

ON A PALIMPSEST BRASS OF BISHOP
WHITE, AT WINCHESTER COLLEGE,
AND BRASSES OF THE WHITE FAMILY
AT SOUTHWICK.

BY PERCY G. LANGDON.

The Chapel of Winchester College formerly contained one of the finest collections of monumental brasses in England, but through the restoring (?) hand of one, and the carelessness of another, but little remains to tell of their former grandeur. At the restoration of the chapel in 1877, the brasses were taken up and stowed away for safety, as was supposed, but when they were required for replacing all had disappeared. A fragment of one only having escaped the sacrilegious hand. This fragment consists of a portion of the effigy of Bishop White, which composed his cope, and is now in the keeping of the present Warden, the Rev. G. B. Lee, by whose kindness and courtesy the writer was lately permitted to obtain a rubbing here reproduced (Plate I). It is a *palimpsest*, being engraved on both sides, having on the *reverse* the figure of a widow in mourning of date *circa* 1440.

The memorial seen in the chapel at the present day has been placed there at the sole expense of Edwin Freshfield, Esq. LL.D., F.S.A., an old Wykehamist, who has generously restored other brasses and in various ways shewn his love for the ancient foundation of which he was a scholar and is now a member of the governing body. The modern brass, which purports to be a *facsimile* of the original, measures 7-ft. 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. x 4-ft 2-in., and depicts White vested in a handsome cope diapered with pomegranates, marguerites, and Tudor roses. He was a courtier, and these devices may have been

adopted as complimentary to the Royal family. The *pomegranate* was the badge of Catharine of Aragon, the *marguerite* the device of Princess Margaret, and the *Tudor rose*, a favourite conventional ornament of the period.¹

The *morse*, or clasp, which fastens the cope, is ensigned with the letters I.H.S. The head is tonsured, but the hair otherwise long and flowing, whilst the hands are held in supplication. The effigy alone measures 52-in. x 13½-in., and the inscription, written by White himself, consists of twenty Latin verses, hexameters and pentameters, as follows, in old English characters :—

HIC TEGOR, HIC POST FATA WHITUS PROPONO JACERE,
 SCRIPTOR JOHANNES CARMINIS IPSE MEI.
 SIN ALIBI SORS EST PUTRESCERE QUI MEUS ESSET
 TUNC PATIOR TUMULUS FIAT UT ALTERIUS.
 NE SINE HONORE TENAX SINE NOMINE LINQUERET HERES
 ID TIMUI EXEMPLIS TURBOR ET INDE NOVIS.
 INGRATI HEREDES : PHAS NIL SPERARE SEPULTO
 ORE TENUS PUTEI SPES IN 'AMICITIA.
 NEC MIHI FAMA TAMEN DE MARMORE QUERITUR
 SED SPES MAGNA PIIS PONITUR IN PRECIBUS
 HOC CUSTODE AVET HIC, HOC PRECEPTORE AVET ILLE.
 HOCQUE PUER PUERO (DIXERIT ALTER) ERAM.
 PARCE DEUS SOCIO, CUSTODI PARCE MAGISTRO,
 HOC AVET, ILLE AVET HOC, HOC ETIAM ALTER AVET.
 SEPTEM ANNOS DOCUI, QUAE LUX POSTREMA DOCENDI
 STATA PREESSENDI MUNERE PRIMA FUIT.
 MUTAVIT MIHI NON MINUIT FORTUNA LABORES,
 CURAQUE NON MODICIS REBUS ADAUCTA MIHI.
 NUNC SUBEAT LECTOR QUIA SANCTA EST ATQUE SALUBRIS
 RES PRO DEFUNCTO FRATRE ROGARE DEUM

TRANSLATION.

