

THE GAWSWORTH ARMORIALS

By The Reverend William Edgar Clarke, Rector of Gawsorth, Cheshire.

NO visitor to the fifteenth century church of St. James', Gawsorth, in the Diocese of Chester, can fail to be impressed by its singular beauty, and that of its surroundings, and it is not surprising that artists have drawn and painted it from every viewpoint. The architecture, which is principally perpendicular in style, speaks at once of a continuity through five centuries, and is brought to a focal point, directly one enters the church, by a pelmet of arms suspended from the top of the chancel screen.

The pelmet is of linen, some 29 feet 3 inches in length and 18 inches in depth, and on it are imposed eighteen shields embroidered with family coats. It was made and embroidered by the wife of the Reverend H. E. Polehampton, a former rector, and was set up early this century.

To the student of heraldry this pelmet is seen to be a combination of arms of patronage, arms of family and arms of alliance, for it contains the coats of the four Lords of the Manor of Gawsorth from early Norman times to the present day, and the arms of the famous Fitton family and its alliances. The arms of patronage are those of de Orreby, Fitton, Stanhope and Richards, and are the 8th, 10th, 17th and 18th upon the pelmet. The remaining fourteen shields are arms of alliance of the Fitton family; 1st Neville, 2nd Stafford de Suthwick, 3rd Badlesmere, 4th Baguley, 5th Welwick, 6th Harbottle, 7th Bechton, 9th Siddington, 11th de Warwicke, 12th Lilleburne, 13th Manboucher, 14th Legh, 15th Beauchamp and 16th Holcroft.

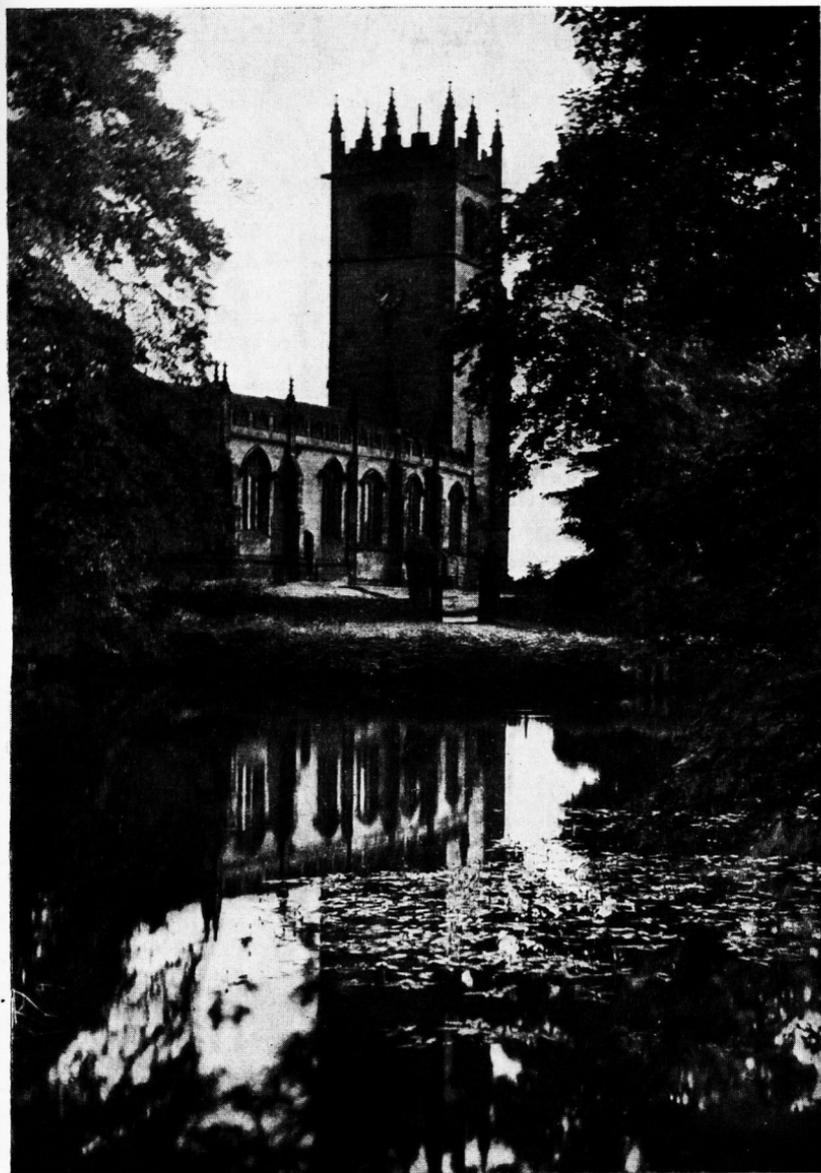
In the reign of King Stephen, Randle, Earl of Chester, granted to Hugh, son of Bigod, in fee for himself and his heirs, Gawsorth with its appurtenances. At the beginning of the thirteenth century Richard de Alford, whose family succeeded to Bigod's Cheshire estates, granted the manor of Gawsorth to Herbert de Orreby and the Lady Lucy his wife, for one knight's fee, and in the time of war to provide one man with a breastplate in defence of the castle of Aldford. The manor was so held, and had been the seat of the de Orreby family for several generations when Thomas de Orreby died in 1289. His heir, Richard, who was aged six at his father's death, died without issue, and the estate passed to his sister Isobel.

