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NICHOLAS CHARLES'S NOTES ON CUDHAM AND DOWNE

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Among the church notes of Nicholas Charles, Lancaster Herald (*d.* 1613),¹ preserved in B.L. Lansdowne MS. 874, are several pages relating to monuments and stained glass in Kentish churches. The most important of these are his copies of drawings by his father-in-law Sir William Segar of the brasses and other monuments at Cobham, on ff. 60v–62v. However, his notes on Downe and Cudham, on ff. 39v and 40, are also of considerable value, helping to elucidate the history of these poorly documented churches.

At St. Peter and St. Paul, Cudham, which he visited on 7 July, 1611, Nicholas Charles recorded the inscription and heraldry of the brass (M.S. I) of Alice Waleys (*d.* 11 July, 1503) at the entrance to the chancel, now unfortunately covered by recently constructed wooden steps.² He also blazoned a series of nine coats of arms:

1. Barry argent and azure an orle of martlets gules (de Valence).
2. Gules three lions passant guardant or (England).
3. Quarterly or and gules (de Say, barons Say).
4. Azure six lions rampant argent, three, two and one (de Leybourne).
5. Chequy or and azure (de Warenne, earls of Surrey).
6. Quarterly 1 and 4, Azure three fleurs-de-lys or (France modern); 2 and 3, (England); surmounted by an open crown.
7. Gules two keys in saltire or.
8. Per pale, dexter, party per fess gules and azure, in chief a lion's face and in base a fleur-de-lys or, sinister, a crosier in pale azure. This is labelled by Charles 'Abbathia de Towrehill'.
9. Ermine a bend gules (Waleys).

That it was armorial glass that Charles recorded, and not some

¹ W.G. Godfrey, Sir Anthony Wagner and H. Stanford London, *The College of Arms* (1963), 135.

² Griffin and Stephenson, 92; Stephenson, 223.

other form of heraldic decoration, is established by the survival of two of these shields (nos. 1 and 2) in the east window of St. Catherine's chapel, on the north side of the nave, together with a third, somewhat smaller shield, probably dating from the early sixteenth century, with a later form of the arms of Waleys (Gules a fess ermine). These shields were in this position in the mid-eighteenth century, according to Thorpe, whose description of the glass at Cudham was copied by Hasted.³ Thorpe noted a fourth shield in the same window: 'Quarterly, gules and Or'. Presumably this is an erroneous blazon of no. 3 in the series seen by Charles.

Although there is no indication of this in Lansdowne 874, the shields must have belonged to more than one glazing scheme. The last Valence Earl of Pembroke died without issue in 1324, and the last Warenne Earl of Surrey died without male issue in 1347.⁴ It would be reasonable to assume that no. 2 antedates Edward III's assumption of the French arms in February 1340,⁵ and indeed its appearance is compatible with an early fourteenth-century date. No. 6, on the other hand, belongs to a period after Henry IV's alteration of the royal arms in 1406.⁶ Similarly no. 8 must date from after the foundation of the Cistercian abbey of St. Mary of Graces in London by Edward III in 1350.⁷ Charles's identification of the arms is confirmed by two abbots' seals.⁸

By adducing reasons for the presence of these shields at Cudham, it is possible to arrive at a slightly more precise dating for some of them. It is most probable that the arms of Valence and Warenne were included because of the national importance of these families; I am unable to point to any particular member of either of these families who was especially connected with Cudham. The de Sais possessed the manor of Cudham from c. 1194 until the death of John de Say, Lord Say on 27 July, 1382, when it passed to his sister Elizabeth, who married firstly John de Fawsley, and secondly Sir William Heron.⁹ The occurrence of the de Leybourne arms as well suggests that the de Say arms refer to Geoffrey de Say III, who succeeded his father William, while still a minor, in 1295. His wardship was obtained by William de Leybourne, who arranged his marriage to his daughter Idonea. Geoffrey proved his age in February 1302/3, and his first son,

³ Thorpe, 936; Hasted, 75.

