



**BRASS OF JOHN WHITE, 1567.  
AND HIS WIFE KATHARINE (POUND), 1548.**

*In the Church at Southwick.*

Height of Figures 19 in.

Border Inscription, 6 ft. 5½ in. x 2 ft. 5½ in.

Sir Thomas White, of South Warnborough, bore arg. a chev. gu between 3 popinjays vert within a bordiere az charged with 8 bezants. Vide *Berry's Hants Pedigrees*, p. 241.

White of Southwick, bore az on a cross quarterly, erm and or between 4 falcons arg a fret between as many lozenges az.—*Berry's Hants Pedigrees*, p. 193. [Ed.]

#### BRASSES OF THE WHITE FAMILY AT SOUTHWICK.

The church of S. James, Southwick, contains a brass, of great interest (Pl. II), attached to an altar tomb on the North side of the chancel. The memorial consists of the effigies of John White, his first wife, five boys, four girls, two shields of arms, and an inscription around the chamfer. On the sides of the tomb are also shields the tinctures of which still exist. The male effigy is portrayed in the armour of the period. The hair is long and the face clean shaven. The armour consists of a breast plate with a *tapul* (projecting ridge), a spear rest screwed into the right side, *pauldrons* (shoulder pieces), with *brassarts* (upright guards), on the upper arm, *coutes*, (elbow pieces), and *vambraces*; on the fore arm. The *taces* (hip plates), are short, being worn over a long skirt of mail; to the lowermost of these taces are attached the fluted *tuilles* (extra guards), of plates appended to the taces, the fastenings of which are plainly seen. *Cuisses* (thigh pieces), *genouillieres* (knee pieces), and *jambes* (leg pieces), protect the lower limbs, whilst the feet are encased in broad, round-toed *sabbatons*. A long sword hangs on his left side, and on the right is fastened a dagger. The figure is inclined to the left in order to face that of his wife, and the toes of the sabbatons point one way, thus placing the spurs, one between the feet, the other outside. The female figure has a plain pedimental head-dress, her costume with its tight sleeves and fur cuffs is cut at the neck in the shape of a capital W. Her waist is encircled by an embroidered belt, buckled loosely, with pendant chain. She has a ring on the fourth finger of the left hand, and three on the third of her right hand. The five sons below their father are attired in ordinary civilian's dress; the four girls after the fashion of their mother. The feet of all these figures are towards the east.

On the dexter side of the slab above the adult effigies is a shield bearing the White arms :—Arg. on a cross quarterly ermine and or, betw. four falcons, az. beaked of the 3rd a fret gu. betw. as many lozenges counterchanged gu. and or. The shield on the sinister side has White impaling Pound, viz. :—Quarterly, 1st, Arg. on a fesse gu. three mullets of the field, betw. two boar's heads coupéd sable in chief, and in base a cross formé fitchée of the last for Pound ; 2d. arg. three fleur-de-lis azure . . . . ; 3rd. arg. a chev. betw. three eagle's legs sable, Braye ; 4th arg. a saltire engrailed gules, Tiptoft ; The inscr. in raised chamfer reads :—

" ✕ HERE RESTYTH IN PEACE Y<sup>e</sup> BODYES OF JOHN WHITE, ESQUYER, FYRST OWNER || OF Y<sup>e</sup> PRIORY AND MANOR OF SUTHWIKKE AFT. Y<sup>e</sup> SURRENDER AND DEPTYNG OF Y<sup>e</sup> CHANONS FROM Y<sup>e</sup> SAME AND KATYNE, HYS WIFF, Y<sup>e</sup> ONLY DOUGHT OF WILLM POUND OF DRAYTON ESQER, AND MARY HYS WYFF ONE OF THE || DOUGHTERS AND HEYRES OF THOMAS HAYNOS, OF THYLE OF WIGHT ESQUYER THE || WHICHE KATYNE DECESSYD Y<sup>e</sup> LAST DAY OF OCTOBER A<sup>o</sup>Dni 1548 AND YE SAYD JOHN DECESSYD THE XIX DAY OF JULI A<sup>o</sup>Dni MCCCCCLXVII. WHOSE SOULES CRIST TAKE TO HYS MERCY. AMEN."