Isobel de Orreby married, first, Roger de Macclesfield, and, secondly Sir John de Grindon, by neither of whom was there issue. Her third husband was Thomas Fitton, the younger son of Sir Edmund Fitton, Knight, Lord of Bolyne, co Chester, and through this alliance the manor passed to the Fittons of Gawsworth, who added the Canton of the old de Orreby coat to their own coat to distinguish it from the other Fitton families. The Fittons were understandably proud of their alliance with the de Orrebys and sometimes used the de Orreby coat alone; this led to it being described as "the Fitton chevron coat", and their own as "the Fitton garb coat". There is ample evidence, however, in Glover's Visitation of Cheshire,¹ and elsewhere, that the chevron coat was borne by the de Orrebys, and the garb coat by the Fittons, differenced after the alliance of 1316 with the canton.

The Fitton family held the Lordship and advowson of Gawsworth until it passed in 1727 into the possession of William Stanhope, Esquire, who was created Baron Harrington of Harrington, co. Northampton, two years later, and Viscount Petersham and Earl of Harrington in 1742. From the Lords Harrington it passed in 1951, together with the advowson, to Raymond Richards, Esquire, the present Lord of the Manor.

In identifying these coats, the generous assistance received from Sir James Mann, M.A., B.Litt., F.B.A., Master of the Armouries and Surveyor of the Queen's Works of Art, and from Major R. P. Graham-Vivian, M.C., the Windsor Herald, is most gratefully acknowledged. Major Graham-Vivian was unable to visit Gawsworth, and in consequence has had only the trickings on which to base his researches; he observes, however, that "it is extremely difficult to be certain about these pre-visitation coats as they so frequently got transferred from family to family with only slight differences, and an intensive study of the family's alliances is about the only certain method." In spite of the difficulties, sixteen coats have been identified with certainty, although there are slight inaccuracies in the reproduction of the tinctures on three shields displayed on the pelmet of arms. These slight mistakes can readily be understood and forgiven for Mrs. Polehampton took as her pattern some of the many coats which adorn the Fitton memorials, and which form the subject of the second part of this paper. It is most regrettable that these important memorials, erected in the first half of the seventeenth century, had been allowed to fall into a sad state of disrepair and the tinctures of the many coats exhibited were dimmed and discoloured by centuries of dirt. In consequence, Mrs. Polehampton twice mis-read azure as sable, and also failed to copy the first line of tinctures on the old de Warwicke coat.

¹ Wherever GLOVER is quoted in this paper the edition is *The Harleian Society*, edited by John Paul Rylands, F.S.A., London, 1882.



ST. JAMES' CHURCH, GAWSWORTH, CHESHIRE.

There can be little doubt that the pelmet of arms, reading from left to right is as follows :—

1. NEVILLE. Gules, a saltire argent, an annulet sable pierced of the field.
2. STAFFORD DE SOUTHWICKE. Or, a chevron gules within a bordure engrailed sable.
3. SIR BARTHOLOMEW DE BADLESMERE. Argent, a fesse gemelled gules.
4. BAGULEY. Or, three lozenges azure.
5. WELWICK. Argent, three escallops gules.
6. HARBOTTLE. Azure, three icicles bendways or.
7. BECHTON. Azure, three spades argent. (Note A.)
8. DE ORREBY. Argent, two chevrons and a canton gules. (Note A.)
8. SIDDINGTON. Argent, a chevron between five cross crosslets fitchie sable. (Note A.)
10. FITTON. Argent, a canton gules over all on a bend azure, three garbs or. (Note A.)
11. DE WARWICKE (NEWBURGH). Chequy, or and azure, a chevron ermine.
12. LILLEBURNE (ELDERTON OR CHARRON). Sable, three water bougets argent. (Note B.)
13. MANBOUCHER. Argent, three water pots, covered, gules.
14. LEGH. Azure, two bars argent, over all a bend gules charged with three bezants. (Note C.)
15. BEAUCHAMP. Gules, cruicily (3 & 3) and a fesse or.
16. HOLCROFT. Argent, a cross within a bordure engrailed, sable.
17. STANHOPE. Quarterly ermine and gules, a crescent for difference.
18. RICHARDS. Sable, on a chevron argent, between, in chief two lions rampant combatant, and in base, a garb or, three pellets.

The two coats which have not been identified with absolute certainty are numbered 12 and 14 (see Notes B and C). It will be seen that they have been the subject of much speculation.

