

Monumental Brass Society

2019



TRANSACTIONS

Monumental Brass Society

Volume XX, 2019, ISSN 0143-1250

Insignia and Status: Banners on Brasses in England in the Late Middle Ages Nigel Saul	1
The Brass of Thomas Stapel (d. 1372), Sergeant-at-Arms to Edward III: A Monument to a Career in Household Service Matthew Hefferan	32
Bishop Hallum's Brass in Konstanz Minster Nicholas Rogers	46
<i>Ex Terra Vis</i>: The Cadaver Brass of Richard and Cecily Howard at Aylesham, Norfolk Julian Luxford	64
Conservation of Brasses, 2017–18 William Lack and Simon Nadin	80
Reviews	91

Contributors are solely responsible for all the views and opinions contained in the *Transactions*, which do not necessarily represent those of the Society.

© Monumental Brass Society and the authors, 2019
Registered Charity No. 214336
www.mbs-brasses.co.uk

Insignia and Status: Banners on Brasses in England in the Late Middle Ages

Nigel Saul

A small number of brasses commemorating members of the gentry and aristocracy are noteworthy for the representation of banners among the heraldic insignia included in the design. This feature, which raises the dignity of the memorial and attests the banneret status of the person commemorated, has often been commented on, but never properly explained. It is suggested here that those patrons who arranged for banners to be shown on their memorials were keen, for one reason or another, to draw attention to their family's standing in the social pecking order. The bannerets were a group whose position in the hierarchy of chivalric honour was under threat in the late Middle Ages.

On a small number of late medieval and early modern monuments the arms of the knight or lady commemorated are displayed not, as usually, on small heater-shaped shields but on a rectangular banner placed at the top or side of the composition. Entitlement to a banner was a privilege enjoyed by those knights of high rank known from their entitlement as bannerets. When such men were in the king's wages they were paid twice the daily rate of the *milites simplices*, or bachelor knights. In the field they were generally the company commanders, the superior knights around whom retinues of lesser, or pennon-bearing, knights gathered. At the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, on the evidence of the Parliamentary Roll of Arms, there were some 170 bannerets in England, a number that gradually fell until the rank's final disappearance in the late sixteenth century.¹ The great majority of surviving representations of banners are found on brasses, not on sculpted monuments. Yet even on brasses they must be counted a relative rarity, armorial insignia generally being

displayed on shields. How are we to explain the presence of banners on some monuments but not on others? And what qualities exactly did the banner signify? Before considering these questions, however, something ought to be said about the knights banneret themselves. Who were these men, the possessors of a dignity now long defunct, and how did they qualify for elevation to the superior rank of knighthood?

The existence of a division within the broad ranks of knighthood is attested from as early as the second half of the twelfth century. Writing in the later 1220s, the author of the *Histoire de Guillaume le Mareschal* says that forty years earlier at the tournament at Lagny Henry, the Young King (d. 1183), to whose service the Marshal was attached, had as many as fifteen knights with him who were carrying banners, the Marshal himself among them.² Since the writer then goes on to say that the same King had a following of some two hundred knights in all, it can be deduced that each banneret knight brought with him some thirteen ordinary or bachelor knights. Some idea of the importance which the Young King attached to the presence of the banner-bearing knights in his retinue is afforded by what the author says about their rate of pay. Each banneret knight, he says, was allowed 'twenty shillings per day, both while travelling and while at Lagny, for each knight that he brought with him; it is a wonder where all this money came from!'. The numerous Flemish, French and Norman companies which fought at Lagny all likewise had a banner-bearing knight at their head. The rank was evidently one which was by this time found right across aristocratic and chivalric

1. *Parliamentary Writs*, ed. F. Palgrave, 2 vols in 4, (London, 1827–34), pp. 418–19.

2. *The History of William Marshal*, ed. and trans. Nigel Bryant (Woodbridge, 2016), p. 77.