The termination of this inscription is perhaps unique. The altar-slab measuring 6-ft. 5¼-in. x 2-ft. 5½-in., was probably brought from "ye priory of Suthwike" and appropriated by White together with the brass then on it, for his own use. The following features tend to make this probable. White died 1567 and the workmanship of the brass is certainly of earlier date, *circa* 1520. The indent occupied by five boys would allow for six boys whereas it is occupied by five only, whilst the four girls are contracted into a space originally made for three ; also the inscription in the chamfer does not fit, having been cut for a smaller tomb.

John White, born at Havant, was not of the same family as Bishop John White, and his brother, of the same name, Lord Mayor of London. He entered Henry VIII's service and was "Esquire for his body." From the king he obtained (30 Henry VIII) the Priory of Southwick with a considerable part of its possessions. He is the first recorded (A.D. 1534), as filling the office of seneschal or steward to the town of Portsmouth, an office which was analagous to that of Recorder. His first wife was Catherine, daughter of

William Pounce of Drayton, and sister of Anthony Pounce recorded on the Farlington brass, by her he had with other issue a son Edward. He married 2nd Anne, daughter of Lewis Wyngfield, widow of the said Anthony Pounce, Esq., and by her had no issue, and 3rd Isabel, daughter of — Vachell, and widow of George Dabricourt, by whom also he had no issue. John White died 1567. Burke has misplaced the first and second wives, by putting Anne as first, and Catherine as second, but Catherine died 1548 and Anne 1557, as appears from the following inscription existing in 1798, on a brass plate in Southwick Church, but now unhappily lost: —(Hants Repos.-vol. 1. pp 104-5).

“OFF YOUR CHARITE PRAY FOR THE  
SOUL OF ANNE WHYTE, LATE THE WYFF OF  
JOHN WHYTE OF SOUTHWYKE ESQUYER  
SOMTYME THE WYFF OF ANTONY POUNDE  
OF DRAYTON ESQUYER, AND ONE OF THE  
DAUGHTERS OF LEWES WYNGFIELD ESQUYER  
WHICH ANNE DEPARTED THIS WORLD  
THE xij DAY OF NOVEMBER, AN DNI  
1557. ON WHOSE SOULE CRIST HAVE MERCY.”

---

HISTORICAL NOTES ON THE MANORS  
OF MERSTONE AND GREAT EAST  
STANDEN IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

---

By REV. R. G. DAVIS.

---

MERSTONE MANOR.

At a short distance from the town of Newport, and almost in the very centre of the Island, there starts in an easterly direction, a range of lofty downs which occupies one half of the longer axis of the Isle of Wight. From St. George's Down where they commence, passing Arreton, Mersley, Ashe, and Brading Downs, then bridging over the Brading valley, and continuing on to Bembridge and Culver Down, they measure an almost straight length of a little over eight miles. At their feet lies one of the most fertile valleys in the Island, protected almost entirely from the north and north-east winds, by the long range of down. At the present time, the district is noted for the large size of many of the fields, some of which approach, if they do not exceed eighty acres in extent. Through the midst of the valley flows the western Yar, and abundance of water is obtained from wells attached to every farm and nearly every cottage. From the summit of the Downs, the traveller sees in the spring, the beautiful rich brown earth, in the summer extensive fields of wheat, and in the early nights of autumn, the lights of the farm houses, and of the cottages in the villages can be most plainly discerned, whilst at the sea end of the valley, the two towns of Sandown and Shanklin are conspicuous by the rows of lights in their streets. In the very bottom of the valley, not far from its western end lies the hamlet of Merstone,

and near to a Manor House where, in centuries gone by, have dwelt Saxon, Norman and English owners, traces of whose occupations still remain.