It would appear that this pelmet was set up to replace coats which had originally been painted on the north and south walls of the nave, and which had been ruthlessly removed, together with the fifteenth century wall paintings of St. Christopher, St. George and a Doom, in the disastrous "restoration" of 1851-55, of which much has been written elsewhere; in particular, Ormerod's *History of Cheshire*, Earwaker's *East Cheshire* and Richards' *Old Cheshire Churches*.¹

In the pelmet there is a link, though tenuous, with mediaeval times. Gawsorth is fortunate, however, in that its link with the early seventeenth century is unbroken, and the Fitton memorials, which were erected between 1608 and 1663 are still preserved and can to-day be seen in much of their original splendour. There are four memorials, all situated in the sacarium of the Church, two on the north side and two on the

¹ Throughout the paper references to Ormerod and Earwaker are from *The History of the County Palatine and City of Chester* by G. Ormerod, LL.D., F.R.S., F.S.A., Second edition revised by Thomas Helsby—Geo. Routledge & Sons, 1882, and *East Cheshire* by J. P. Earwaker, M.A., F.S.A., published for the Author, London, 1877.

south. The earliest memorial is that to the memory of Francis Fitton, dated 1608, and is the more westerly of the two memorials on the south side of the chancel. Immediately opposite is the next in date, that of Dame Alice Fitton, died January 1626-27. (Note D.) Adjoining this tomb, and to the east of it, is the third in date, the memorial to Sir Edward Fitton, the first baronet, died May 10th, 1619. The fourth memorial, that to Sir Edward Fitton, the second and last baronet is situated on the south side, opposite to that erected to the memory of his father.

Originally the tombs of the two baronets were constructed with imposing canopies, but these were destroyed in 1851. By good fortune the tablets bearing the incised epitaphs and many armorial shields were preserved and re-erected on the east wall above the tomb chests in 1859. In the so-called "restoration" of 1851-55 the monuments were very indifferently repaired and many of their rich colours hidden beneath a coat of drab bluish-grey paint.

A careful restoration was undertaken in 1954, under the guidance of Sir James Mann, primarily through the generous assistance of the Pilgrim Trustees. (Note E.) Providentially, it would almost seem, a considerable amount of the alabaster which had formed part of the canopies removed in 1851 had been lately discovered in the old Tithe Barn, and Mr. Alan Brough, the Prestbury sculptor, was able to use much of this in the repairs which he carried out so excellently. The cleaning and re-colouring was entrusted to Miss Susan Blacking of Salisbury, who, with her assistant, Miss Isobel Brett, carefully removed the nineteenth century paint revealing the original colour and exquisite floral decoration on the strapwork of the armour of Francis Fitton (the earliest memorial). Upon this tomb and those of the two baronets are to be found the many shields, carved either in alabaster or stone, and emblazoned with the heraldic insignia of the Fitton alliances.

The plaque at the head of the tomb of Sir Edward Fitton, the first baronet, displays sixteen coats. (Fig. 1.)

1. FITTON-BARRET. Sir Edward Fitton, born Dec. 1572, married Anne, daughter and co-heir of James Barret of South Wales, 1609. Created a baronet 1617, died and buried at Gawsorth, May 10th, 1619. Parted per pale, baron and femme, two coats; the first FITTON, Argent, a canton gules, over all on a bend azure, three garbs or. The second BARRET, Gules, on a chief indented argent, three escallops sable. The augmentation of the human hand gules on the escutcheon in chief denotes that the holder was a Knight Baronet.
2. MAINWARING-FITTON. Margaret Fitton, aunt of the above-named, married Sir Randle Mainwaring of Peover, September 1st, 1568 at Gawsorth. On the same day her sister Elizabeth married Sir Thomas Holcroft. Parted per pale, baron and femme, two coats; the first MAINWARING,

Argent, two bars gules, the second FITTON, Argent, a canton gules, over all on a bend azure, three garbs or.

3. SIR EDWARD FITTON, Baronet.
4. DE ORREBY. Argent, two chevrons and a canton gules.
5. LEGH OF BECHTON. Azure, two bars argent, over all a bend gules with three bezants for a difference. (Note C.)
Thomas Fitton, (aged 13—9 ED : III) married as his first wife, Margaret, daughter and co-heiress of Peter de Legh of Bechton, and granddaughter of Matthew de Bechton. She died on December 12th, 1379.
6. CULCHETH. Argent, an eagle with wings displayed sable, preying on an infant proper, swaddled gules.
7. HORTON. Argent, a squirrel sejant gules. (Note F.)
8. BAGULEY. Or, three lozenges azure.
9. BECHTON. Azure, three spades argent.
Margaret Fitton (see 5 above) was granddaughter of Matthew de Bechton.
10. HOLCROFT. Argent, a cross within a bordure, engrailed sable. (Note D.)
11. SIDDINGTON. Argent, a chevron between five cross crosslets fitchie (2 & 3) sable.
Edward Fitton (1434—February, 1510-11) married Emma, daughter and heiress of Robert Siddington, of Siddington, Cheshire.
12. LILLEBURNE. Sable, three water bougets argent. (Note B.)
13. HARBOTTLE. Azure, three icicles bendways or.
Sir Edward Fitton (1500—February, 1547-48) married Mary, younger daughter and co-heiress of Sir Guiscard Harbottle of Northumberland.
14. MANBOUCHER. Argent, three water pots covered gules.
15. WELWICK. Argent, three escallops gules.
16. FITTON.

The memorial to the second and last baronet, Sir Edward Fitton, born at Gawsworth, August 24th, 1603, and who died at Bristol, August 1643, displays eight shields; four on the plaque on the east wall of the chancel, two on a plaque on the south wall above the monument and two upon the tomb chest.