⁴ Cockayne, x, 387; xii, pt. 1, 511.

⁵ J.H. and R.V. Pinches, *The Royal Heraldry of England* (1974), 52.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 88-9.

⁷ V.C.H., *London*, i (1909), 461.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 464.

⁹ Hasted, 61-3; Cockayne, xi, 467, 478.

also called Geoffrey, was born in 1305. He was summoned to parliament from 1313 to 1321, and died in February or March 1321/2.¹⁰ It is probable, therefore, that shields 1–5 belonged to a window of the first two decades of the fourteenth century. It is even conceivable that they were part of the original glazing of the east window of St. Catherine's Chapel. The tracery of this three-light window has been restored, but it reproduces the form of a Decorated window. There is no certainty, however, that shields 1–5 belonged to a single window. Indeed, the two surviving shields differ in size and shape, the de Valence arms being very slightly larger and broader than those of England. This may indicate that they belonged to different windows.

There is no obvious reason why the arms of St. Mary of Graces should be at Cudham. In Kent the convent possessed the manor and castle of Leybourne, land in Cobham and Rainham, and the advowsons of Bicknor, Gravesend, Leybourne and Ridley.¹¹ Augustine Waleys (*d.* 1354–5) held the manor of Ridley, but it was not until 1376–77 that the convent was granted the advowson of Ridley by its founder, Edward III.¹² It may be that a later Waleys established a connection with the abbey.

I have so far avoided identifying no. 7. An incautious heraldist relying on Papworth's *Ordinary* might take these to be the arms of the Chamberleyn family. It is far more likely that these were intended as the arms of the Papacy. In the earliest instances of these arms the keys are silver, but as early as the fourteenth century examples can be found with gold keys.¹³ These arms doubled as those of St. Peter, and it is probable that their presence at Cudham reflects the church's dedication. This explanation is supported by the occurrence of these arms at York Minster, which is dedicated to St. Peter, for example in the Lady Chapel of the 1360s.¹⁴

The following day Charles visited Downe. In this small church, at that time a chapel of Orpington, there was no heraldic glass worth recording, with the exception of 'these 3 very ould in the windowes', which are now lost:

1. Quarterly or and gules.
2. Sable a cross engrailed or.
3. Quartely or and gules with a label of five points azure.

¹⁰ Hasted, 62; Cockayne, xi, 474–5.

¹¹ V.C.H., *London*, i (1909), 464.

¹² Hasted, 459, 461.

¹³ D.L. Galbreath, *Papal Heraldry*, 2nd Edn. (1972), 8–14.

¹⁴ *Antiq. Journ.*, lii (1972), pl. LIXa.

Seventeenth century antiquaries' estimations of antiquity have to be treated with care; however, Charles was a perceptive observer, so these shields are more likely to have been of fourteenth- or even late-thirteenth, rather than fifteenth- or sixteenth-century date. Nos. 1 and 3 are to be assigned to one of the de SAYS and his eldest son. The use of an azure rather than an argent label on the latter shield may be indicative of a relatively early date. There are two likely candidates for no. 2, which is the arms of the Suffolk family of Ufford. Mary, the second wife of William de Say III (*d.* before 1271/2), afterwards married Robert de Ufford, Justiciary of Ireland. Assuming that nos. 1 and 3 were of the same date, they could then be assigned to William III and his son William, who died in September 1295.¹⁵ Another possibility is that no. 2 is the coat of arms of John de Ufford, who was elected Archbishop of Canterbury in 1348, but died of the Black Death on 20 May, 1349, before he could be enthroned. In this case, nos. 1 and 3 would be the arms of Geoffrey de Say IV (1305–1359) and his son William (*b.* 17 June 1340).¹⁶

Charles also noted an inscription 'in the South wyndow' (presumably either the early sixteenth-century three-light window in the south wall of the chancel, or the similar window in the nave):

Orate p̄ aiabz Johis Petle et Christinae vxoris eius et Jōhis Petle & Aliciae Et Thomae Philpott ac parentū meor.

