

INCISED DIALS, SCRATCH DIALS OR MASS - CLOCKS ON THE WALLS OF HAMPSHIRE CHURCHES.

By A. R. GREEN, F.S.A.

DIALS were the time-markers of our ancestors before clocks became common.

There are three chief types of sundial :—

1. Anglo-Saxon sundials which divide the whole day-night into three-hourly intervals, called tides. There is an excellent example of such a dial at Corhampton.
2. Mass-clocks, which divide the day-night into twenty-four hours, each line representing an hour, came in when the Normans conquered England and continued to be made for some centuries afterwards. Dials of this type vary considerably.
3. Lastly, in the 16th and 17th centuries, dials constructed on scientific principles became more and more common.

All these types of dial told the time by the shadow of the style or gnomon, which the sun caused to fall on the lines of their dial faces, and they all marked sun-time, which differs to some extent from clock or Greenwich time.

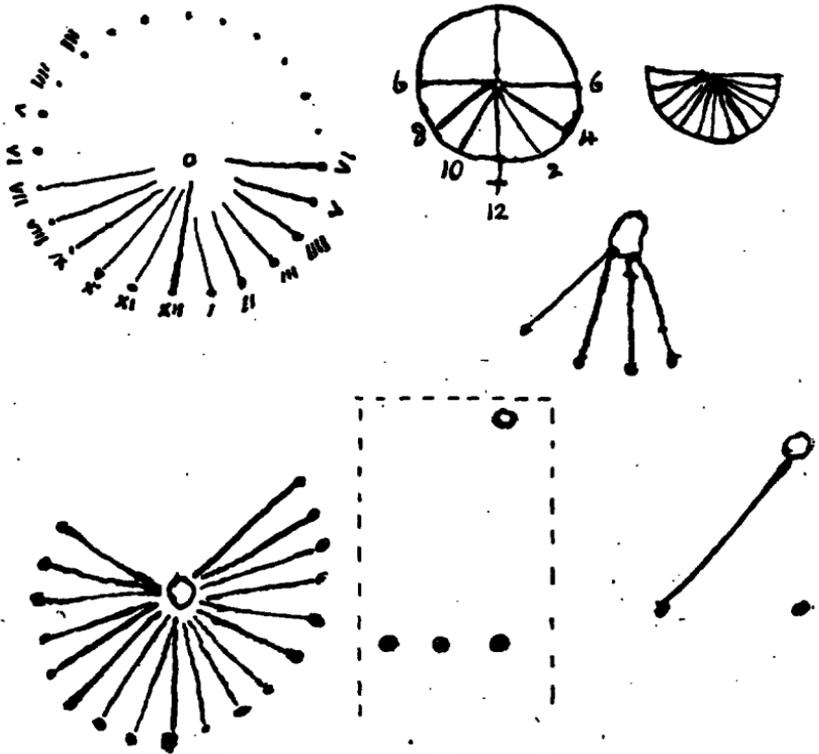
Mass-clocks vary considerably in size and construction. Some diagrams of typical dials are illustrated. The hole in the centre contained the style which has disappeared. They were not very accurate time-markers, but they were quite sufficient for the wants of the period, and so far as we know they were the only common means of telling the time then in use.

Probably every church possessed at least one Mass-clock and one important function was to mark the time when Mass was said, generally about 9 a.m., and on some of them the line marking this hour is more distinctly cut than the other lines.

The noon-line, which is cut vertically downwards from the style hole, marks the middle of the day and is usually distinctly incised, and if the dial faced south and the style stood out straight from its face so as to point due south also, the shadow *always* marked 12 noon correctly all the year round. It must have been of great importance to the community to have this line, which could be relied upon to mark the correct time throughout the year.

Mass-clocks are found on the south side of churches (unless they have been removed to other positions), often on the jambs of a south doorway or perhaps incised on a window or buttress, etc.

A Mass-clock which told the time fairly accurately in the summer with a style standing out straight was very inaccurate



DIAGRAMS OF SOME TYPICAL DIALS.

(except as regards the noon-line) as a winter time-marker so that, when several dials are found on one church, probably each was fitted with a differently shaped style in order that the correct time could be ascertained all the year round, *i.e.*, there was a dial for each season.

In 1926 I published a list of all the dials in the County then known to me.¹ Since that time much interest has been taken in this subject and many more dials have been discovered. The Photographic Section of the Hampshire Field Club possesses prints of a large number.

There are, however, many persons who are still ignorant of these time-markers and consequently they are in danger of inadvertent destruction. That they are worthy of preservation is undoubted.