Europe. Its emergence appears to have been associated with the wider dissemination of heraldic insignia in the later twelfth century. Back in 1100 use of the banner as an ensign of rank had been largely confined to dukes, counts and a few other great men. By fifty years later, however, as the language of heraldic blazon secured more general recognition in tourneying circles, so its use became more widespread and displaying a banner a distinguishing mark of elite knighthood. As the poet Wace was to write in the mid 1100s, when describing the marshalling of an army, ‘the barons carried their gonfanon, and the knights their pennants’.³ It is a pennant or – to use the more common term – a pennon which Sir John d’Abernon is shown carrying on his brass of c. 1330 at Stoke d’Abernon, Surrey.

Although the term banneret denoted a command, and not initially a social rank, the bannerets were generally to be numbered among the better-off of the knightly class. They had to be men of some wealth to be able to lead a troop in war. Whereas a bachelor knight might have had some three or four manors to his name, a banneret would have had at least half-a-dozen and perhaps more. A banneret’s income in most cases would have been as high as £300–£400 per annum, as opposed to the £50–£100 enjoyed by the bachelor. By the beginning of the fourteenth century, in the early stages of the formation of parliament, there was considerable overlap between the bannerets and the untitled barons who were summoned by writ to the upper house, the future House of Lords. Indeed, there are signs that the lists of those who were so summoned were often based on the lists of the banneret knights summoned to serve in war. The two sets

of lists, however, were by no means always co-extensive. A clear distinction was made by the clerks in the royal administration between those whom they called ‘barons’ and the bannerets. The barons, although socially they ranked with the banner-bearing class and were entitled to the use of banners in battle, were in legal terms defined as those who held their lands by barony. Being men of status, they enjoyed full baronial rank and were summoned regularly from parliament to parliament. This was not, however, the case with the bannerets, whose rank was lacking in legal definition and who stood slightly below the barons in esteem. The bannerets were a group of men who owed their summonses purely to the king’s recognition of their valour and prowess in arms. They did not necessarily hold any of their lands by barony, and a good many of them did not. Parliamentary summonses to the bannerets were hardly ever hereditary. Just because a banneret was summoned in one generation did not in any sense mean that his son in the next would be. In terms of status, the position of the bannerets was insecure and uncertain.

It was precisely because of the close association between banneret status and regular military service that recruitment to the rank was usually from those who had distinguished themselves in the field. In some cases, if a knight had shown himself especially valorous on a campaign, he might be made a banneret either before or after a battle by his commander. Froissart tells the famous story of how on the eve of the battle of Najera in Spain in 1367 Sir John Chandos was raised to banneret rank by his commander, the Black Prince. The prince, he says, took Chandos’s pennon from him and cut off the tail, giving it a square shape, and returned the truncated ensign to him as a symbol of his new

3. Cited by M. Bennett, ‘Wace and Warfare’, in *Anglo-Norman Studies*, XI, ed. R.A. Brown (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 37–57, at p. 46. For early bannerets more

generally, see D. Crouch, *The Image of the Aristocracy in Britain, 1000–1300* (London, 1992), pp. 114–19.

dignity.⁴ It is precisely this sort of ceremony which was to be recalled later, in the sixteenth century, in the description by the herald Robert Glover of how a banneret was to be made in the field. According to this account, the aspirant banneret was to be brought before his commander accompanied by two other knights; the herald was then to declare the banneret's credentials; the commander would cut off the tails from his pennon saying 'advance, banneret', and to the sound of trumpets, the newly elevated knight would then return to his tent.⁵ While it is doubtful if such a ceremony was ever performed exactly as Glover specified, what he says may well capture the spirit of what was done in the Middle Ages.

More than a few of those who were raised to banneret status in such circumstances were almost entirely self-made. Chandos, although from a knightly lineage, was a man of modest means who had made his name in war. A handful of other fourteenth-century bannerets came from more modest backgrounds still. Sir Thomas Cok, a man apparently of Oxfordshire origin, rose from almost total obscurity to become successively Henry of Grosmont's marshal of the army in Aquitaine and in 1347 his seneschal of the duchy. Cok was raised to banneret rank in 1347, and in that year awarded an annuity of 200 marks, made up of 100 marks for life and 100 marks in fee, the sum to be supplemented by a life grant of £200 to be received out of rebel lands in Aquitaine. A few days after this grant, he was awarded a wardship, and in the next