Domesday Book, in the entry referring to Merstone, tells us that in the time of Edward the Confessor, the manor was held by Bricuin, and that he held it allodially of King Edward. Bricuin was apparently a man in high position. The manor had probably come down to him from his ancestors, and he owed suit and service to no superior, save only to his lord the King. The entry is as follows: "William Fitz-Stur holds Merestone and Hunfrid under him. Bricuin held it allodially of King Edward. Then and now it was assessed at half a hide. There is one carucate in demesne with one villein. Was and is worth 10s." There is no mention of a church as Merstone lies within the parish of Arreton, and at no great distance from its church. The Manor is only taxed at half a hide, and the largest meaning given to a hide<sup>1</sup> would appear to make the manor consist of only from 60 to 80 acres, an extent of manorial holding, quite inconsistent with the idea of Bricuin being a powerful and wealthy man. It is at this distance of time most difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain what were the boundaries of the old manor, but, guided by its more recent dimensions, the manor must have contained when held by Bricuin at least 300 acres. That he was only taxed for 60 or 80 acres is an indication of the powerful position held by Bricuin, whether acquired either by himself or by his ancestors. William the Conqueror when he bestowed the manor on his powerful subject William Fitz-Stur, did not increase the amount of tax to be paid, "it was, and is worth 10s.," as we have seen from Domesday.

As there is good reason to assume the high position and wealth of Bricuin, we may fairly conclude that he had a house here at Merstone, and that in this immediate neighbourhood there stood, nearly two thousand years ago, the original of the present manor house, but whether on its actual site we cannot now determine. William Fitz-Stur received

<sup>1</sup> The virgate and hide were probably actual holdings before they were adopted as land measures. The normal hide appears to have consisted of 129 acres or 4 virgates. *Seebohm's English Village Community* p. 39.

from the Conqueror twenty manors in the Isle of Wight, of which at least four were held under him by Saxon tenants. Merstone was held by Hunfrid, and the presence of this sub-tenant again indicates that there was a house in the time of the Conqueror.

Merstone, or as it was called in Domesday, Merestone, was only a small manor, and has not left any mark in the history of the Isle of Wight. It appears to have remained from the time of the partition after the Conquest (1066) till past the middle of the reign of Edward 1st (1283), in the possession of William Fitz-Stur and his descendants. Among the liberties claimed by Isabella de Fortibus, Lady of the Isle of Wight, in the 8th year of Edward I. (1280), it is stated that Domina de Whitfield, the Lady of Whitfield, holds from Matilda de Estur six holdings in the Isle of Wight, and amongst them Merstone. The family of Fitz-Stur had gradually dropped the Fitz out of their name, and adopted the name de Estur. Lady Matilda was the heiress of the property of the de Esturs, which she carried by marriage into the family of Lisle or de Insula. The Domina de Whitfield, who held the manor of Merstone as tenant of Lady Matilda de Estur, was according to Mr. Stone,<sup>1</sup> the consort of Edward I., Merstone, however, cannot put forward any claim that it was a residence of a queen of England.

In an Inquisition taken in the 7th year of Edward III. (1334) occurs an entry that Robert Giros, now Geoffrey de Insula, *Robertus Girus nunc Galfridus de Insula, tenet quartam partem feodi in Mirston*, held a fourth part of a fee at Merstone. Since we cannot find any clue to this Robert de Giros, we can only surmise that he came to the Island, and for some reason held land at Merstone, which afterwards came into the possession of Geoffrey de Insula.

How long Merstone remained in the family of de Insula, has not so far been ascertained, but after a time it passed with an heiress into the family of Cheke. Sir John Oglander tells us that the original name of this family was "Chekehill because they lived at Whippinghame on ye hill." About 1374 they obtained possession of Mottestone, not far from Brook in the West Medine, and eventually also became owners of

<sup>1</sup> Architectural Antiquities of the Isle of Wight. Part ii. p. 129.