The following list of 169 dials and 8 doubtful ones does not pretend to be exhaustive, for dials are constantly being discovered

¹ *Sundials, Incised Dials or Mass-Clocks* (The Historical Monuments of England Series). By A. R. Green. S.P.C.K.

by keen observers, and others are frequently being destroyed in the course of alterations, repairs, additions and "restorations" to the fabric of churches. This destruction is especially liable to take place if the incumbent, churchwardens, Parochial Church Council, mason or architect is not aware of the existence of a Mass-clock on the walls of the church.

I am indebted to many archaeologists in the County for help in compiling the list and to them I offer my thanks.

No doubt there are many inaccuracies and omissions, and members are asked to examine the churches in their neighbourhood and communicate with the writer so that a corrected and accurate list can be made.

List compiled by A. R. GREEN, F.S.A.

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|-------------------|---|
| Amport. | 2 E. jamb of priest's door. |
| | 2 S.E. buttress of chancel, faces S.E. |
| Ashe. | 1 Sill, middle window, N. of nave. |
| Ashley. | 2 S.W. of nave. |
| Ashmansworth. | 1 E. jamb, S. door. |
| Baughurst. | 1 S. jamb, W. door, inverted. |
| | 1 N. jamb, W. door, inverted. |
| Bishop's Sutton. | 2 W. jamb, S. door. |
| | 1 S.E. corner of nave. |
| Bishop's Waltham. | 1 E. jamb, S. porch. Much mutilated. |
| Bedhampton. | 1 Central buttress S. of chancel. |
| | 1 on W. of S.W. chancel window. |
| | 1 on E. of S.E. chancel window. |
| Bramley. | 2 W. jamb of S. chancel door. |
| | 3 E. jamb of S. chancel door. |
| Breamore. | 1 W. angle of S. porch. |
| | 2 S.E. angle of S. transept. |
| Brockenhurst. | 1 E. jamb of S. porch. |
| Burghclere. | 3 E. jamb of S. door. |
| | 2 W. jamb of S. door. |
| | 2 S.E. angle of nave. |
| Catherington. | 1 E. jamb of S. door. |
| Chalton. | 1 E. of arch of S. chancel door. |
| Cheriton. | 1 E. jamb of S. porch. |
| Chilcomb. | 1 S.E. angle of nave, high up. |
| Damerham, S. | 1 E. jamb of S. porch. |
| | 2 Buttress at S.W. angle of nave. |
| | 1 on stem of churchyard cross, faces E. |
| | 1 inside tower, N.W. corner, 1st floor. |
| | On S. buttress, dated 1708, triangular iron style. 1. D. |
| Dibden. | 1 S.E. quoin of nave. |
| Droxford. | 1 E. jamb of S. door. |
| | 1 W. jamb of S. door. |
| | 2 E. jamb of E. window of S.E. chapel. |
| | 1 E. jamb of W. window of S.E. chapel. |
| | 1 Buttress S.E. of chancel, Roman figures, faces S.W. |
| Ellingham. | 1 S.E. buttress of chancel. |
| Faringdon. | 2 E. jamb of S. door. |
| Farley | 1 E. jamb of S. door. |
| Chamberlayne. | W. end of S. wall, cut in plaster, probably modern. 1. D. |