year, to afford him greater financial security, his fee was assigned on the revenues of an alien priory.⁶ Another leading soldier of the day, the Surrey knight Sir Reginald Cobham, rose higher and more steadily through the ranks. A member of a junior branch of the Cobhams of Kent, Reginald was admitted to the king's household in 1327, knighted in 1334, and raised to banneret rank in 1336. Just as Cok had been, he was awarded grants of money and lands to support him in his new estate. In anticipation of his promotion to banneret, in June 1335 he was awarded a fee of a hundred marks a year at the exchequer, and a few months later, following his promotion, he was granted a further three hundred marks a year 'for his better maintenance in the estate of banneret ... until the king could provide for him four hundred marks yearly in lands and rents'. In May 1337, in part fulfilment of this promise, Cobham was awarded a life grant of the manor of Cippenham, Buckinghamshire, said to be worth £64, and in the following year the farm of the town of Great Yarmouth was added to this, worth another £55 yearly. In November 1338 all these grants, which had all been made for life, were converted into hereditary ones. In 1352 Cobham was elected one of the first successor Knights of the Garter, and from 1347 to his death in 1361 he was summoned to parliament as a peer.⁷ Neither Cok nor Cobham had begun life as a rich man, but each was to end up one. In the case of both men, military and political service either to the king or a member of the royal family had brought, first, rewards in status – that is,

4. *Chronicles of England, Spain, France by Sir John Froissart*, ed. T. Johnes, 2 vols, (London, 1862), I, p. 370.

5. BL, Harleian MS 6064, f. 72r (formerly f. 69r). I am grateful to Nigel Ramsay for identifying for me the hand as Glover's. For Glover himself, see N. Ramsay, 'Glover, Robert (1543/4–1588)', *ODNB*, online edn, ref:odnb/10833 accessed 21 April 2017.

6. *CPR, 1348–50*, pp. 362, 371, 378; see also N.A. Gribit, *Henry of Lancaster's Expedition to Aquitaine, 1345–*

6. Military Service and Professionalism in the Hundred Years' War (Woodbridge, 2016), p. 274 (but where Aston Rohand (Oxon.) should read Aston Rowant.

7. N.E. Saul, *Death, Art and Memory in Medieval England. The Cobham Family and their Monuments, 1300–1500* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 124–35.

promotion to banneret – and then, because status and wealth went together, reward in land. Like Sir Thomas Dagworth, Sir Walter Mauny and numerous others who had risen through the ranks, they formed part of the service nobility of the fourteenth century.

In the age of the three Edwards it was the bannerets who formed both the core and the elite of the knights who were retained to serve the king in the royal household. Typically in these years the king retained some fifty or sixty knights in his establishment, the number rising or falling according to whether he was on campaign or not, and between half-a-dozen and a dozen-and-a-half of these would be knights banneret.⁸ In the field, it was the bannerets who were the retinue commanders around whom the household element of the army came together. By the early fifteenth century, however, when the war in France, which had languished for two decades from 1390, was reopened by Henry V, the bannerets were to be far less in evidence. One reason for this was that from roughly the 1410s the ratio of men-at-arms to archers began shifting heavily in favour of the archers, which meant that there were now fewer knights recruited to the king's armies anyway.⁹ The falling away, however, was also partly a reflection of the declining importance attached to the bannerets in operations in the field. In the muster rolls and pay records of the Lancastrian wars far less attention was paid to the distinction between bachelors and bannerets than had been the case before. In the muster rolls of the 1430s, for instance, the Norfolk knight Sir John Fastolf was invariably described as a simple knight,

even though he had been raised to the rank of banneret in 1424.¹⁰ It was much the same with his comrade-in-arms, the Lincolnshire knight Sir Henry Redford. Redford appears as a banneret in a muster taken at Pont-de-l'Arche in 1441 and was regularly paid at the higher rate thereafter; yet in only one of the rolls of the 1440s was he accorded the title of banneret which was his due.¹¹ In a similar way, although it can be shown that bannerets continued to enrol for the big expeditionary armies sent to France in these years, hardly ever were these men recorded as such in the muster rolls. The social and military distinctiveness which had once been the banneret's trademark was fast being eroded. In the eyes of the clerks who administered the king's armies, the knightly class comprised just one group, whatever the rates of pay that may have been agreed for its individual members. And the heralds seem to have been of much the same mind too. By the late fifteenth century some at least of them were assuming that every knight would muster under a banner, only the esquires any longer carrying the lesser ensign of a pennon.