Here I, John White, am buried, here I the writer of my own epitaph propose to lie after death. But if it be my fate to rot elsewhere, then I allow that the tomb that should be mine should be anothers. I have feared that a grasping heir should leave me without honour, without name, and therefore I am troubled by recent instances. Heirs are ungrateful, a man has nothing to hope when he is buried, but up to the brink of the grave is there hope in friendship. Nor do I ask for fame alone from my stone, but I place great hope in pious prayers. "Under his wardenship," prays one, "under his mastership," prays another, "when he was a boy" says a third "I was a boy : O God spare the fellow, spare the warden, the master," one desires this, another desires this, yet another desires this. Seven years did I teach, the day which was the last for teaching was fixed as the first for the office of being head. My success changed my toil but did not lessen it, and my cares were increased by no moderate amount. Let the reader now pray because it is a holy and profitable thing to beseech God for a dead brother

¹ A similar cope without the roses appears on the brass of Dean Frowsetoure, 1529, at Hereford.



BP. WHITE, Circa 1550.



REVERSE, circa 1440.

Height 31 in. x 13½ in.

FRAGMENT OF PALIMPSEST BRASS OF JOHN WHITE,

Warden of Winchester College, 1541;

Bishop of Lincoln, 1554; translated to Winchester, 1556;

OBIIT. 1560.

Formerly in the College Chapel, Winchester.

The border inscription also in old English character runs thus :—

"VENIT HORA IN QUA OMNES QUI IN MONUMENTIS SUNT AUDIENT VOCEM FILII DEI || ET PROCEDENT QUI BONA FECERUNT IN RESURRECTIONEM VITE, QUI VERO MALA EGERUNT IN RESURRECTIONEM JUDICIJ. REPOSITA EST HEC SPES IN SINU JOHANNIS WHITE, QUI IN OFFICIO CUSTODIS HUIUS COLLEGII XIIIJ ANNOS AGENS, LINCOLNIE || EPISCOPUS PRIMO DIE APRILIS A^ODNI 1554 CONSECRATUS EST, ATQUE AD WINTONIE || EPISCOPATUM SEXTO DIE JULIJ A^ODNI 1556 TRANSLATUS EST, ET POSTEA JURAMENTUM SUPREMITATIS RECUSANS INCARCERATUS EST ET DEPRIVATUS SPIRITUM SUUM DEO REDDIDIT A^ODNI 1559. CUJUS ANIME PROPICIETUR DEUS. AMEN.

TRANSLATION.

The hour comes in which all that are in the tombs shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that have done good shall go into the resurrection of life, but they that have done evil into the resurrection of judgment. This hope is laid up in the breast of John White, who passing xiiij years in the office of warden of this college, was consecrated bishop of Lincoln the first day of April A.D. 1554, and was translated to the bishopric of Winchester on the sixth day of July, A.D., 1556, and afterwards refusing the Oath of Supremacy, was imprisoned and deprived. He yielded up his Spirit to God, A.D., 1559. On whose soul God have mercy. Amen.

This border inscription was, in 1770, said to have been 'imperfect and decayed.' At the four corners are these arms :—"Three plates charged with three bars wavy, az, a mullet (3rd son) for a difference."¹ This is perhaps the *only brass known* where a bishop is represented in a cope,² but would be accounted for, as it was laid down or made before White was raised to the episcopate. Why his arms are given as above on the restored brass it is difficult to discover. In a window formerly in Fromond's Chantry, but now at S.

¹ With regard to the restored brass, Dr. Freshfield writes (Jan. 30th 1895) "it was produced from a rubbing made by myself when a boy, and another rubbing made by Mr. F. J. Baigent, of Winchester, and from the remaining fragment of the brass. Of the inscription at the foot, Mr. Baigent had, I think, a rubbing. Of the inscription round the margin, only fragments had existed which were well known then. They were sufficient however to show that the inscription as reproduced was correct, as to part; conjectural as to the rest, but still sufficient to be reasonably sure. . . . As to the arms, I know that Mr. Baigent and I exercised all the care we reasonably could, when the brass was put into its place, fifteen years ago, and I was much indebted to him for the assistance he then gave me, without which, I never should have been able to reproduce this and the other brasses in the perfect condition they now are."

Translations are here offered of the inscriptions which are corrupt and complicated pieces of Latinity. It would seem that a word is wanted after *queritur*, to complete the hexameter. (Ed).