Merstone, which in the latter half of the 16th century was held by Edward Cheke, who married three times. His first wife was a daughter of a Mr. Thomas Dennys, and his third, Ann, of the family of Percivall, of Somersetshire. He had no children by either of these wives, and thus they have no further connection with the history of Merstone. His second wife was Elinor, the daughter of Sir William Oglander, of Nunwell, and aunt of Sir John Oglander, the author of the Memoirs. This marriage must have taken place between 1550 and 1600. Edward Cheke and his wife were the builders of the manor house that now stands at Merstone. Sir John Oglander calls it "the new house" and so implies the existence of an old one.

#### THE MANOR OF GREAT EAST STANDEN.

At the foot of the southern declivity of Osborne Hill, the road that leads from Newport to Ryde crosses a small stream, known as Palmer's Brook. Just before the bridge is reached another road turns off at right angles, and running in a southerly direction gradually rises for a distance of three miles, till it reaches the top of the Downs, where the line of demarcation lies between St. George's Down and Arreton. To this point, which bears the name of Downend, several roads converge. One of them runs along the northern slope of St. George's Down, and gradually falling it at last reaches the valley of the Blackwater near Shide Station. Shortly after leaving Downend it passes near the pleasant farm house which bears the name of Little East Standen. Further on a lane turning to the left leads to Great East Standen. High up on the hill side is a small plain, on which stand the present farm buildings. East, South, and West run the chalk hills. The fields, even after centuries of cultivation, are little more than chalk, but the little plain is a pleasant green spot with its kitchen and flower gardens, orchard, and, in the midst of a grassy swamp, a little pond. The farm buildings, much neglected, are built of brick and chalk, and the local green sand stone, and present but little interest to the casual spectator. In one portion of the building is a chimney of very wide dimensions,

and under another portion are cellars that have been closed for many years. But where the farm house now stands there stood in the fifteenth century a house in which took place the closing scene of an interesting historical romance.

The Manor of Standen, at the time of the Conqueror's survey, was held by William Fitz-Azor. In 1279 it was held by Thomas d'Evercy, one of whose descendents added to the Manor a private chapel, and endowed it with the tithes of his lands in Standen, La Wode and Bembridge. John Glamorgan in 1346 married Anne, the daughter and heiress of d'Evercy. From him the manor passed into the possession of a branch of the ancient family of Urry, who appear to have held it for some generations.

Edward IV, who came to the throne 1461, by his wife Elizabeth Woodville, had two sons and six daughters. The third daughter, named Cecilia, was born towards the end of the year 1469. Of the exact day of her birth no record is left, but her father in October, 1474, speaks of her as being 4 years of age. In 1470 a rebellion of the Lancastrians broke out and Queen Elizabeth Woodville carrying with her her little baby girl only a few months old, was forced to fly for sanctuary to the Abbey of Westminster, and there she remained until the rebellion was crushed. At the early age of four years, Cecilia was betrothed to James, the son of James III. of Scotland, when the boy was but two years of age. From this time Cecilia was styled the Princess of Scots.

In 1481, when she had reached her twelfth year, James III. of Scotland changed his mind on the subject of the marriage, declared war against Edward IV., and invaded England. Alexander, Duke of Albany, whom through jealousy James had thrown into prison, escaped into England, and proposed to Edward to assist him to dethrone James of Scotland. To this Edward agreed, one of the conditions being that the Duke of Albany should marry Cecilia. This arrangement, however, fell through, and on Edward and James making peace, Cecilia was again engaged to young Prince James. No long time elapsed before this agreement also came to an end, and once more Cecilia was pledged to the Duke of Albany. Four times over had this poor little

princess been bandied about between these two men, when death stepped in, and within a few months of each other (A.D. 1483) the Duke of Albany and Edward IV. of England both died.