The truth of the matter was that by the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the rank of banneret was being squeezed. The once dignified bannerets were the victims of a process of growing social stratification from which they found themselves emerging the losers. Above them by this time was the upper parliamentary house, the House of Lords, a body well on the way to becoming an assembly of hereditary peers. All those lords who had earlier been summoned in their capacity as holders of baronies were by now

8. C. Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity. Service, Politics and Finance in England, 1360–1413* (New Haven and London, 1986), p. 205.

9. A.R. Bell, A. Curry, A. King and D. Simpkin, *The Soldier in Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 58, 96–7, 139–44.

10. In an undated list, probably of the early 1430s, of those in France with the Regent of France, the duke of Bedford, Fastolf appears among the nine bannerets serving (BL, Harleian MS 6166, ff. 69v–70r).

11. Bell, Curry, King and Simpkin, *Soldier in Later Medieval England*, p. 72.

being summoned by prescription: that is to say, automatically. If their ancestors had been summoned, then they were likewise, and their descendants after them.¹² Below these people came the knights bachelor, the country gentry, the men who were establishing a parliamentary identity through their membership of the Commons, the lower house. The bannerets straddled the divide between these two groups, falling clearly into neither. In the course of the fourteenth century their ranks were sifted and sorted. Some bannerets, generally those who were wealthier and better established, managed to secure a place in the upper house, joining the hereditary lords; the Zouches of Harringworth, Northamptonshire, for example, fell into this category. Others of the dignity – those who were less fortunate or successful, or who failed to match the achievements of their ancestors – slipped down into the gentry and had to make do with a place in the parliamentary Commons. In the late fourteenth century it was still uncertain on which side of the divide many banneret families would fall. In some cases, the matter was settled by the action of the crown and its agents. In 1383, for example, when Sir Thomas Camoys had been elected a knight of the shire for Surrey, it was established that he could not take up his seat because he was ‘a banneret as were most of his ancestors’, and ‘bannerets used not to be elected knights of the shire’.¹³ Sir Thomas, who enjoyed the favour of Richard II, was then summoned to parliament as a lord, and continued to be so summoned until his death in 1421. It is for this reason that on his brass at Trotton, Sussex, he is identified as ‘Thomas de Camoys ... dominus de Camoys’. Other knights who

laid claim to banneret lineage and whose forebears had been summoned to parliament, such as the fourteenth-century Swynnertons of Staffordshire, were not so fortunate. Henceforth they had to compete for election to the Commons with the humbler bachelor knights, alongside whom they lived. By the mid fifteenth century the once exalted rank of banneret was fast becoming an anachronism, a casualty of irreversible changes in both war and civil society.

And yet the rank did not disappear altogether. As Mark Twain was to say of the reports of his own demise, its death can be greatly exaggerated. Aspirants to banneret status still valued elevation to the rank, and monarchs remained happy to bestow it. In the 1470s bannerets were still listed as a category in the court hierarchy in Edward IV's *Black Book*, and in 1475 fourteen bannerets were recruited to serve on the king's big expedition to France.¹⁴ In the next decade, when the English twice undertook campaigns against the Scots, a corps of bannerets was created on each occasion that the army set out. In August 1481, at Hoton near Berwick, Richard, duke of Gloucester, the future Richard III, raised twenty knights to banneret rank, all of them northerners.¹⁵ In the following year, when he embarked on a direct thrust to Edinburgh, he raised another 34 men, again the great majority of them northerners.¹⁶ In 1487, when he was fighting to defend his newly won crown against the veteran Ricardians, Henry VII raised fourteen men to the rank, three of them before defeating his enemies at Stoke and the remainder afterwards.¹⁷ A decade

12. K.B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 268–78.

13. *CCR*, 1381–5, p. 398.

