

NOTICE OF AN ANCIENT LOCK-PLATE AT BASINGSTOKE.

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The accompanying illustration represents an ancient Lock-plate, or escutcheon of ornamental character, to be found on the door of an old building belonging to the Vicar, and situated to the west of the parish church at Basingstoke. The building, which was visited by the Hants Field Club, May 18th, 1889, is itself an object of interest, being a half-timbered house of considerable antiquity, considered by Canon Millard to have been an old vicarage, and at present used as a Sunday School. At the north end is an ancient panelled door of oak, with heavy moulded stiles, probably from the neighbouring Chapel of the Guild of the Holy Ghost, when that building was suffered to go to decay.¹

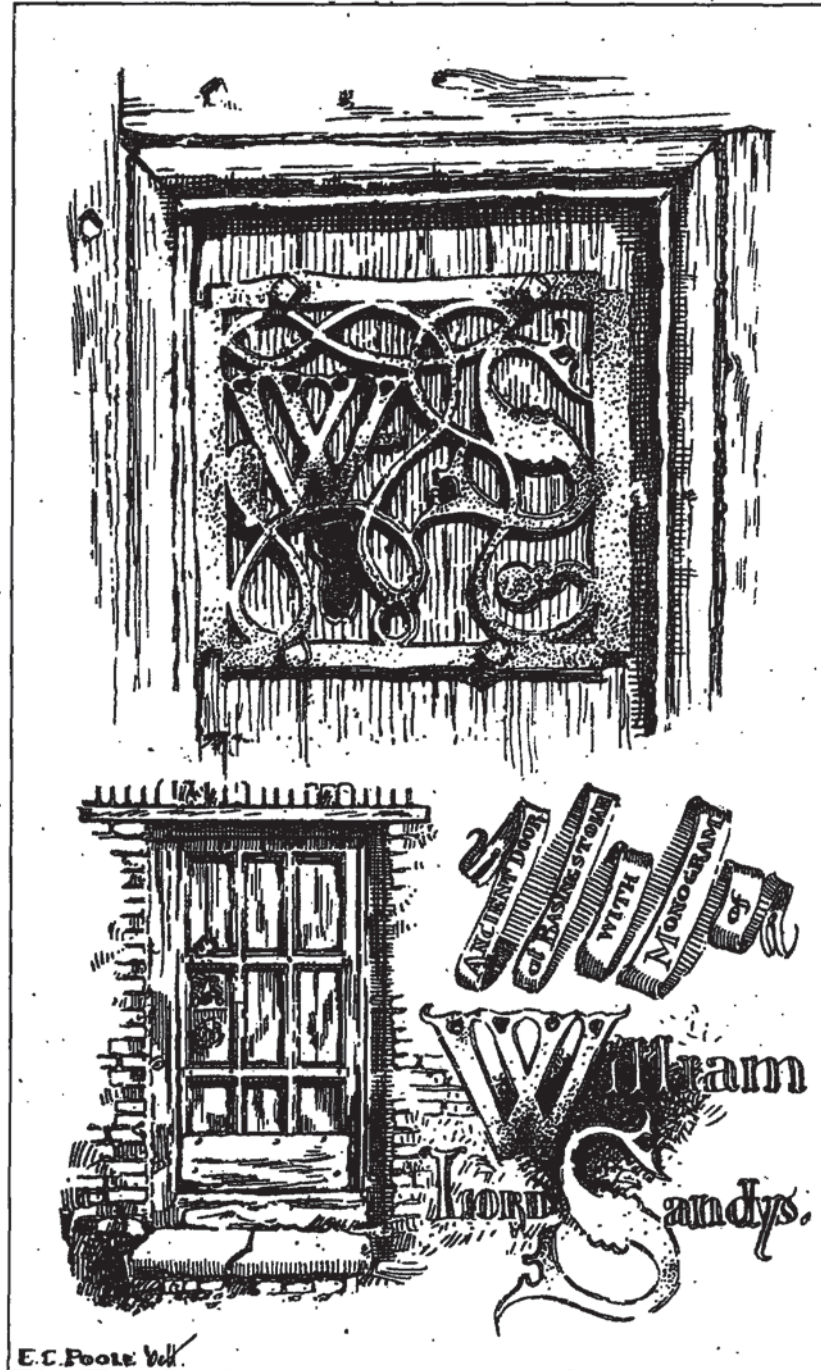
The Lock-plate measuring $6\frac{1}{2}$ -ins. by $7\frac{1}{2}$ -ins. and about $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. in thickness, is of wrought iron, containing the letters W.S. entwined by a tasselled cord, delicately wrought, forming the initials of Sir William Sandys, first Baron Sandys of "the Vyne,"² that noble example of domestic architecture which still remains, and has been so well described and illustrated by its present owner, Mr. Chaloner W. Chute.

