

ROYAL ARMS IN SUFFOLK CHURCHES

by DIARMAID MACCULLOCH

These notes are intended to form a supplement to the list of sets of Royal Arms in Suffolk parish churches given in the late H. Munro Cautley's book *Royal Arms and Commandments in our Churches* (1934). I have first listed additions to Cautley's list and have then made a number of amendments and corrections to it; for the sake of completeness I have included three sets, at Timworth, Whepstead and Stowupland, which Cautley himself mentioned in his later book *Suffolk Churches and their Treasures* (1937). The total number of existing sets in the County would thus seem to be 210 against Cautley's original figure of 196, when the loss of the set at Dunwich is taken into account. I would be glad, however, to hear of further examples.

ADDITIONS

Aldeburgh

Charles II, painted on boards, hanging at the east end of the nave. Removed from the church at the restoration last century and kept until recently at the Town Hall. In the Churchwardens' Accounts for 1660 there is a reference to the purchase of the set for £6.

Bury St. Edmunds St. Mary

Carved and painted, post-1837 and probably Victorian. Hanging at the west end of the nave.

Coddenham

A very dilapidated set of George II Arms remained here at least until 1954, when it was proposed to restore it.¹ The present Rector, however, knows nothing of its whereabouts.

Exning

Besides the George II Arms here, there is a large George III set dated 1807, painted on canvas and now at the west end of the south aisle. This was brought from elsewhere between 1930 and 1935 in part-payment for a chair sold by the church.²

Hitcham

A fine set of carved and painted George VI Arms dated 1937, over the south door.

¹ Information: Mr. L. Dow, F.S.A.

² Information: the Ven. The Archdeacon of Suffolk (The Rev. C. S. Scott).

Kirton

An attractive little painted panel of Elizabeth II Arms, hanging in the south doorway recess. Installed in the 1950's. 'The artist was a Mr. Stephenson, late of Falkenham Old Rectory'.³

Pakefield

Besides the Charles II Arms, which survived the fire in the last war, there is a roundel of glass in the west window of the north nave depicting the Hanoverian Arms as after 1801.

Raydon

A very dilapidated set of Hanoverian Arms, formerly identifiable as George II and dated 1757,⁴ hanging at the west end of the nave.

Stoke Ash

Hanoverian Arms painted on canvas, on the north nave wall. Now inscribed 'W IIII R' and dated 1836, but the quarterings are those of the Royal Arms before the removal of the French lilies in 1801.

Stowupland

Post-1816 Hanoverian Arms, modelled in cast-iron and coloured, on the west gallery. Cautley⁵ says that these are George IV but there is no visible indication of this. The church was only built in 1843, and these Arms were probably brought from Stowmarket parish church sometime after that date.

Sudbourne

Collected with fragments of mediaeval glass in a small window at the south-east of the nave are four rectangular panes of stained glass which form part of a set of Royal Arms, probably early 17th century. These show part of a supporter, ermine mantling and the letters '—E—ET' from the motto 'DIEU ET MON DROIT'. As far as I know, there are no other such sets in Suffolk, although there are two in the north nave aisle windows at Norwich Cathedral.

The George III Arms formerly in the north porch were restored in 1971 and now hang inside over the north door.⁶

Thorndon

A painted panel of George IV Arms dated 1822 now hangs in the recess of the north doorway.

³ Information: the late Rev. P. R. Westall.

⁴ *E. Anglian Notes and Queries*, 1907-8, p. 231.

⁵ *Suffolk Churches*, p. 320.

⁶ Information: Mr. A. C. J. Turner, Churchwarden.

Timworth

In the north chapel is a large set of William III Arms painted on boards.

Wissett

The Royal Arms hang over the north door, are dated 1813 and signed 'T. Rounce Halesworth'.

Whepstead

A former Churchwarden assures me that the George III arms mentioned by Cautley⁷ are now in the vestry, although I have never seen them.

Wrentham

Painted on the tympanum at the junction of the nave and chancel facing down into the nave is a fine display of William IV Arms, dated 1832 and flanked by paintings of Union Jacks and white roses.

AMENDMENTS AND CORRECTIONS

Barnby

The George IV Arms are dated 1825 and signed 'HALL PINXt'. Presumably this is the artist of the similar sets at Great Hockham (Norfolk) and Nettlestead.

Barningham

This is a pre-1801 Hanoverian set, only initialled for Victoria. Now in very poor condition. The design is very similar to that of the George III set at Walsham-le-Willows.

Blundeston

The Charles II Arms are apparently painted over a hatchment of the Soame family. Is this a unique reuse?

Boulge

The William III Arms were stolen in early June 1971.

Depden

The inscription on the William IV Arms should read 'MARTIN JOHN LLOYD M.A. RECTOR'.⁸

Dunwich

The Hanoverian Arms described by Cautley as being 'in glass in the West Window' were destroyed by enemy action during the 1939-45 War.⁹ As the church of St. James was only built c. 1830, the set was presumably for William IV.

⁷ *Suffolk Churches*, p. 198.

⁸ Cf. *Royal Arms*, p. 100.

⁹ Information: the Rev. J. A. Lovejoy.

Easton

The Arms that Cautley did not identify have been moved, and are a pre-1801 Hanoverian set carved in relief in wood.

Elmsett

The Arms of Anne on the north wall are hinged, and on the back is painted the Prince of Wales' plume of feathers within a sun in splendour. This is most unusual, although there are earlier examples at Ipswich St. Margaret and St. Stephen.¹⁰ It probably dates from the alteration of this set for George II in 1758.

Felsham

The Arms originally dated 1753 are now painted over with the date 1820 and 'G II R' altered rather ineffectively to 'G III R'.

Hessett

The Arms described by Cautley as 'housed with lumber in the Solar' have, during a recent restoration, been placed at the east end of the north aisle. When it was discovered that they were a Charles II set altered for Queen Anne, all traces of the alterations were rather injudiciously removed to reveal the earlier work.

Ickworth

The embroidered Arms have been removed from the church to Ickworth House for preservation treatment.¹¹

Kessingland

The Arms are inscribed 'W. Cartwright pinx. 1741'.

Livermere Parva

The George III Arms formerly here were auctioned after this church was closed and are now in private hands.¹²

Mendham

The Arms kept at the Rectory in 1934 have been returned to the church.

Mutford

This is a late Stuart set, Charles II or James II, although it is now dated 1831.

Palgrave

The Arms are for Victoria, not Anne, and are dated 1850.

¹⁰ See *Royal Arms*, p. 70.

¹¹ Information: the Rev. H. Price Jones.

¹² Information: Miss Joan Corder, F.S.A.

Rushbrooke

The celebrated set of Henry VIII Arms was not in the church in the early 19th century.¹³ It does seem older than the Victorian period, although certain parts look suspiciously like the work of Col. Rushbrooke, that amateur Victorian craftsman to whom the church interior owes its present appearance.

Saxham Magna

The Arms of Anne are inscribed 'DIEU ET MON DROIT' instead of the motto 'SEMPER EADEM' normal on sets of this reign. This is presumably accounted for by their early date—1702.

Stanton St. John

Following the closure of this church, the George III arms have been transferred to Stanton All Saints' church.

Wissington

The pre-1801 George III arms are inscribed 'Fear God and Honour the King' on the back, which faces into the gallery.

Wyverstone

Cautley was incorrect in dating the Hanoverian Arms after 1816—they are dated 1812.

¹³ Henry and Parker, *Suffolk Churches* (1855), describe the Arms as 'of modern introduction'. Davy's Church Notes, taken in 1840, do not mention the set.