14. *The Household of Edward IV. The Black Book and the Ordinance of 1478*, ed. A.R. Myers (Manchester, 1959), p. 77; F.P. Barnard, *Edward IV's French Expedition of*

1475: the Leaders and their Badges (London, 1925), ff. 2v–3r.

15. W.C. Metcalfe, *A Book of Knights Banneret, Knights of the Bath and Knights Bachelor* (London, 1885), pp. 5–6.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 6–7.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 13–14.

later, Henry was to raise yet another fourteen men to banneret rank on the eve of the battle of Blackheath, at which the West Country rebels were crushed.¹⁸ The tradition of regular elevations before or during a campaign was maintained in the early years of the reign of Henry's son and successor, Henry VIII. In 1513 this Henry was to raise no fewer than twenty-eight knights to banneret rank in the course of his Low Countries campaign, among them Sir John Arundell of Lanherne, whom he raised after the taking of Théroutanne.¹⁹ After this initial burst of activity, however, there were to be very few subsequent elevations to the rank. In 1547 Protector Somerset was to create three new bannerets at Roxburgh in the wake of his victory over the Scots at Pinkie.²⁰ In Elizabeth's reign, however, there were to be no new elevations at all, and the rank of banneret was finally allowed to fade away. In the 1560s, when Sir Thomas Smith was to analyse the ranks of society in his *De Republica Anglorum*, the bannerets found no place in his work. Even the heralds were beginning to lose interest in holders of the title. It was at least in part to make good the deficiency in the hierarchy of honour, if also to raise money from aspirant grandees, that in 1611 James I introduced the new rank of baronet, or hereditary knight.

As we have seen, the distinguishing mark of the banneret was his entitlement to the use of a square banner, as opposed to the swallow-tailed pennon allowed to the knights bachelor. As the banner was the most striking emblem of banneret status, it might be supposed that

representations of it would figure prominently in the decoration on monuments of knights of this rank. Yet in fact this does not appear to be the case. Banners are shown on no more than fifteen surviving monuments of bannerets, all but one of them on brasses or indents of brasses. If we include what appears to be a banner on a fragment of an indent of a brass once in Bury St Edmunds Abbey, then the figure can be brought up to sixteen.²¹ To this total may also be added a couple of representations on brasses which are now lost but which are known to us from antiquarian sources. And from the very end of the period there is one isolated case of a knight referred to as a banneret in his epitaph, although the banner itself is not represented.²² This total, even when stretched to the limits, is still a very small one. The sheer selectivity shown in the representation of the banner in funerary art is noteworthy, and has not previously been the subject of discussion. It is worth considering why the banner was a device that appealed to only some banneret patrons or their executors, and not others. An enquiry on these lines may shed valuable light on contemporary attitudes to banneret status and the standing which it was believed to have in contemporary society.

Before we proceed further, however, it is worth stressing the limitations of our knowledge, and in consequence the possibly provisional nature of any conclusions we may reach. We are very badly informed about the monuments of the banneret class. To say that barely a dozen monuments have come down to us of members

18. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 45–6.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 95–8.

21. I am grateful to Fr Jerome Bertram for drawing my attention to this fragment.

22. This is the slab of Sir Brian Stapilton 'knyght and barinet' (d. 1550) at Burton Joyce (Notts.) (F.A. Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, 2 vols (London, 1976), II, plate 90a). Greenhill interpreted 'barinet' to

mean 'minor baron', which is certainly a possibility. However, it is more plausible to see it as a corruption of 'banneret'. The main branch of the Stapelton family had enjoyed banneret status in the early fourteenth century, and an earlier Sir Brian had been raised to banneret rank by Richard, duke of Gloucester, on the eve of the invasion of Scotland in 1482 (BL, Harleian MS 293, f. 208r).