17. FITTON-TREVOR. Sir Edward was the second and only surviving son of the first baronet. He married first, Jane, daughter of Sir John Trevor of Plâs Têg, co. Flint, on October 13th, 1622. The only child of this union, Margaret, was born on February 26th, 1623-24. She died in infancy and was buried at Gawsworth on October 2nd, 1631. Jane, Lady Fitton, died in June 1638, and Sir Edward subsequently married Felicia, daughter of Ralph Sneyd of Keele, co. Stafford, who bore him no child. On the outbreak of the Civil War he fought, as his epitaph records, on the Royalist side at "Edgehill, Banbury, Brainford, Reading and many other places." He was present at the siege of Bristol, and when this was successfully raised he was left in command of the garrison by Prince Rupert. He died in tragic suddenness, not of wounds, but of a consumption in August, 1643. His body was first buried at Oxford, and subsequently re-interred at Gawsworth. He was the last male in the direct Fitton line.

Parted per pale, baron and femme, two coats; the first, FITTON, with the augmentation of a human hand gules;

The second TREVOR, party per bend sinister, ermine and ermines, a lion rampant or.

18. DE ORREBY. This is not a shield but a large lozenge, and in 1859 was set up on its end, contrary to all principles of heraldry. It appears to have originally formed the central panel of the canopied tomb. There is almost the suggestion of a hatchment about it, save that it is cut in alabaster and its surrounding embellishments are tinted in palest azure and decorated. The epitaph to Sir Edward begins "Among most illustrious ancestors himself the greatest, Sir Edward Fytton, of Gawsworth, Baronet, is here laid, who at the same time ended the most ancient race of Fyttons and completed it, the last and the first; so Fates decreed." In this memorial to the last of the Gawsworth Fyttons, erected by the Rt. Hon. Charles Gerrard, Lord Brandon, his nephew, it was natural that the central panel should proudly display the de Orreby coat, which they had borne since Thomas Fitton married Isabel de Orreby, and from whose family their estates and Lordship of the Manor of Gawsworth had been derived.

19. (?) COLE-FITTON.

Parted per pale, baron and femme, two coats; the first, Sable, a chevron or, and in base a scorpion of the second. The second FITTON. Lettice, the sixth sister of the 2nd Baronet, born 1613, married, c. 1634, John Cole of . . . co. Salop. According to Burke's *General Armoury* COLLE of Newcastle-on-Tyne was granted December 3rd, 1614 "Argent a fesse engrailed between 3 scorpions erect sable", and also COLE bore "Argent a chevron gules between three scorpions erect (another reversed) sable". It would seem to be fairly certain that this coat is Cole impaling Fitton.

20. (?) MEYRICK-FITTON.

Parted per pale baron and femme two coats; the first, Sable, a chevron between three tree trunks raguly or; the second FITTON. Alice, the fifth sister of the 2nd Baronet, born at Gawsworth October, 1605, married at Gawsworth April 22nd, 1629, Sir John Meyrick of Monckton, co. Pembroke, M.P. MEYRICK of Salop bore "Sable, on a chevron argent, between three staves raguly or, inflamed proper, a fleur-de-lys gules between two Cornish choughs sable". The similarity is too close to arrive at any other conclusion than that this coat is Meyrick impaling Fitton.

In writing of this memorial Earwaker (*East Cheshire*, Vol. 2, p. 583) says "The canopy, like the previous one, was destroyed in 1855, but some shields and the tablet were preserved". The inference is that some shields were lost, and it appears not unlikely that the marriage alliances of each of the second baronet's sisters may have been incorporated in the armorial devices, and that the two shields (19 and 20) alone survived the "restoration." The plaque on the south wall, above the tomb chest, is embellished with two coats; the first Fitton, below that a devise of helm



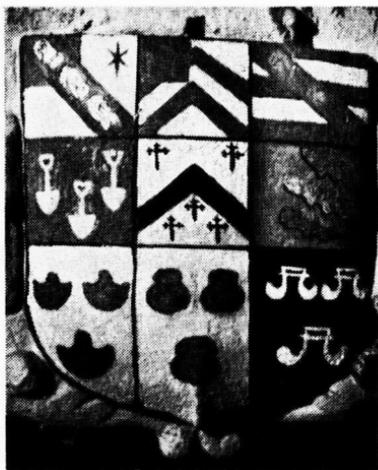
Coat Meyrick (?) impaling Fitton.
Base of Plaque commemorating Sir
Edward Fitton, 2nd Baronet.



Coat Cole (?) impaling Fitton.
Base of Plaque commemorating Sir
Edward Fitton, 2nd Baronet.



Coat on Tomb of Francis Fitton ;
married to Katherine Neville.



Coat on Tomb of Francis Fitton

and trumpets, and in the lowest panel the coat of Trevor. These two coats are repeated on the tomb chest.

