



NONSUCH EXTRA

THE MONUMENTAL BRASSES AT ST MARY THE VIRGIN, EWELL PARISH CHURCH

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When St Mary's has been open on Heritage Days in the Borough of Epsom and Ewell, many of the visitors to the church have shown a special interest in the collection of sixteenth century brasses. They consist of three with complete figures (effigies), one fragment (a heraldic shield) and two strips with inscriptions only; and they are mounted on the walls in the south-west corner of the church. This collection is one of St Mary's treasures, and was transferred from the former church, of which only the fifteenth century tower remains in the south-eastern end of the churchyard, to the present one when it was built in 1847-48. They are described in great detail in *A List of Monumental Brasses in Surrey* by Mill Stephenson. In compiling this list, the author provides a copy of the inscription below the brass and, for some, biographical details of those commemorated; and descriptions of their attire. According to St Mary's monthly magazine for June 1913, Mill Stephenson, 'the greatest living authority in the country on medieval brasses', visited St Mary's to record the collection. In his book, he notes that, when they were transferred from the former to the present church, four of the brasses were placed on the floor of the chancel but were 'again removed' and 'let into the walls of the south aisle at the western end' and that 'in 1912', two others 'were also let into the walls of the aisle'.

The painstaking descriptions and comments which Mill Stephenson gives are well worth reading - all fifteen pages of them - so it is not proposed to repeat them here, although a copy of his book may be difficult to obtain. The following table, therefore, sets out in chronological order the names of those to whom each brass relates, and its main features. In the inscriptions in English, the original spelling has been retained as well as the sometimes irregular use of upper and lower-case letters. Extensions to complete abbreviated words are shown in square brackets. In round brackets are given present day spellings of words that might not, otherwise, be easy to recognize. The two inscriptions in Latin, sometimes abbreviated, have also been copied with, to complete the words, the addition of extensions shown in square brackets. It is, perhaps, disappointing that Mill Stephenson did not attempt to translate the Latin. It may be that he thought that anyone likely to read his book would be proficient in Latin. He certainly would not have had the benefit of the research and publication of, for example, *Brasses* by Julian Franklyn, and *Latin for Local History* by Eileen Gooder.

The dates of the brasses span the sixteenth century, being:

1500	Tabard
1510	Dows
1519	Iwarby
1521	Treghestin
1559	Bray
1577	Taylare/Horde

They are not mounted on the walls in date order but as follows, walking in a clockwise direction:

South-west corner	1519	Iwarby
	1521	Treghestin
West wall	1510	Dows
	1500	Tabard
	1559	Bray
West wall corner	1577	Taylare/Horde

The general effect of this arrangement is well-balanced, but mounting on walls is hardly convenient for brass-rubbers.

Details of the six brasses are set out below. Nos.1-5 lend themselves to a tabular presentation but No.6, the Taylare/Horde memorial, contains a number of figures and is, perhaps, best dealt with in descriptive prose.

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Date of death</i>	<i>Features</i>	<i>Inscription</i>
1.	Lady Jane Iwarby	8 May 1519	a) A kneeling effigy 39cm high b) Two coats of Arms 12cm x 10.5cm c) Black letter inscription	Pray for me Lady Jane Iwarby sūtyme (sometime) wife of S' (Sir) John Iwarby of Ewell knyght daught'[er] of John Agmondesh [a]m sūtyme of ledered (Leatherhead) in surrey sq'[u]er which Jane dyed the viii day of Maii in y ^e yere of oure lord M ^l V ^o xix of home ihū (Jesus) have m'[er]ci
2.	Margery Treghstin	23 October 1521	a) Full length effigy 47cm high b) Black letter inscription in Latin on a plate measuring 48cm x 10cm	Hic iacet margeria Treghstin nup[er]consors Joh[ann]is Treghstin qui quidem margeria obiit xxiii die octobris A ^o d[omi]ni M ^o V ^o XXI ^o cui[us]a[n]i[ma]e [per] picietur de' [i] amen
3.	Edmond Dows	14 May 1510	Four line black letter inscription on a brass tablet measuring 59cm x 13cm	Of your charite pray for the soule of Edmond Dows gentilma[n] oon of the Clerk'[s] of the signett with king harry the vii whiche decessed the xiiii day of may the yere of our lord god M ^l CCCCC and x on whose soule Ihu (Jesus) have mercy A M E N
4.	John and Joan Tabard	Undated but thought to be c.1500	a) Strip only measuring 45.5cm x 2.5cm b) Black letter in Latin	Hic iacet Joh[ann]es Tabard Et Johanne ux'[or] ei' [us] q[u]or'[um] a[n]i[m]ab[us] [per] piciet'[ur] de'[us] ame[n]