On the death of King Edward, his Queen Elizabeth Woodville, and her daughters were, owing to the threatened usurpation of the Duke of Gloucester, obliged again to take sanctuary in the monastery at Westminster. The two years 1484 and 1485 saw the deaths of Edward V. and Richard III., and the accession of Henry VII., who chose as his queen Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of Edward IV. and Elizabeth Woodville. His eldest son, Prince Arthur, was born in 1487, and Cecilia, who had now reached eighteen years of age, carried her little nephew, the infant prince, to the baptismal font. She was attended by the Marquis of Dorset and the Earl of Lincoln, her train being borne by the Marchioness of Dorset. Cecilia is spoken of at this time as having inherited an extraordinary share of the ancestral beauty of her race. In the following year Cecilia married John, Lord Wells, heir to the titles and estate of the ancient family of Wells. She was present at the Court, at the Christmas festivities, in 1487, but immediately afterwards, with her husband, retired into private life. During this retired life two daughters were born to her, Elizabeth and Ann. In the Cottonian MSS. are two autographs of Cecilia, apparently pages torn from some books belonging to her. They read as follows:—"Thes boke ys myn Cecyl Wellas suster to ye Queen grace," and the other, "Thys booke is myn Cecyl Wellas suster to ye Queen."

In 1492 Queen Elizabeth Woodville, Cecilia's mother, died. Five years more were passed by Cecilia Lady Wells, in her house with her children, and now ten years after the year of her marriage, her misfortunes again commenced. Her eldest daughter Elizabeth was taken from her by death, and on the 4th of February, 1498, she lost her husband, Lord Wells, who died in St. Swithuns' Lane, London, and was buried in the Lady Chapel of Westminster Abbey. His death was shortly followed by that of her second daughter, Ann. Thus in a short twelve months husband and children were gone.

Between the two sisters, Elizabeth, the wife of Henry VII, and Cecilia, there existed a great and most charming affection, and the young widow of only twenty-nine, deprived of husband and children, returned to the court of her sister. She took a prominent part in the pageantry at the espousals of Arthur, Prince of Wales, and Catherine, of Arragon. In 1503 her sister Elizabeth the Queen, died, and in the same year a few months after her sister's death, Cecilia, now in her 34th year, was married again to a private gentleman, named Sir Thomas Kyme. This marriage was evidently displeasing to her brother-in-law, the King, and this may account for the fewness of the records that have been preserved respecting it. Sir Thomas Kyme is supposed to have been a member of the Lincolnshire family of Kyme. Immediately after the marriage Cecilia and her husband retired from the court, left London, and came to the Isle of Wight, where they took up their abode at Great East Standen. In 1346 the manor was possessed by one of the branches of the family of Urry, and now one hundred and fifty years after it had become the property of Sir Thomas Kyme. The only mention to be found of the manor, during this period, is in Cardinal Beaufort's valuation of ecclesiastical property in which the chaplaincy is rated at four marks and forty pence.

After thirty-four years passed amidst the dangers and pleasures of the Courts of four English Sovereigns, a residence at Standen must have come as a very sudden and remarkable change to Cecilia Lady Kyme. In the midst of its great quietude there were many features that would help to make her life agreeable. Within an easy ride was the great abbey of Quarr, then in all its glory. The Parish Church of Arreton stood on the property of the monks, who had just completed a thorough work of restoration and adornment. Around her were living the Oglanders at Nunwell; the Chekes at Merstone; Gilbert had succeeded, by marrying the heiress, to Knighton; at Osborne was the family of Bowerman, one of whose members had entertained her sister's husband at Brooke, when in 1499 Henry VII. had visited the Isle of Wight. So in peace and quiet Cecilia settled down at Great East Standen. In due time

was born to her a son, Richard, followed by a daughter, Margaret. Most of the years of Cecilia's life had been full of trouble, and brief indeed was her time of quiet happiness, only four years had she lived at Standen, when she died in her 38th year, on the 24th of August, 1507. Her funeral obsequies were celebrated in the church of the abbey of Quarr; there she was buried, and there a splendid monument was erected by her husband over her grave.