This refers to John Petle of Trowmer, in the parish of Downe, who was living in the reign of Henry VIII, his wife Christina and her father Thomas Philpott, and his parents John Petle and Alice Brampton.¹⁷ The phraseology indicates that the inscription was almost certainly placed there by one of John's four co-heirs, most probably his eldest daughter Agnes, the wife of John Manning (*d.* 1543), to whom there is a brass (M.S. III) in the nave.¹⁸ Weever, who had access to Charles's notes, printed this inscription, noting in the margin that it was 'in a window'.¹⁹ Thorpe consulted Weever's *Ancient Funerall Monuments* when compiling his *Registrum Roffense*, but missed this note, and assumed that the inscription was that formerly on the brass of a civilian and wife (M.S. I), now relaid, on the south side of the chancel.²⁰

¹⁵ Cockayne, xi, 473–4.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 475–7.

¹⁷ Hasted, 55.

¹⁸ Griffin and Stephenson, 100; Stephenson, 226. This brass is probably a palimpsest.

¹⁹ John Weever *Ancient Funerall Monuments*, (1631), 331.

²⁰ Thorpe, 948.

Griffin and Stephenson tentatively identified the brass which Thorpe had mis-attributed as that of John Petle, *d.* 1395, and his wife Juliana Trowemer.²¹ This attribution is reasonable, since features of this London Series B brass, such as the man's pointed bag-sleeves, the woman's high collar, and the long undersleeves, partly covering the hands, worn by both, point to a date shortly after 1400.²² However, Nicholas Charles's notes enable a different identification to be made. At Downe he overlooked or ignored the Manning brass, but recorded three memorial inscriptions. One of these was that on the brass (M.S. II) of Thomas Petle, who died, according to Hasted, in 1421–22, and his wife Isabella, which survives, though lacking a shield and the figure of Isabella, in the nave.²³ The second, a simple brass inscription to John Bederenden (*d.* 27 September, 1445), a London draper who owned property in Northfleet, was 'on a stone' in 1611, but was broken and loose in 1922, and lost by 1926, although there is a rubbing in the Society of Antiquaries.²⁴ It is the third inscription which Charles copied which, I would suggest, belongs to M.S. I:

Hic Jacet Ricūs Downe Armiger et Margeria Consors eius quor aīabus ꝑpicietur Deus.

Richard de Downe witnessed a deed of gift made at West Wickham on 1 April, 1395, and is mentioned, though he was not necessarily alive at the time, in quitclaims dated at St. Mary Cray, 15 and 16 May, 1402.²⁵ Such dates accord perfectly with the appearance of the brass in the chancel at Downe.

There are a few more notes on f. 40 of Lansdowne 874 from which it is possible to deduce the way by which Charles returned to London. At the Bell Inn in Bromley he observed the arms of Draper and of Long of South Wraxall, as borne from the mid-fifteenth century onwards.²⁶ When he had almost reached London he stopped at 'the Kings head a little beyond the meate market' in Southwark, where he noticed the arms of Weston of Sutton Place impaling Sandys, as borne by Sir Richard Weston (*d.* 1542), who married Anne Sandys.²⁷

²¹ Griffin and Stephenson, 99; Stephenson, 226.

²² Cf. the brass of Richard Martyn (*d.* 1402) and wife at Dartford (M.S. I).

²³ Hasted, 55; Griffin and Stephenson, 99; Stephenson, 226.

²⁴ Griffin and Stephenson, 100; Stephenson, 226; *Calendar of Close Rolls, Henry VI*, iii (1937), 249.

²⁵ *Calendar of Close Rolls, Richard II*, v (1925), 417; *id.*, *Henry IV*, i (1927), 564, 566.

²⁶ Cf. *Harleian Soc.*, cv-cvi (1954), 117.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, xliiii (1899), 7.

Nicholas Charles's notes, though concerned with a narrow range of material, contain evidence which is of value not only as a corrective to the repeated errors of later antiquaries, but also as a contribution to the unravelling of the complicated architectural histories of Cudham and Downe.

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