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Monument of Sir Richard Reade (Redbourn Church).

BY THE REV. H. FOWLER, M.A.

This small monumental brass, now on the floor of the chancel was once fixed in the north wall. It is inserted in a slab of Bethersden marble (Cussans) with a border. It represents a knight and his lady kneeling at fald-stools, with sons and daughters at the sides. The armour is early Elizabethan, also the costume of the wife. The latter exactly resembles that of the lady of Sir William Greshye on a monument in Harpenden Church, dated 1558. The armour of the knight may be compared with that of Sir William Harper, in St. Paul's Church, Bedford, c. 1570. There is a shield of arms above, but no inscription. It is probable that there was an inscription on a separate plate, which, with the brass, was once fixed on the slab of a raised tomb erected in the south chapel (now the vestry). The tomb existed there at the time when Salmon wrote his history (c. 1728). His words are—"In the south part of this chapel is an altar tomb—a man and woman with six children—arms—a cross charged with four lions passant, sable, a lion rampant in chief, another in base. This is probably for Sir Richard Reade Kt., mentioned by Weaver." The arms described are those which we see on the brass. The words of Weaver are—"Sir Richard Read Kt. lieth here entombed." The statement of

Salmon appears to identify this brass as a part of the tomb mentioned by Weever.

Sir Richard Reade, the possessor of the Manor of S. Amphibal and the site of the Priory, was certainly the most important person in the parish in the earlier part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when the Manor of Redbourn was held by the Crown. He was a benefactor to the parish ; and in the document which contains his bequest to the poor, made chargeable on Green-tree Farm, he is stated to have lived at the Place House ; this would be the principal residence in the parish. Sir Richard Reade died in 1576. It would appear that he adopted that south chapel as his mortuary chapel. The Reade estates passed, before 1660, to William Beaumont, whose tablet is in the church. He perhaps built the mansion called Beaumont's, which existed close to Beaumont's Farm.

The monuments of the Beynon family, who were subsequently possessors, are here in the chancel ; as also the hatchments of the noble family of Grimston, in whom the lordship of both manors and the patronage of the church are now vested.

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