² At Chigwell, Essex, Saml. Harsnett, Vicar, Bp. of Chester, see Bp. of Norwich, and Archbishop of York, 1631, is represented in a cope (Ed.).

Cross, also in New College Hall, and in Wood's *Antiquities of Oxford*, p. 196, they are emblazoned thus :—"Party per chevron crenellé, or and gules, three roses counterchanged slipped proper, on a chief of the second, three hour glasses of the first."

Burke, also Bérny, in his *Hampshire Pedigrees* p. 193, give the following arms which were to be seen in an old window with the arms of several Bishops at No. 10, The Close, Winchester :—"Azure, on a cross quarterly ermine and or betw. four falcons, arg. beaked of the third, a fret betw. as many lozenges of the field." These were not the arms of Bishop White, but of John White, of Southwick.

Bishop John White was the son of Robert White, of Farnham, and a younger brother of Sir John White, Lord Mayor of London, 1563, M.P. for London 1566 and 1571. He was educated at Winchester, and at New College, Oxford, of which he became a fellow (1527). In 1534 he completed his degrees, and was appointed master of Winchester school in 1537, at the age of 27; and was elected Warden Jan. 1541. According to Duthy, he like John de Campeden, held the living of Cheriton, of which parish he became rector in 1547. On the accession of Q. Mary he was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln, April 1st, 1554, and was translated to Winchester, July 6th, 1556. He preached the memorable Q. Mary's funeral sermon¹ of which Sir John Harrington² gives a quaint account in which he states that Queen Elizabeth was greatly offended at his text, Eccles. iv., 2—"Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive. Yea, better is he than both they, which hath not been."—And after praising the dead queen "speaking of her great gravity, her rare devotion, her justice and clemency, and lastly her grievous, yet patient death, he fell into such an unfeigned weeping that for a long space he could not speak—Then recovering himself he said she had left a sister to succeed her, a lady of great worth also, whom they were now bound to obey, for saith he *better is a live dog than a dead*

¹ Strype Memor., vol III, pt. 2.

² "Brief view of the state of the Church of England as it stood in Queen Elizabeth's and King James' reign to the year 1608."

lion, and I hope so shall reign well and prosperously over us ; but I must still say with my text I have praised the dead more than the living, for certain it is Mary hath chosen the better part."

Such language could not but annoy the queen, and the Bishop was arrested but afterwards released. In 1559 he was again imprisoned in the Tower and deprived of his bishopric for refusing to take the oath of supremacy. He died at the house of his sister, Sir Thomas White's place at South Warnborough, on Jan. 11th, 1560, and was buried agreeably to his will in Winchester Cathedral, where no stone marks the resting place of all his troubles. The brass is therefore a cenotaph.

A good deal of information with regard to Bishop White and his family will be found in *the Diary (1550-1563) of Henry Machyn, citizen of London*, Camden Society, Volume 1847, from which we gather the following particulars:—(Ed.)

(1) JOHN WHITE, LORD MAYOR.

"1555, June 10th, chosen master of the Grocers' Company.—1558, Aug. 29th, married the widow of Ralph Greenway.—1559, May 25th, his child John christened at "St. Bartholomews beside St. Anthony" his sponsors, Marquis of Winchester Lord Treasurer, Dr. Whytt, Bishop of Winchester, and Lady Laxton, wife of Sir Wm. Laxton, late Lord Mayor.—1559, July 7th, my good Lord of Winchester, Dr. Whytt came out of the tower to his home.—1560, Feb. 3rd, a son (Thomas) born to Alderman John White.—Feb. 27th, his wife churched.—1561, June 16th, "at the Grocers' Feast."—1561, June 30th, "at Merchant Taylor's Feast." This civic senator was the son of Robert White, of Farnham, he married (1st) Sibell, sister of Sir Thomas White, of South Warnborough, Sir Thomas having married Agnes, sister of Sir John and Bishop John White, (2nd) Katharine, widow of Ralph Greenway, and daughter of John Sodaye, of London, apothecary to Queen Mary. Sir John was buried at Aldershot, 1573, where his funeral trophies, as shown in an engraving, (Machyn's Diary, xxii) were suspended in the church. They consisted of his standard as a knight ; four pennons, of his own arms, the merchant adventurers, the grocers ; a coat armour ; a target helmet and crest, and mantles and sword ; his armorial coat, being per fesse az and or, a pale counterchanged, three fountains, two and one, and three lions heads one and two, the crest a lion's head erased quarterly az and or, gutté de sang in each quarter.