On the tomb of Francis Fitton are three painted shields, two of which are identical, Fitton with nine quarterings; 1. Fitton, a Mullet for difference; 2, de Orreby; 3, Legh; 4, Bechton; 5, Siddington; 6, Harbottle; 7, Welwick; 8, Manboucher; 9, Lilleburne. In writing of this memorial Earwaker says of the third shield "Fitton impaling Percy," this is obviously incorrect. Dr. Ormerod in his monumental *History of Cheshire* states "on the arches supporting the tomb the arms of Fitton and Neville", but makes no attempt to identify the quarterings. Francis Fitton married, in 1855, Katherine, the eldest daughter and one of the four co-heiresses of John Neville, Lord Latimer, widow of Henry, seventh Earl of Northumberland, and without doubt this is her coat:—

1. NEVILLE. Gules, a saltire argent.
2. NEVILLE (Ancient). Or fretty gules, on a canton an ancient ship, sable.
3. FITZALAN. Gules, a lion rampant or. (Note G.)
4. BEAUCHAMP. Gules cruizily (3 & 3) and a fesse or.
5. DE WARWICKE (Newburgh). Chequy or and azure, a chevron ermine.
6. BERKELEY. Gules a chevron between ten cross crosslets, argent.
7. LISLE. Or, a fesse between two chevrons, sable.
8. (?) FITZGERALD. Gules, a lion passant guardant argent. (Note H.)
9. DE VERE. Quarterly gules and or, in the first quarter a mullet argent.
10. (?) CARIADOC. Sable, a lion rampant argent. (Note I.)
11. SANDFORD. Barry and wavy of six argent and azure.
12. BADLESMERE. Argent, a fesse gemelled gules.
13. DE CLARE. Or, three chevronels gules.
14. (?) CHAMPERNOUNE. This is very indistinct, but appears to be Lozengy gules and or, a saltire sable. It may possibly be chequy or fretty. (Note J.)
15. HOWARD. Gules, between six cross crosslets fitchie, a bend argent.
16. BOYS. Ermine, a cross sable.
17. WELWICK. Argent, three escallops argent.
18. (?) PLAITZ. Pale, or and gules, a lion (?) rampant/passant argent. (Note K.)
19. STAFFORD. Or, within a bordure engrailed sable, a chevron gules.
20. (?) BLYKE. Sable, a chevron argent, in chief three ? s faces, or. (Note L.)

The three remaining coats in the chancel, all of later date, and not associated with the Fittons, are to be found on two memorials and on the Patron's stall. The earlier memorial placed over the south door commemorates the Reverend John Hammond, rector 1683-84 to 1724. He married Alice, second daughter of Sir Fulk Lucy, and at the foot of the tablet is a shield bearing the Hammond-Lucy arms.

Parted per pale, baron and femme, two coats :—
the first HAMMOND, Argent on a chevron sable between three pellets each charged with a martlet of the field, three escallops or ;

the second, LUCY; Gules, a semme of cross crosslets, three lucies hauriant argent.

Immediately opposite, over the north door of the chancel, is the memorial to Edward Thornycroft, Esquire, who died at Henbury in 1817. In the family arms displayed the coat has four quarterings; 1 and 4, Thornycroft, 2 and 3 Henshaw.

Vert, a masle or between four cross crosslets argent, THORNYCROFT. Argent, a chevron sable between three moorhens close gules, HENSHAW.

The remaining coat forms part of the cresting of the Patron's stall, situated on the south side of the chancel, which was carved by Pugin.

Sable, on a chevron argent, between, in chief two lions rampant combatant, and, in base, a garb or, three pellets, RICHARDS.

Prior to 1851 there were a number of interesting brasses, all of which are lost with the exception of the notable example displaying Fitton impaling Warburton placed over the entrance of the old Fitton vault in the centre of the nave.

At the time when the Reverend Edward Massey, Curate-in-charge, was pursuing his devastating restoration of the church, most of the surviving mediaeval glass was ruthlessly thrown out. Embodied in the lovely old glass, depicting many distinguished Fittons, their wives, children and connections by marriage, was a wealth of heraldry, the men wearing tabards of arms and their wives displaying their arms on their mantles or on shields placed beside them. Randle Holme's descriptions in *Harl: MSS. 2151*, B.M. and his MS Volume of *Cheshire Church Notes* enhances the sense of grievous loss which Gawsworth suffered at this time when such vioient hands were laid upon its treasures. So complete was this despoliation that only fragments of the mediaeval glass survived and these have been re-assembled and are to be found in two windows in the sacarium. The four shields of arms in the south window of the hall of the Old Rectory were probably removed from the church shortly after the Reformation, thus escaping the unwelcome attention of the "restorers" and are preserved intact. Only one presents any difficulty in identification, the first or most easterly. Reading from left to right they are:—

1. (?) ROPE. Gules, a lion rampant or, between six pheons argent.
2. CROXTON. Sable, a lion rampant argent, debriused by a bendlet gobony or and gules.
3. DAVENPORT OF BROMHALL. Quarterly, 1st and 4th Argent, on a chevron between three cross crosslets fitchie sable, a crescent for difference, DAVENPORT. 2nd and 3rd Sable, a lion rampant or. BROMHALL.
4. FITTON-ERDESWICK. Quarterly, 1st and 4th Argent, a bend azure, thereon three garbs or, FITTON. 2nd and 3rd Argent, three birds heads sable crased, beaked or. ERDESWICK.