Suggested translation: Here lies Margery Treghstin, former consort of John Treghstin, which Margery died on the 23rd day of October in the year of the Lord 1521, to whose soul may God be merciful.

In *Brasses*, Julian Franklyn translates 'anima perpicietur dei' as 'may whose soul reach atonement with God' but the foregoing translation seems closer to the text and more natural.

Suggested translation: Here lies John Tabard and Joan his wife to whose souls may God be merciful.

*Lady Jane Iwarby
(1519)*



*Traditional 16th century brass
with kneeling figure and
inscription in Latin*



*Traditional 16th century brass with central
standing figure of Lady Dorothe Taylare.
On either side are groups of her five sons and
five daughters by her first husband,
Allen Horde (1577)*



*Detail of Lady Dorothe's daughters.
(1577)*

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Features</i>	<i>Inscription</i>
5.	Richard and Joan Bray	Shield with Coat of Arms: Bray impaling Saunders, measuring 13cm x 12cm	None, but see below.

The following statement appears on a brass strip under the shield:

THE LAST REMNANT OF THE BRASS TO RICHARD BRAY WHO DIED XXIV AUGUST 1559 AND
HIS WIFE JOAN DAUGHTER OF NICHOLAS SAUNDERS OF EWELL.
REMOVED FROM THE OLD TOWER IN 1913.

6. Taylare/Horde: 1577

This is the most complicated of the brasses. It commemorates Dorothe Taylare (Dorothy Taylor) and her second son, Edmond Horde, by her first husband, Allen Horde. There are full-length effigies of Dorothy, of Edmond and his wife; and, on engraved plates, are groups of small figures of Dorothy's other nine children, with their names: Thomas, Alyn, William, John, Kethern (Katherine), Elyzabeth, Mary, Dorothe and Ursula. On similar plates are engraved the figures of Edmond's six children, with their names: Arthur, Alyn and Edmond; Dorothy, Elyzabeth and Anne. (A small 'h', presumably for 'Horde' follows each of their names). Dorothy Taylor's effigy is 48cm in height, Edmond's measures 45cm and that of his wife 44cm. Above them are two shields measuring 16x10.5cm with the Coat of Arms of Thomas Roberd' (Roberts) of Willesden, Middlesex, Dorothy's father. Underneath the figures is the following inscription and, below that, a shield with the Coat of Arms of Horde. The black letter inscription, copied with all the variations in spelling, and with abbreviations, reads:-

Here lyeth the lady dorothe Taylare widow, and Edmond Horde her seconde Sonne the which
Edmonde decessed the 29 day of october A^o (anno) 1575 and shee being y^e dawghter of Thomas
Roberd of Wylesdon in mydellsex Esquyre, late the wyffe of Syr Lawrence Taylare of doddington in
ye Countye of Huntingdon Knyght (e)t (and) before wyffe unto Allen Horde of y^e myddle Temple
Esquire (e)t bencher ther y^e yeres of her age was lxx (e)t decessed y^e xith of Maye A^o 1577

Mill Stephenson refers to 'Lady' Dorothy Taylor but the word 'lady' in the first line of the inscription has a small (lower case) 'l' when compared with the capital (upper case) 'L' in 'Lawrence'. It may be that the engraver did not know that Dorothy, as the wife of a knight, would not have used her Christian name in her title (if present convention was followed) but would have been addressed as 'Lady Taylor'. Comparing this inscription with that for Jane Iwarby, she, too, was the wife of a knight, but the engraver of her brass gave her a capital 'L' for 'Lady Jane Iwarby', so perhaps the present convention was not in force in the fifteenth century. These variations, and reflections on them, make the reading of inscriptions challenging.

