

The Fayrey Pall

The pall was given to the Fraternity by Henry and Agnes Fayrey in about 1500. It measures about 2.5m by 1.5m. The top is made of rich crimson cut Florentine brocade velvet on cloth of gold. The sides are purple velvet, edged with a deep silk fringe, and worked with appliqué embroidery in coloured silks. It is Flemish in style but was worked in England. The ends depict John and Mary Fayrey, parents of Henry, kneeling one on either side of St. John the Baptist as he preaches. Below the figures are their names and on woolpacks are the family's merchant marks. St John is depicted again in the centre of each side. He is shown preaching, dressed in a rough coat of camel's hair. The background shows the wilderness of barren trees and rocks. To the left, Henry Fayrey is leading twelve men towards the Baptist. They represent the male members of the Fraternity. On the right, his wife presents twelve women to St. John. They are presumed to be female members of the Fraternity. At the extreme ends are the arms of the Mercers' Company and at the other end the Fayrey arms and those of the Haberdashers' Company. Henry, who died in 1516, was a member of both Companies. The pall was put on the coffin of members of the fraternity, and their families, during the night of vigil before the funeral. In Georgian and Victoria times the church verger, for a fee of 6d, would put the pall over a coffin, which was due for burial the next day. The pall used to be housed in a glass case in the north aisle of the church. It is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, as are the Fayrey monumental brasses. There is a photograph of the Pall on the south wall of the Priory, by the brasses. Many descendants of the Fayreys emigrated to America where their surname evolved into Farr.