It is interesting to observe that in this shield is to be seen the ancient Fitton coat before the canton from the de Orreby coat was added. The first coat is very similar to that of Rope of Stapeley, which is blazoned by Glover in his *Visitation of Cheshire*, 1580, "Argent, a lion rampant Gules between five pheons sable", and by Ormerod "Gules, a lion rampant Argent, within an orle of pheons of the second". There does not appear to have been any marriage alliance between Fitton and Rope, and at first sight Rope as an identification would seem to be discounted. However, Ormerod on page 495, Vol. III *History of Cheshire* records "12 He: VI, John de Rope granted, by charter enrolled, to sir Lawrence Fyton, kt. Robert Hewster, parson of Gowesworth church, (and others) all his lands in Rope, Wystaneston, Wyghterston, and Wich Malbank; and the said John, and Clemence his wife, by another charter, granted to Fyton and Hewster, all their lands in Hellesby, and elsewhere in the county. Pl. Ro. m.5." Did this charter justify the inclusion of the Rope coat in Gawsworth church windows?

No paper on Gawsworth church would be complete without some reference to its tower, for, architecturally it is probably its finest feature. Constructed of sandstone, the colours of which range from deep red at the base to the palest pink at the summit, it rises to a height of over a hundred feet. Each face of the tower is embellished with heraldic shields sculptured in relief, which were first brought to notice by Frank Renaud, M.D., in his "Contributions towards a History of the Ancient Parish of Prestbury" (*Publications of The Chetham Society*, Vol. 97, 1876).

Helsby in his revised edition of Ormerod, and his contemporary, J. P. Earwaker, are content to refer their readers to Dr. Renaud's book; there are, however, some slight inaccuracies in this account, and for the sake of completeness these shields have been examined afresh and my findings do not appreciably differ from the views of Dr. Renaud. In a number of cases the shields have been partially defaced by time and weather, particularly on the north and south faces of the tower, and one has been compelled to rely upon Dr. Renaud's drawings in these instances. There are, fortunately, sufficient portions of the shields in good preservation to verify or reject his conclusions.

Fourteen shields embellish the tower; four on the west face, five on the south face, three on the east face, and two on the north. Five shields are single, eight are impaled, one is quartered.

On the west face, about mid-way up the tower are three shields:

I. DE ORREBY impaling Fitton of Pownall.

Parted per pale, three coats; the first de Orreby, the second, parted per fess, in chief, ARGENT, a bend azure, thereon three garbs or, a crescent for difference, FITTON, in base, ARGENT, three birds heads sable erased, beaked or, ERDESWICK.

2. DE ORREBY impaling (?) Newton of Pownall.
Parted per pale, two coats; the first de Orreby; the second (Argent) a lion rampant (sable). (?) NEWTON.
3. DE ORREBY impaling EGERTON.
Parted per pale, two coats; the first de Orreby, the second, Argent a lion rampant gules, a pheon sable. EGERTON.

Below these shields, and ornamenting the corbel of a niche above the west door, is a shield borne by an angel, it is:

Quarterly; 1st and 4th DE ORREBY, 2nd FITTON, 3rd BECHTON.

Two of the five shields decorating the south face are placed low on the tower;

1. MAINWARING. 2. DE ORREBY.

Above these are three shields in line, the centre one being placed immediately below a square quatrefoiled window.

1. DE ORREBY impaling Bechton.
2. DE ORREBY impaling Fitton.
3. DE ORREBY impaling Weever.
Parted per pale, two coats; the first de Orreby. The second, Sable, two bars Argent, on a canton of the first a garb of the second, WEEVER.

On the east face is a narrow doorway giving access to the roof of the nave, and halfway up the tower are three shields, the central one being directly above this doorway.

1. DE ORREBY impaling Davenport.
Parted per pale, three coats; the first de Orreby, the second parted per fess, in chief, Argent on a chevron between three cross crosslets fitchie sable a crescent for difference, DAVENPORT. In base, Sable a lion rampant or, BROMHALL.
2. RALPH BLUNDERVILLE. Azure three garbs or.
3. DE ORREBY impaling Pulford.
Parted per pale, two coats; the first de Orreby. The second, Sable a cross patonce argent, PULFORD.

The two remaining shields decorate the north face of the tower, they are:

1. RODE. Argent two quatrefoils sable, a chief of the second.
(This shield is so weathered that only the quatrefoils are now discernable).
2. DAVENPORT OF BOUGHTON.

This shield is not identified by Dr. Renaud and is blazoned by him "A chevron humetté with two lozenges in fess between three cross crosslets fitchée". It is still quite obvious that the crosses are crosses bottonny fitchie. In this connection Papworth and Morant's *Ordinary of British Armorial* gives "BOUGHTON, Argent a chevron coupé between three crosses bottonny fitchy sable", which at least suggests Davenport of Boughton as a possible identification.



CHANCEL OF ST. JAMES', GAWSWORTH, NORTH SIDE.
 Memorial to Sir Edward Fitton, 1st Baronet, d. 1619.
 Dame Alice Fitton Memorial.



CHANCEL OF ST. JAMES', GAWSWORTH, SOUTH SIDE.
 Memorial to Sir Edward Fitton, 2nd Baronet, d. 1643.
 Memorial to Francis Fitton, d. 1608.