Mill Stephenson discussed whether the Taylare/Horde brass can be defined as a palimpsest - as, for example a retroscript when a brass engraved for one person is turned over and re-engraved for another person (c.f. Franklyn op.cit.) He was shown a brass rubbing taken from the reverse of the Taylare/Horde brass before it was mounted on the church wall. He records, with illustrations, that, in addition to fragmentary designs, there is an incipition in Flemish commemorating Pieter Snouc, bailiff of Vinderhoute and his wife Jacquemyne, as follows :-

Hier licht begrauen Pieter Snouc In zunen leuene baillue van vinderhoute die ouerleet des weereit de
(date left blank)
Ende Joncv' Jacquemyne van steelant f^a mees Jacops zyn huusr' die ouerleet des weereit den xviiiien
in april naer paesschen anno M Vc en liiii Bidt godt ouer huerlien zielen

The engraver does not appear to have known the Flemish for 'daughter', so has used the Latin word for 'daughter' - namely, 'filia', abbreviated to 'f^a'

Translation (as printed by Mill Stephenson):-

Here lies buried Pieter Snouc, in his lifetime bailiff of Vinderhoute who left this world (date left blank - to be filled in after Pieter's death), and the young lady Jaquemyne van Steelant, daughter of Master Jacops, his wife who left this world on the 17 April after Easter in the year 1554. Pray God have mercy on their souls.

Mill Stephenson's conclusion, which seems to be entirely acceptable, is that the Taylare/Horde brass is only partly palimpsest. Perhaps the inscription on one side of the brass had been engraved when the 'young lady Jaquemyne' died but was not used for Pieter when he died; and was then acquired for Dorothy Taylare's memorial in the old St. Mary's in the days when brass tablets of this kind were costly.

Before leaving the sixteenth century brasses, it is worth studying the complete figures for Iwarby, Treghtin and Taylare for the evidence which they give about the history of costume. Mill Stephenson describes garments and styles carefully but does not refer to fabrics nor attitudes to fashion in a period which was noted for elaborate fabrics and extravagant and exotic costumes, including headdresses and caps. As to Jane Iwarby's headdress, 'gable', as used by Iris Brooke in *English Costume in the Age of Elizabeth* seems to sound more elegant than Mill Stephenson's and J.Lewis André's 'kennel'.

Leaving the sixteenth century, it is worth looking at other brass monuments in St. Mary's which has a fine collection of wall tablets, and it seems appropriate to include them in this survey of monumental brasses. None of them display effigies as in the earlier brasses. Perhaps, at one time, only people of high social standing were given a brass memorial whereas, by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, local gentry such as the Glyns of Ewell, who eventually became titled, and worthy citizens were being commemorated in this way. Examples are the brass plates for Elizabeth Deavin, schoolmistress; and the Parish Clerk, George Scowen.