There still exists a brass in the east wall of the chancel of Aldershot church to Sir John White, apparently erected before his death, as the date is not filled in. There are also two helmets with crests, one supposed to be that of White, the other belonging to a Tichborne. At South Warnborough is a brass to Robert White, Esq., eldest son of John White, 1512-13, with a large hand pointing to a scroll, mural, in chancel.

(2) JOHN WHITE, BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.

He was brother to the above-named Sir John White, this being an instance, of which there are many parallels, of two brothers bearing the same christian names. Machyn gives many particulars about the bishop.—"1557, April 23rd, he sang Mass at Westminster before the King.—1557, May 23rd, preached at St. Mary Overy; there was a heretic there to hear the sermon.—1558, Jan. 30th, preached at Powles Cross, did make a goodly sermon.—1558, Nov. 30th, funeral of Bishop (Griffiths) of Rochester, my lord of Wynchester dyd preche at St. Magnus, in London.—1558, Dec. 14th, Masse for the Queen Mary, bishop of Winchester mad the sermon.—1559, April 3rd, he was sent to the Tower of London.—1552, May 25th, godfather to the son of Alderman John White.—1559, July 7th, comes out of the tower to Alderman White's.—1560, Jan. 12th, good master doctor Whyt, late bishop of Winchester, died at Sir Thomas Whyte's plasce, of ague, and he gave much to his servants.—1560, Jan. 15th, carried to be buried unto Winchester."

(3) SIR THOMAS WHITE OF SOUTH WARNBOROUGH.

He was son of William White, and brother-in-law to the bishop and Sir John, the Lord Mayor mentioned above, having married their sister Agnes; and as Sir John married Sibell, the sister of Sir Thomas, there was a double connection by marriage, although not related in paternal descent. Sir Thomas, the son of William White, was born at Reading.—1492, Sheriff of London.—1546, knighted as Lord Mayor.—1553, he was a Merchant Taylor and a great benefactor to the schools of that Company. He founded St. John's College, Oxford, where he was buried, 1566. He bequeathed to twenty-four cities and towns £2000, to be bestowed in loans of £25 each on poor tradesmen. Winchester, Southampton, and Reading are included in the rotation. The benefaction was last received by Southampton in 1878. His portrait, probably a copy of the picture at St. John's, Oxford, will be found at the Audit House, Southampton, and at Winchester County Hall. In Strype's Stow's Survey (1720) vol. II. p. 133, it is stated that the Sir Thos. White, Lord Mayor of London, (1553), was the son of Thos. White of Rickmansworth, Herts.

The three families of White (according to Mr. B. W. Greenfield, F.S.A.) of Farnham, South Warnborough, and Southwick descend from different and separate ancestors, and their arms differ accordingly,

Sir John White, Kt., Lord Mayor, great grandson of Thomas White, of Purfield, near Farnham, bore per fesse az and or, a pale counter changed: on the first 3 plates each charged with two bars wavy vert, on the second as many lions heads erased gules. Berry's *Hants Genealogies*, p. 295, from the visitation of 1634.

Bishop John White had a right to bear the family coat of the White's of Farnham, but in the 15th and 16th Centuries several bishops appropriated to themselves heraldic coats totally different from their family bearings. Accordingly we find that John White, as Bishop of Lincoln, 1554-1556, when he was translated to Winchester, bore party per chevron embattled or and gu 3 roses counterchanged slipped vert; on a chief of the second three hour glasses arg framed of the first. Vide *Bedford's Blason of Episcopacy*, 1858. Mr. Bedford adds "Confirmation by Dethick, 1557. MS. Ashmole, 8569."