened at the outer margin by a strong band of metal. Dotted in on the bowl: John Skellin, churchwarden, 1671; under the foot: Richard Drewer, churchwarden, 1669.

There are no marks on either piece. The dates, with the names of the churchwarden, may commemorate repairs.

The papers preserved with the plate give the history of the alienation. In 1841, the parishioners, without the knowledge of the Rev. R. A. Cox, rector, sent the plate to a London firm to be melted down. The churchwarden said it was so very old that all wished for a new service. A subscription for this purpose realised £20 9s. 8d., including £3 1s. 8d., the value of old plate given by the rector; and the modern cup and paten were procured with the money. Mr. Cox purchased the discarded cup and cover for £3 10s. 0d.; in 1868 they were given to the nephew of his widow, and in 1913 they were offered for sale. I am thrice happy to be able to state that by the exertions of Mr. Arthur F. G. Leveson-Gower and Prebendary Farrer, Rural Dean of Crewkerne, a generous donor, who does not wish his name to be known, has redeemed and restored the plate to the parish on the condition that no alien-

ation be permitted without the consent of the Chancellor of the diocese and the donor's legal representative.

WEST PENNARD.—To the list of plate given in *Proc.* XLVIII, ii, 89, can be added a small paten on foot with a diameter of $4\frac{1}{2}$ ins. On the foot are the initials W.P., 1711. Marks: 2 official of Britannia sterling; maker's mark, BA; date letter for 1711. [Note furnished by the Rev. J. Harrison, vicar.]

From some remarks in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries*, 2nd ser., XXIII, 41, it appears that my notice of Richard Orange in *Proc.*, XLIII, ii, 174, requires an explanation. On eighteen pieces of Elizabethan plate in Dorset and one in Wilts, there is a single mark consisting of a central pellet surrounded by six others all enclosed in an outer circle of similar pellets. This mark is quite distinct from another single mark found on one piece in North Dorset, and seven in South Somerset, which consists of a circle containing a mass of minute pellets giving the resemblance of a guelder rose. Not only are the two marks quite distinct, but the cups on which they are found are of different patterns, both in design and ornamentation. The Somerset cups are so alike as to make it quite evident that they all came from the same workshop. On the latest example, the cup at Charlton Horethorne, where 1603 is engraved on the cover, the mark, somewhat modified by the addition of a ferrule and handle to the bottom of the circle, is accompanied by another mark bearing the initials R.O. It seems very reasonable to ascribe these initials to Richard Orange, an old-established goldsmith in the neighbouring town of Sherborne. His will, made in 1605, refers to many grandchildren, so he must have been up in years, and may well have been in business in 1572, which is the earliest date of a cup bearing the guelder rose mark.

There is of course no reason for supposing that it was the mark of Sherborne; and the fact that it does not appear after the death of R. Orange in 1606, shows that it was his

private mark, perhaps a rebus on his surname, for the mark might be said to resemble a very rough-skinned orange, or perhaps a rebus on the local dialect which applies (o)range to a sieve or cullender. In this case the circle would represent the initial letter. But the handle does not appear on the earlier examples of the mark.