It is interesting to notice that in many instances the Fitton family use the de Orreby coat, a custom to which attention has already been directed. Another peculiar feature is that, contrary to the established customs of heraldry they have appropriated the dexter to themselves, even when the alliance has been that of a Fitton female. This again emphasizes the pride of the Fitton family in their alliance with the de Orreby's, and in their Lordship of the Manor of Gawsorth. Since this great family became extinct in the seventeenth century and there followed over a hundred years of pluralism and absentee rectors it is not surprising that the church became neglected. The misguided, but no doubt well intended, efforts to counter this neglect by Edward Massey in mid-Victorian times unfortunately denuded the church of much of its mediaeval splendour, and the miracle is, that with all this unsympathetic treatment so much survives to delight the antiquary of to-day and the heraldic student of the future. Gawsorth is indeed a goodly heritage.

NOTES.

- A. In connection with these four coats the following extract from I.D. 14. 268 *Visitation of Cheshire* 1580, is interesting: "These Armes taken owte of an old masse booke at Gouseworth wherein they wer fayne illumyned longe a goe".
- B. The Windsor Herald has found this coat attributed in the *Ordinaires* to both Elderton (or Alderton) of Co. Northants, and John de Lilleburne, (Ashmole & Surrey Rolls). His research has discounted that it may be the coat of Bouchier, as was at first suggested. Earwaker in *East Cheshire*, Vol. II, p. 580, attributes the coat to Charron. His Grace the Duke of Northumberland very kindly permitted an inspection to be made of his Shield of 892 Quarterings of Alliances and in this, at 713, is to be found "Sable, three water bougets (2 and 1) argent. CHARON."

Against this must be set Glover's *Visitation of Cheshire*, Vol. XVIII H.S. p. 99, where he records the Fitton quarterings and gives "II. Argent, three water-bougets sable, (LILBURNE?)". Miss Elizabeth Halcrow, B.A., B.Litt., the City Archivist of Newcastle-on-Tyne drew my attention to two interesting papers read before the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and which are published in *Archaeologia Aeliana*, Third Series, Vol. III (1906) and Third Series, Vol. VI (1910). These papers were each read by Mr. C. H. Blair.

In the first paper Mr. Blair is discussing an armorial manuscript, probably of the sixteenth century, which contained 160 shields, in colours, and is thought to have been compiled as a record of the arms of those associated with the fifth Earl of Northumberland, and of those liable to serve under him in time of war. Its main interest from the point of view of the Gawsorth armorials is his description of the Harbottle coat and his note upon it. On pages 263 and 264 he says:

"HARBOTTOLL.

Quarterly: 1. Silver three escallops gules. WELWICK.

2. Sable three water bougets silver.

3. Silver three pitchers gules. MONBOUCHER.

4. Quarterly.

1 & 4 Silver a fesse indented or three fusils gules. MONBOUCHER.

2 & 3 Azure three 'hair bottles' silver. HARBOTTLE.

"In connection with Welwick, it is curious to notice that Kelke of Barnetby, Lincs, also bore these arms (Papworth 681 and Burke's General Armoury); and that William Kelke (the first of Barnetby) married the daughter and sole heir of Ralph Wellwick of Wellwick.' (Visit. of Lincolnshire in 1562, *Genealogist*, IV, 186).

"The second quarter is usually given for Charron on what authority I have been unable to discover. The Arms of Charron were quite different and bear a resemblance to those in the first quarter. In the roll of Edw. II 'Sire Richard de Charoune de goullys a une chevroune e iiii

eskalops de argent'. The same arms are blazoned in Grimaldi's roll of Edw. III and in Jermyn's Ordinary."

In the other paper read by Mr. Blair in 1909 he again gives this coat for Charron and cites additional authorities, viz. the Parliamentary roll of Edw. II, and *The History of Northumberland*, by the Rev. John Hodgson.

In the same paper he gives "Lilburn, Sable three bougets silver", giving as authority the Roll of Rich. II edited by Thomas Willement, 1834, and *The Natural History and Antiquities of Northumberland*, by John Wallis.

It seems that the weight of evidence, so far as it has yet been produced, falls on the side of LILLEBURNE.

- C. Coat No. 14. This coat is copied from one of the carved shields on the memorial of Sir Edward Fitton, the first baronet, with which it agrees exactly. Major Graham-Vivian points out that he finds a Grey coat in Vincent's Ordinary "Argent, three bars azure, over all a bend gules bezantee", taken from the Howard Roll, temp. Hen. III. The carved shield, which he has not seen, quite certainly depicts two bars with a bend over all, and undoubtedly is LEGH, for it is certain that many branches of the Legh family bore "Azure, two bars argent, over all a bend"; the bend often being gules, sometimes of gobony and other tinctures, though the Windsor Herald says that he can find no instance of bezants on the bend.