Not only people but important events in the life of the Church have been accorded a memorial. The laying of the first stone of the present building and its consecration are recorded on lettered brass panels, surmounted by a heading on a brass strip across the mantelpiece over the open fireplace in the Sacristy:-

I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall judge the Quick and the Dead at his appearing and his kingdom, Preach the Word

Lefthand panel

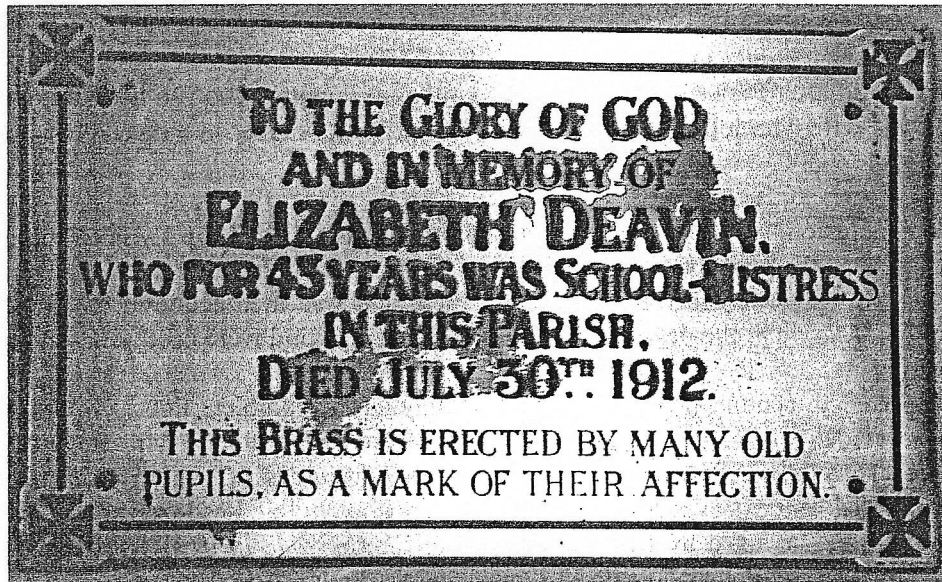
The first stone of
this church was laid
June 26th 1847
Other foundation can no
man lay than that is laid
which is Jesus Christ
I Cor III XI

Righthand panel

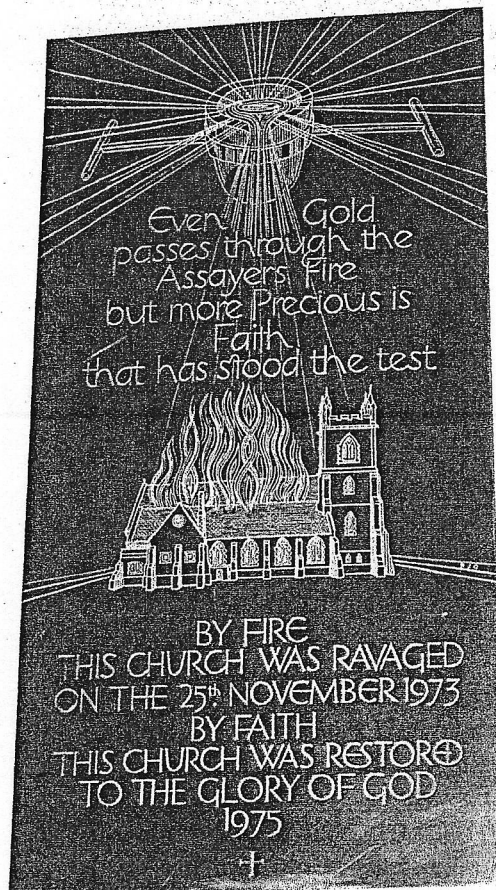
This church
was consecrated
August 24th 1848
I will fill this house
with Glory
saith the Lord of Hosts
Haggai II VII

More recently, the fire of 1973 and the restoration of the damaged parts of St. Mary's remind all who visit the church of this event by a brass tablet with wording which makes a striking ending to this survey:

Even gold passes through the Assayer's fire
but more precious is faith that has stood
the test. By fire this church was ravaged
on 25 November 1973, by Faith this church
was restored to the Glory of God, 1975.



Early 20th century brass wall tablet commemorating Elizabeth Deavin, a local schoolmistress.



Brass wall tablet in memory of the restoration of St Mary's after the fire of 25 November 1973 when part of the north aisle including the valuable Father Willis organ was destroyed.

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