of a group that at its height numbered nearly two hundred highlights how relatively little we know about these people's commemorative tastes. The great majority of the bannerets' memorials are likely to have been located in the monasteries and the mendicant houses. Like the dukes, earls and other members of the high aristocracy, the bannerets favoured the Regulars for their burials because, unlike the parochial clergy, who came and went, they could guarantee uninterrupted intercession for the soul. It was precisely the Regulars' establishments, however, that were to suffer most severely at the Reformation. Of the funerary monuments of such great houses as Glastonbury and Bury St Edmunds, St Mary's, York, or St Augustine's, Canterbury, we know next to nothing. The great majority of the knightly tombs which have come down to us from the Middle Ages have survived in the small country churches, which by virtue of their isolation escaped the Reformation largely unscathed; and in these churches, the burials that were made were chiefly those of the knights bachelor, and not of the bannerets.

From roughly the end of the fourteenth century, however, there were the beginnings of a gradual shift in the bannerets' burial preferences, as there was, indeed, in those of the aristocratic elite as a whole. As the knightly and banneret class identified more with the localities and their power became increasingly territorialised, so they abandoned their earlier preference for the monasteries in favour of burial in the local parish churches and the secular colleges. Thanks to this shift in their locational preference, from the last two centuries of the Middle Ages we do have a reasonable scattering of banneret tombs in such parish churches as Wantage, Poynings, Lingfield and Trotton. Although our knowledge of the group's commemorative tastes is by this means greatly increased, it is altogether remarkable

to find that the impression we have formed of the relative rarity of banner representation, so far from being modified, is actually reinforced. The men commemorated by these late medieval monuments all belonged to the elite banner-bearing class; and yet in only a handful of instances is the banner included in the tomb iconography. It is worth qualifying this statement by saying that, when the deceased's funerary obsequies were staged, his campaign banners and armorial trappings would have been paraded inside the church and, once the obsequies were over, deposited over his tomb, as the Black Prince's banners are today in Canterbury Cathedral. Yet, even when due acknowledgement is made of this point, it still remains the case that banners were hardly ever included in the permanent iconography on the tomb monument. Nor do we find banners included in the decoration on the monuments of those such as the earls who were above the bannerets in rank, and who were themselves entitled to display banners. Square banners are conspicuous by their absence from the tombs of such grandees as Thomas Beauchamp, earl of Warwick in St Mary's, Warwick, Thomas FitzAlan, earl of Arundel, at Arundel, and John Beaufort, earl of Somerset in Wimborne Minster. Nor are banners known to have been shown on such lost monuments as those of Ralph, Lord Basset in Lichfield Cathedral, and John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, in Old St Paul's. Equally noteworthy is the fact that, when we consider the tomb effigies of Knights of the Garter, it is the garter which is displayed on their monuments and not the knight's banner. The reason for the conspicuous absence of banners from the monuments of so many of these grandees is not hard to find. It is quite simply that the status of these men was guaranteed to them, and that they did not find the need to have the reassuring presence of banner insignia on their monuments. For them, the display of heraldry on the heater-shaped

shields was quite sufficient. From this point it follows, however, those the people on whose monuments the banner was in fact shown must have felt a good deal less confident of their position. It is this line of thought which we will be pursuing in the discussion which follows.

The earliest monument to have come down to us on which banners are represented appears to be the slab, now despoiled of its brass inlays, in Tewkesbury Abbey attributed to Maud, widow of Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, who was killed at Bannockburn in 1314 (Fig. 1).²³ To judge from the well preserved outlines in the stone, this was a once magnificent memorial showing Maud under a delicate openwork canopy, four small figures ranged outside the canopy shafts, a scene – probably of the Coronation of the Virgin – at the top, and a banner on each side of both the figure and the canopy pediment. On stylistic grounds the monument, which is probably of regional workmanship, can be dated to around the time of Maud's death in 1320. There can be little doubt that Maud is the person commemorated because a note was entered into the Tewkesbury chronicle of her burial in the abbey, alongside her husband.²⁴ Why she or her executors should have decided to include banners on the monument when these were omitted from most other monuments of the day is hard to say. One possible reason may have been that brasses, a flat medium, lent themselves to the representation of banners more easily than did sculpted monuments, on which heater-shaped shields could be accommodated neatly in rows around the sides or suspended from a gable along the top. More generally, a context



Fig. 1. Indent of the lost brass of Maud (d. 1320), widow of Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, Tewkesbury Abbey, Gloucestershire (M.S.63).
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

23. P. Binski, 'The Stylistic Sequence of London Figure Brasses', in *The Earliest English Brasses. Patronage, Style and Workshops, 1270–1350*, ed. J. Coales (London, 1987), pp. 69–132 at p. 77 and fig. 60.