- Fawley. 1 W. jamb of S. chancel door.
 Fordingbridge. 1 on eastern buttress S.E. of chancel.
 Two style holes on buttress, S. of nave, E. of porch.
 2. D.
- Hambledon. 1 E. jamb of priest's door, style hole and indistinct
 circle.
- Hayling, N. 1 E. jamb of priest's door.
 1 S.E. corner of chancel wall.
 1 on buttress S.E. of chancel, faces upwards.
- Hayling, S. 1 S.E. corner of S. aisle.
 1 W. end of S. chancel wall.
 1 E. jamb of S. chancel door, traces of.
 1 Buttress, S.E. corner of chancel. Hole dial.
- Headbourne Worthy. 1 S.E. angle of tower, high up.
 Herriard. 8 on buttress at S.E. angle of nave.
 1 E. jamb of S. door, inverted.
 1 W. jamb of S. door, inverted. Inside Church.
- Houghton. 1 S.E. angle of S. aisle.
 Hurstbourne Priors. 1 W. jamb of priest's door.
- Hurstbourne
 Tarrant. 1 E. jamb of E. window on S. of chancel.
 Idsworth. 1 S.W. angle of S. aisle. 16th century.
 Kimpton. 1 S.E. angle of S. transept.
 S.E. angle of S. transept, more to W. 1. D.
- King's Somborne. 2 E. jamb, 4th window from E. of S. aisle.
 1 W. jamb, 4th window from E. of S. aisle.
 1 S.E. corner of chancel. Now (1942) destroyed.
 1 (? 2) over blocked door N. of nave. Faces N.
- Laverstoke. 1 S.E. angle of nave. Faces E.
 Old Parish Church. 1 S.E. angle of chancel.
 Long Sutton. 1 E. of chancel. Faces E.
- Martin. 2 on buttress at S.W. corner of S. transept. Faces S.W.
 1 on buttress S.E. corner of S. transept. Faces S.E.
 1 on buttress S.E. of tower. Faces S.W.
- Meon, East. 1 S.W. of S. transept.
 1 W. jamb of S. door.
- Milford-on-Sea. 1 S.W. of S. transept.
- Monk Sherborne. 1 S.E. angle of nave.
 All Saints. 2 E. jamb of S. chancel door, now in vestry.
 Newton Valence. 2 2nd buttress from E. on S. of nave, Roman numerals.
- Odiham. 2 S.E. angle of chancel.
 Otterbourne. 1 S.W. angle of nave. (? Doubtful.)
 Old Church. 1 S.E. angle of nave.
 Penton Mewsey. 1 W. jamb of S. door of chancel.
 1 W. jamb of S. chancel door. Very low down.
 1 W. jamb of S. nave window E. of door.
 1 on buttress of S. chapel.
 On E. jamb S. nave window E. of door. 2. D.
- Preston Candover. 1 on buttress on S. of S. chapel.
 Quarley. 1 on buttress at E. end. Inverted, faces N.
 2 S.E. angle of old chancel.
 1 on buttress of S. chapel, east of porch.
- Rockbourne. 1 over arch of S. door.
 Romsey Abbey. 1 E. jamb of S. porch doorway.
 Rowner. 1 S.W. angle of nave.
 St. Mary Bourne. 1 S.E. angle of chancel. Wedge-shaped lines.
 Sherborne St. John. 1 S.E. angle of chancel. Faces E.

- Soberton. 1 on buttress at S.E. corner of chancel. Hours in Roman figures in ring.
 1 on buttress of tower. Faces N.W. Ring as above but figures not visible.
 Over window at E. of N. chapel. 1. D.
 4 on S.E. corner of Lady Chapel.
 2 on E. of Lady Chapel. Faces E.
- Southampton.
 Holy Rood. 1 under window next to and E. of tower.
 Southampton. 2 S.E. angle of S. chapel. On next stone to corner. Difficult to find.
- St. Michael.
 Sparsholt. 1 S.E. of S. aisle.
 Steventon. 1 on S. jamb of W. doorway.
 3 S.W. angle of nave.
- Stockbridge. 1 on right hand jamb of W. window N. aisle. Inverted. Window came from Old Church.
 New Church.
- Stockbridge.
 Old Church. 1 in jamb of W. door. Faces S.
 Stoke Charity. 5 E. jamb of S. nave window.
 1 W. jamb of S. nave window.
- Tisbury. 1 S.E. angle of chancel.
 Upham. 1 S.E. angle of chancel.
 Upper Clatford. 2 S.E. angle of old chancel. Uncovered 1934.
 Up Nately. 1 on sill of S.E. window of chancel.
 Waltham, North. 1 on W. jamb of priest's door.
 Warblington. 1 on W. jamb of S.E. window of S. aisle.
 Warnford. 2 E. side of porch entrance.
 2 W. side of porch entrance.
- Wield. 1 W. jamb of S. door.
- Winchester.
 St. Bartholomew. 2 E. jamb of S. door.
- Winchester.
 No. 10 The Close. 1 or 2 on kitchen of Frater.
 Winchester College Hall. 1 on a stone in the Screen.
- Winchfield. 2 on E. jamb of S. porch.
 Wonston. 2 on W. jamb of S. door.
 1 on E. jamb of S. door.
- Yateley. 1 on jamb of S. chancel door. Now in Vestry.

Isle of Wight.

- Arreton. 1 on E. jamb of S. door.
 Binstead. 1 S.E. corner of chancel.
 Calbourne. 2 E. jamb of S. priest's door.
 Shalfleet. 1 E. jamb of S. door.
 Yaverland. 1 W. jamb of S. door.

Total 169 and 8 doubtful dials.

Saxon Sundials.

- Corhampton. 1.
 Warnford. 1.
 Winchester. 1 (altered).
 St. Maurice. 1.
 St. Michael. 1.

Doubtful dials are marked D.