

## CHURCH PLATE, SHELLAND.

An account of the return to this parish of its early Cup and Paten seems fit to be chronicled in our Proceedings. Its disappearance is easily accounted for. The Ray family—owners of a large property in Shelland and its neighbourhood—with a seat at Plashwood—were represented in 1770 by a Richard and his wife Elizabeth who were married in that year. Their first and only child, a daughter, arrived in 1777 and to commemorate her birth the Communion Set now in use was probably presented to the Church. This fine set, on account of its armorial bearings, etc., was on view at the recent Church Congress. The original set evidently found a resting place in the donor's house and when the daughter eventually married into the Tyrell family of Gipping, she took as heiress all the property and belongings at her father's death. The Tyrells seem then to have moved from Gipping, pulling the old hall down, some 70 years ago and migrated to Plashwood. As to the Plate in question, the paten has no marks beyond the sexfoil stamp, which generally denotes Elizabethan origin. Sometimes this mark, I believe, was placed on plate which had been altered and diminished in size. The mark is of great importance, because the date letter on the cup, G (Roman) is rather rubbed and might be either 1588 or 1722. A well known dealer tells me that he is sure that it is the former!

Though an account of the plate appeared recently in the Miscellany Column of the E.A.D. Times it will be as well to briefly describe the set. The cup is 4-in. in height, diameter of bowl  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -in. at the top where it is rimmed. It has a baluster stem and weighs 3-oz. 16-dwts., as scratched on under the stem. There is an engraved inscription in "script" hand, "Church of Shelland, Suffolk. (This is repeated on the paten). The marks are as follows: The maker's IS in an oblong rectangle, the leopard's head crowned, the lion passant and the date letter G. The paten or cover is  $4\frac{1}{2}$ -in. in diameter, with the weight scratched underneath 1-oz. 13-dwts., and there is a small hole or dot in the centre. It is rather interesting to note that the Tyrell family gave Church Plate to several churches, amongst them, S. Nicholas, Thelnetham, in 1744; Gipping, 1736; Harleston, Shelland's neighbour, according to "Suffolk Church Plate" also possesses a cup with baluster stem dated 1754.

Buxhall Rectory will be the home of the Shelland Plate for a time, in order that its production for inspection may be the easier.

Mr. H. C. Casley, our authority in Suffolk on Church Plate, says—"the paten is plain, no foot and does not fit cup as a cover perhaps 16th cent. Maker's Mark probably a sexfoil (as at Hinderclay, Charsfield, Sibton, etc.)"

Referring to the punch on the Cup, he adds—"it is imperfect and may have been surmounted with a crown, but " Jackson " states it (the I.S. punch) is to be seen in a plain oblong punch on a paten of 1722-3 at Sollers Hope, Herefordshire (vide p. 181), and of the Roman G—"the outline of the date punch is slightly rounded instead of coming to an acute point, which is frequently found with this letter."

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