24. *The Complete Peerage*, ed. G.E. Cokayne and others, 12 vols in 13, (London, 1910–57), V, pp. 714–5.

for the feature may be found in the rapidly growing elaboration of funerary brasses at this time, as these products became a popular commemorative medium not only with the clergy but with the lay aristocratic class.

In order of date, the next monuments on which we find banners represented are a group of three brasses dating from *c.* 1320–*c.* 1345, all now lost but known to us from the recording of Sir William Dugdale. Two of these were at Astley, Warwickshire, and the third not far away at Drayton Bassett, Staffordshire.

The Drayton brass (Fig. 2), if it is correctly represented, appears something of a curiosity, with no close likeness among other early brasses either extant or known to us from antiquarian sources. It consists of a very swagger armed figure with a banner tucked under his arm and a shield projecting on the other side under a wide single canopy, the whole surrounded by a marginal inscription.²⁵ The closest analogy to the hipshot stance of the figure is to be found not on a tomb effigy but in stained glass, in the standing figures of the lords of Tewkesbury in the choir clerestory of Tewkesbury Abbey (*c.* 1340).²⁶ On stylistic grounds, the brass can be dated to *c.* 1330–40, although an earlier date is possible. It is likely that the person commemorated is a member of the Basset family, who were the lords of Drayton, the most plausible candidate being Ralph, Lord Basset, who died in 1343. Ralph was one of the most distinguished soldiers of his day, and served successively as steward of Aquitaine, seneschal

of Gascony, Constable of Dover and Warden of the Cinque Ports.²⁷ He was also a frequently appointed commissioner or justice of oyer and terminer in his native shire or elsewhere in the Midlands. He had been knighted with the prince of Wales, the future Edward II in 1306, and was summoned to parliament as a peer from 1299 to 1342. His chivalric tastes found expression not only in his brass but also in a remarkable stained glass panel in the east window of Drayton Bassett church, likewise recorded in a drawing for Dugdale (Fig. 3). In a scene highly reminiscent of the famous arming scene in the Luttrell Psalter, an armed man, presumably Ralph Basset again, was shown receiving a plumed helm from his wife with, behind him, a groom holding the reins of his horse.²⁸ The context for this remarkable display of family and chivalric pride is to be found in Ralph's foundation of a chantry in the church in 1336. A decade-and-a-half earlier he had founded a chantry in the chapel at Fazeley, a few miles from Drayton, which was supported by rents from Drayton.²⁹ In 1336, however, evidently losing interest in this foundation, he embarked instead on a more ambitious plan, establishing a chantry for as many as three chaplains at Drayton itself, the family seat.³⁰ In the next year, by new letters patent granted by the king, he provided a generous endowment for the chantry of rents to the value of £20 from his manor of Nether Whitacre.³¹ Ralph clearly had in mind establishing Drayton church as a family mausoleum, where masses would be said in perpetuity for his and his forebears' souls, and, to provide his chaplains

25. Binski, 'Stylistic Sequence', p. 128 and fig. 136.

26. Illustrated in R. Marks, *Stained Glass in England during the Middle Ages* (London, 1993), plate XVIII.

27. For Ralph's career, see *Complete Peerage*, II, pp. 2–3; C. Moor, *Knights of Edward I* (Harleian Society, 80–4, 1929–32), I, p. 53.

28. BL, Additional MS 71474, f. 60v, discussed by R. Marks, 'Sir Geoffrey Luttrell and some companions:

images of chivalry, *c.* 1320–50', *Studies in the Art and Imagery of the Middle Ages* (London, 2012), pp. 657–81, at pp. 661–2.

