

BREDHURST PATEN.

THE Rev. W. Gardner-Waterman sends a photograph, of which the accompanying 'half-tone' illustration is a reproduction, of a paten belonging to Bredhurst Church, and he writes about it as follows:—

“In the year 1867 new vessels for the Holy Communion (see Vols. XVII, 304, and XXVI, 221) were presented by Miss Newton to St. Peter's, Bredhurst, through the Rev. H. C. Day, who was then the vicar. It is stated that the old vessels were sold at the same time for the sum of £1 13s. 6d. The churchwardens' accounts of that time are not forthcoming, but it may I think be presumed that the chalice only was sold, for the value of the silver, as in 1907 a paten was returned by Mr. Day to the Rev. E. E. Phillips, the present vicar. On being shewn to some of the older inhabitants it was recognized as the paten that was used prior to the new vessels being given. The material of which it was made evidently saved it from destruction. . . . It is almost like the coffin paten that was found in Worcester Cathedral in the tomb of Bishop Cantelupe, who died in 1266. (*Vide* Cripps, *Old Engl. Plate*, 6th ed., p. 209). . . . Bredhurst must be considered very fortunate in possessing one of the few remaining pre-Reformation patens, of which about only one hundred examples are known in England.”

The Rev. E. E. Phillips, Vicar of Bredhurst, has kindly submitted the paten for examination and description. It belongs to the type which Mr. W. H. St. John Hope, in his classified list of medieval patens,* enumerates as “Type A,” which comprises the earliest extant patens of English

* *English Medieval Chalices and Patens*, Trans. St. Paul's Ecol. Soc., vol. ij.



Photo.]

BREDHURST PATEN.

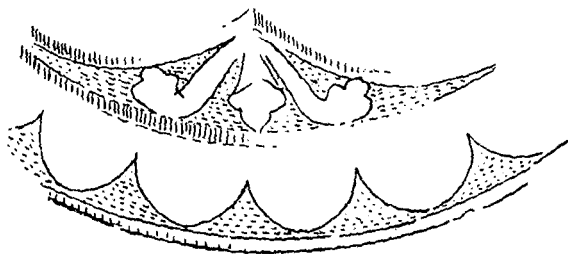
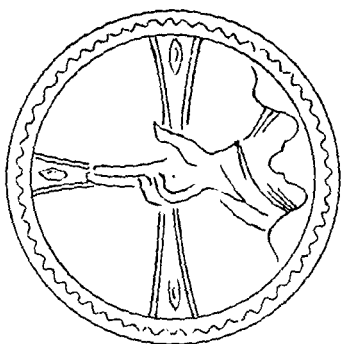
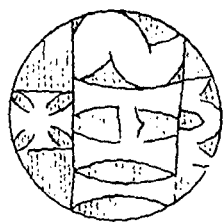
[*W. G. W.*

make, date *circa* 1180 to *circa* 1260. Only four other examples of this type are known, and each of them was found in the grave of a bishop or archbishop. The Bredhurst paten is undoubtedly the earliest extant English paten which has been in constant use in an English church within living memory.

The paten is of copper, parcel gilt. Its diameter is $4\frac{7}{8}$ inches, and its depth (all over) $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. It is a plate having a slightly moulded rim and two depressed surfaces. The rim is $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in width. The first depression is circular. The second depression is quatrefoil. The rim has a continuous decoration of semi-circles. The spandrels of the quatrefoil, which form the first depression, are foliated. The second depression has a central device—on a cruciform nimbus the *Manus Dei*, or Hand of God, issuing from clouds in the act of blessing (after the Latin manner). The clouds are conventionally represented by a line of three waves, the central one foliated. The background of the circles and foliated decoration of the rim and first depression is faintly stippled with dots. The cruciform nimbus is defined by a double circle with an intervening 'wavy' line.

The back of the paten is decorated with a central device, consisting of a circle enclosing a band on which the letters of the sacred name, I.H.S., appear, with a cross *patée* above and a simple decorative design below the band. The background is stippled. The letter S is peculiarly shaped, and turned the wrong way round.

The lighter shades and lines in the photograph indicate remains of the gilding; elsewhere the gold has worn off. The very dark parts are only shadows. The line-decorations were merely scratched into the surface of the copper, and for the most part retain the gilding. The two circles which form the nimbus were scratched in with a pair of compasses, the central point from which they were struck being still visible, even in the illustration, on the palm of the hand. All the rest of the decoration, even including the circle of the device on the back, is drawn with a free hand; the accompanying line-block does poor justice



BREDHURST PATEN.
(Original size.)

to the firmness, freedom, and delicacy of the lines, but it will serve to interpret the photograph.

The other examples of this type of paten may be quoted from Mr. St. John Hope's Paper:—

1. Chichester Cathedral Church. Silver parcel gilt. Diameter, 5. Device: the Holy Lamb. Date, late 12th century. Found in a bishop's grave in the south choir aisle in 1825, with a chalice, etc.
2. Lincoln Cathedral Church. Silver parcel gilt. Diameter, $4\frac{3}{4}$. Device: within a plain circle, the figure of a bishop. Found with a chalice in the grave of Bishop Grostête (1235—1253).
3. York Minster. Silver parcel gilt. Diameter, $4\frac{3}{4}$. Centre, plain without device. Found with a chalice early last century in the grave of an archbishop. Has been repaired, and is in occasional use.
4. Worcester Cathedral Church. Silver gilt. Diameter, $4\frac{7}{8}$. Device: the *Manus Dei*. Found in a grave assigned to Walter de Cantelupe (1237—1266).

Judged from an illustration, the decoration of the Worcester example appears to have been incised; it throws deep shadows and is more elaborate and effective in appearance. The date of the Bredhurst paten may, perhaps, be placed within the first half of the 13th century.