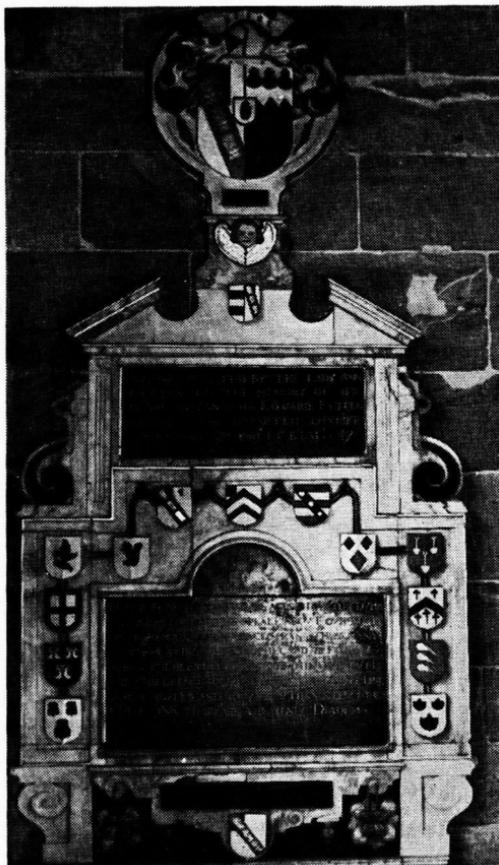
Thomas Fitton married Margaret, daughter and co-heiress of Peter de Legh, "who differed his paternal coat with three dart heads argent" (Ormerod, *History of Cheshire*, Vol. III, p. 198). Earwaker *East Cheshire*, Vol. II, p. 570, in writing of shields painted upon the south wall of Gawsorth Church says "Legh of Bechton, Azure, two bars argent, over all on a bend gules, three bezants". He is following Randall Holmes' *MS Cheshire Church Notes*.

Glover's *Visitation of Cheshire*, p. 99 states "Fitton coat. 4. Azure two bars argent, over all on a bend gules three bezants (pheons or?), LEGH of BECHTON."

There can be little doubt that the coat is intended for Legh.

- D. This monument is known as the "Dame Alice Memorial". In fact it was erected as a memorial to Sir Edward Fitton (1550-1606), whose effigy at one time certainly formed the centre piece of the memorial. Sir Edward Fitton, who was Lord President of Munster, married Alice, daughter and heiress of Sir John Holcroft, of Holcroft, Co. Lancs.; there were four children of this marriage, Edward, who married Anne Barret, Richard who died unmarried in 1610, Anne born 1574, and who married, in 1595, Sir John Newdigate of Arbury, Co. Warwick, and Mary, born 1578, who became a Maid of Honour to Elizabeth I, and who is believed by many to be the "Dark Lady" of Shakespeare's sonnets.
- E. Extract from the 24th Annual Report (1954) of the Pilgrim Trust. "Among artistic treasures in churches restored with the Trustees' help were the famous monuments to the Fitton family in Gawsorth Church Cheshire . . . One of the most perfect 15th century churches in the diocese of Chester, contains some notable monuments in alabaster and stone to the memory of the Fitton family . . . The monuments, all dating from the first half of the 17th century, have suffered considerable damage, particularly during the disastrous 'restoration' of 1851, when so much that was associated with the early church was mutilated, or in some cases removed. Their restoration has been entrusted to Mr. Alan Brough, a well-known Cheshire sculptor and a Fellow of the Ancient Monuments Society. Mr. Raymond Richards, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S., who lives at Gawsorth Old Rectory and who was responsible for bringing the case before the Pilgrim Trustees, has provided a workshop in the old tithe barn, thus avoiding the need for removing the monuments to a distant place for treatment. The Trustees made a grant of £500, the estimated cost of the work."
- F. Ormerod, *History of Cheshire*, Vol. II, p. 759, writing of the ruined church of Aldford describes the east window of the choir with seven Fitton quarterings, amongst them, "2 Argent, a squirrel sejant gules, RIXTON; 3 Argent, an eagle with wings displayed sable, preying on an infant profer, swaddled gules, CULCETH". Glover's *Visitation*, p. 99, agrees with the coat attributed to Culcheth; but gives HORTON for the second quarter. At pages 114 and 124 Glover gives Rixton as bearing "Argent, on a bend sable three covered cups of the field".
- G. Glover's *Visitation of Cheshire*, p. 216.
- H. The Duke of Northumberland's Shield of Quarterings of Alliances at No. 692 gives "FITZGERALD. Gules, a lion passant guardant Argent, crowned Or". A possible identification if the crown has been obscured during the centuries. Burke's *General Armory* agrees.
- I. At 252 in the Duke of Northumberland's shield this coat is attributed to CARIADOC, but this has not been confirmed elsewhere. This coat seems to have been borne by many

- families, Papworth's *Ordinary of British Armorial* gives 37, but does not include Cariadoc.
- J. This quartering is very indistinct, but it is suggested that it may be CHAMPERNOUNE, which is given at No. 195 on the Duke of Northumberland's shield as "Gules, a saltire Vaire between 12 billets Or". Papworth gives, p. 1059, "Gules billey or a saltire vair. John Champernoune."
- K. The lion in this quarter is so placed that it is impossible to tell whether it is rampant or passant. If it is rampant it is suggested that it is PLAITZ; the Duke of Northumberland's shield at 833 gives "Plaitz. Pale or and gules, a lion rampant argent."
- L. This twentieth quartering presents a difficulty as the shield only permits a minute space for it, and the coat is not completely delineated. The Duke of Northumberland's shield of Alliances gives at 870 "BYLKE. Sable, a chevron between three leopards faces argent." This is confirmed by Burke. Is it possible that the original artist finding he had insufficient room to paint the leopard's heads 2 and 1, put them all three in chief?



CHANCEL OF ST. JAMES', GAWSWORTH.
Plaque commemorating Sir Edward Fitton, 1st Baronet.