Sir William Sandys was the friend of Henry VII and VIII, and Lord High Chamberlain (1526) to the latter monarch. He was one of the Commissioners appointed to arrange the famous interview between his sovereign and Francis I, at the field of the Cloth of Gold (June 4th, 1520), and is

¹ Baigent and Millard's "History of Basingstoke," p. 113.

² It probably occupies the site of the ancient Roman Vindomis, from which its name may be derived, a name which having been first contracted into "Vynnes," acquired its present form of "Vyne" or "Vine," at least as early as the fourteenth century. "History of the Vyne in Hampshire," by Chaloner W. Chute, Winchester and London, 1888, p. 1.

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mentioned by Shakespeare,¹ who calls him Lord Sandys, by anticipation, since he was not created Baron Sandys of the Vyne till April 27th, 1523, whilst serving under the famous Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, against the French.

From Shakespeare we gather that this display was distasteful to the knight, since he puts into his mouth the following words (Henry VIII, Act 1, sc. 3):—

Cham.—Is't possible the spells of France should juggle
Men into such strange mysteries?

Sands.— New customs,
Though they be never so ridiculous,
Nay, let them be unmanly, yet are follow'd.

In 1524, Lord Sandys, in conjunction with Fox, Bishop of Winchester, obtained from the king a charter for the reconstitution of the Fraternity of the Holy Ghost, at Basingstoke, and at the same time made important additions to their chapel, erecting the chapel of the Holy Trinity, wherein he was interred (ob. 1542),² together with his lady. He also built the tower at the west end, which remains a prominent feature of the ivy-clad ruins, still to be seen from the railway. Sir William Sandys married Margery Bray, niece and heiress of Sir Reginald Bray, Knight of the Garter, who was not only distinguished as a diplomatist, but also eminently skilled as an architect. It was he who designed much of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, wherein he was buried, and his device, a *bray*, or hemp breaker, appears in

¹ Henry VIII, Act 1, sc. 3.

² According to Messrs. Baigent and Millard, p. 113, obiit. 1542, and in the Chronology, p. xviii., 1541, but Mr. C. W. Chute, p. 49, gives Dec. 4, 1540, and supports it with the authority of a letter from Lord Maltravers to the king.—State Papers (Hen. VIII) Vol. viii, p. 495.

With regard to the date of Lord Sandys' death, Mr. B. W. Greenfield, F.S.A., has communicated the following: "I make out that William, 1st Lord Sandys of the Vine, died in December, 1540. Dugdale gives the date of the will as 8th Dec., 32 H. VIII (1540). [vide Register of Wills in Prerog. Ct. Cant. *Spart* 6]. I do not pin my faith on Dugdale's data, as I have found the Baronage wrong in several instances, as regards *minutia*, and therefore the 4th of December, as given in the Kalendar of State Papers, may be correct. We know that *Thomas*, his son and successor, did not have livery of the lands of his inheritance, though of full age, before the 33 H. VIII 1541 (Par. Roll. 33 H. VIII, p. 3.) Lord Sandys must have died before 23rd April, 1541 (33 H. VIII) as on that day Sir Anthony Wingfield was elected K.G. as his successor. The date of his wife's death is unknown." She is mentioned in 1537, but not in her husband's will.

many parts of that building. He was also the architect of the beautiful chapel of Henry VII at Westminster, being present in that capacity at the laying of the first stone (Jan. 24th, 1503).¹

In the erection of the mansion and Chapel of the Vyne, as well as the Chapel of the Holy Ghost, Lord Sandys was doubtless greatly aided by his marriage with Margery Bray, and remembering the development in the art of working metals in the beginning of the 16th century, of which Henry VIIIth's Chapel at Westminster affords notable specimens, it is probable that this ancient example of a Lock-plate, as well as a similar one, with the same initials, found in the door leading to the priest's chamber, in the Chapel of the Vyne,² and others in the house owe something to the genius and influence of Sir Reginald Bray; as he lived till 1503, with regard to the Vyne Chapel this is more than probable.

An escutcheon of similar style and date to the one here given will be found on a door in the south transept of Norwich Cathedral, where the letters R.C.P.N. are found entwined with a tasselled cord. The initials standing for *Robertus Catton Prior Norwicensis*. Catton was Prior 1504-1520.³

For the illustration we are indebted to two members of the H.F.C.; Mr. Mason Good, of Winchfield, furnishing beautiful photographs, from which Mr. J. Poole, Architect, of Southampton, made an accurate drawing, here reproduced.

¹ Stanley's "Memorials of Westminster," p. 144.

² Figured in Messrs. Dollman and Jobbins' "Ancient Domestic Architecture," vol. ii, p. 34; also at the head of chapter iii, in Mr. Chaloner W. Chute's book.

³ "Norfolk Archæology," vol. vii, p. 9.