Of this strange history, the strangest part, perhaps, yet remains. Nothing, not even a record, is left of Cecilia after her death. Her husband and her children have passed away, nothing is known of them. Quarr abbey shared the fate of all the abbeys of the land, and 300 years ago the stones of Cecilia's tomb were carted away to become building material. Of her home in the Island nothing now remains, unless perhaps a few of its stones form part of the present farm-house, where a tradition survives which points out the present orchard as being the site on which stood the old chapel.<sup>1</sup>

In the walls of the house are to be found two varieties of building material. The lower portion of the wall is built of a local stone found in the greensand. The upper portion of the west, or principal, front is composed of bricks that by their size indicate that they were made prior to the Order in Council of Charles I. in 1625, which fixed the size of bricks at 10 inches long, by  $4\frac{3}{4}$  inches wide, and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick. The bricks of which this house is built are 9 inches long, by  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide, and  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches thick. The eastern front is built of bricks and stones in a promiscuous manner, the old grey stones, and probably other material, forming part of the old house that was here before Edward Cheke built the new one. Whilst brick and stone thus form the exterior portion of the walls, which are from 24 to 36 inches in thickness, the interior is mainly, if not altogether, composed of blocks of chalk.<sup>1</sup> The entrance door, apparently the original one, is a good specimen of the workmanship of the period, and still has its old hinges and the original drop-handle of iron. The hall was a room

<sup>1</sup> Worsley says the foundations of this chapel were visible in his time in the orchard behind the house. Hist. I. Wight, p. 222.

measuring 45 feet in length by 20 in breadth, but is now cut up by two partition walls. Most noticeable in the hall is the rich, flat-arched fireplace, six feet wide. In the kitchen, in its original place, is the large copper used formerly for the brewing of beer. The opening in the floor and wall through which passed a tube or shoot for leading the beer to the barrels in the cellar is still to be seen. In this cellar are two beams of oak, stop-chamfered, and supporting the floor above.<sup>1</sup> The details indicate that the work was very carefully done, and the ornamentation would suggest that the beams belonged to the older house that previously stood here. The staircase has a broad roomy stairway, and, though not elaborate in detail, the ornamentation of the balusters and handrail is characteristic of the Jacobean period. In the rooms on the first floor are three carved oak mantel-pieces. One of these is ornamented with the Tudor rose; the other two appear to be of later date, as they are examples of the meaningless ornamentation in vogue in the time of the Stuarts. In two of the rooms there still remains a large amount of oak panelling. Above this floor are extensive garrets, extending over the entire house. The original mullioned windows that still exist in the roof indicate that at one time it was divided into several rooms. It is at the present time, and has for many years past, been occupied by a colony of owls. The roof, now covered with slates, was, up to about sixty years ago, a most splendid specimen of thatch work.<sup>2</sup>

Edward Cheke, the builder of the house, according to Sir John Oglander, had three sons and a daughter. The daughter Francis died at a school near Salisbury. Of the sons, John died in the wars in the Low Country; Henry died in the "Isle of Rez;" and Edward, the second son, "maryed Grace, ye daughter of William Broade, a shop-keper of Newporte."

The Manor of Merstone remained with the descendants of Edward and Elinor Cheke till the time of Charles II. It

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Oglander records of the timber used in building the house:—"Sir John Oglander gave him moste of ye timber yt buylt itt."

<sup>2</sup> Views and elevations of the house, with details of the panel work, staircase, chimney pieces, &c., are given in Mr. Percy Stone's work.

was then purchased by Eustace Mann, the owner of Osborne. His granddaughter, Elizabeth Mann, carried by her marriage Merstone, as well as Osborne, into the family of Bláchford. During the last 150 years the property has passed to different owners. Early in this year (1894) it has again changed hands, and the present owner proposes to effect considerable alterations in this old manor house. It is hoped that the restoration will be carried out with all the reverence to which the building has a claim from its architectural interest, and ancient associations.

---