29. *CPR*, 1317–21, p. 390.

30. *CPR*, 1334–8, p. 301.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 459.



*Fig. 2. Sedgwick's drawing of the indent of the lost brass of Ralph, Lord Basset (d. 1343), Drayton Basset, Staffordshire.
(© British Library Board Add. MS 71474 f.60r)*



Fig. 3. Sedgwick's drawing of a stained glass panel, now lost, showing the arming of Ralph, Lord Basset, in the east window of Drayton Basset church, Staffordshire.

(© British Library Board Add. MS 71474 f. 60v)

with suitably grand surroundings to do so, he almost entirely rebuilt the place. The chivalric imagery which was so striking a feature of its decoration was to attest to his family's status and his sense of a Christian knighthood fighting under divine protection.

The commemorative scheme which was commissioned at neighbouring Astley, Warwickshire, may have owed something to that at Drayton, just over the county border, as it was initiated only a few years later. In Astley church there were two brasses which included banners in their imagery, both of them now lost but recorded for Dugdale and included in his *Antiquities of Warwickshire*.³² On one, Elizabeth, the wife of Sir Thomas de Astley (Fig. 4), was shown in a heraldic mantle under a single canopy, from the gable of which two banners rose upwards, one on each side, and surrounding the whole was a marginal inscription. On the other, which was conceived as a companion to the lady's memorial, a knight, presumably Sir Thomas, Elizabeth's husband, was shown, again under a single canopy, with a banner bearing the family arms placed one on each side of the pediment. The marginal inscription on this second brass was already lost by Dugdale's time. Both brasses can be dated on stylistic grounds to c. 1345.

The context for the Astley scheme, as in the case of that at neighbouring Drayton, was the establishment of a major intercessory foundation. In 1338 Sir Thomas, who had succeeded his uncle, Sir Nicholas, in the family estates in 1325, founded a chantry for four chaplains in Astley church, endowing it with the church advowson.³³ Two years later he augmented the foundation, raising the number



Fig. 4. Brass, now lost, of Elizabeth, wife of Sir Thomas de Astley from Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (London, 1730).

of chaplains to seven, providing them with a clerk, and alienating further lands for their support.³⁴ Still not satisfied with his provision, however, in 1343 he changed the arrangements yet again, reconstituting the former chantry as a college composed of a dean, two canons and three vicars, and granting the body yet further endowments, among these the advowson of Hillmorton, Warwickshire.³⁵ The statutes, which he drew up for his foundation, probably

32. W. Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire*, 2 vols, (2nd edn., London, 1730), I, p. 118.

33. *CPR, 1338–40* p. 162.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 526.

35. *CPR, 1343–5*, pp. 1–2, 114.

in association with his kinsman, Thomas, a king's clerk, prescribed the clergy's liturgical round in great detail.³⁶ At each mass they were to pray for the founder, his wife and mother, for the archbishop of Canterbury, for Thomas Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, William Clinton, earl of Huntingdon and others. The priest vicars were to attend matins, evensong and compline every day, these to be sung in the choir of the church. After matins there was to be the Lady Mass, followed by prime, while terce and sext were to be said at their proper hours after High Mass, and after them nones. Special arrangements were laid out for various masses to be said on different days of the week; and the *placebo* and *dirige* were to be recited daily before evensong, save on Mondays when they were to be sung in the choir. On every solemn day and festival a deacon and subdeacon were to be present at high mass, properly vested, as well as a priest. At the greater doubles, or more important festivals, there were to be cantors in choir copes throughout, and likewise every day at High Mass. Every Monday at Mass for the Dead the priests were to be suitably vested. To provide his community with the appropriate physical surroundings for their work, Sir Thomas, perhaps inspired by Ralph Basset's example at Drayton, entirely rebuilt the church, in this case as a cruciform structure united around a central tower and a spire. The former chancel of this building, the nave of the present church, is the sole part of it to survive.³⁷ The source of inspiration for Sir Thomas's idea of establishing a college was probably the college of St Mary at Warwick, not far away.

For the Astleys the establishment of the college was both a reaffirmation of their social status

and a badge of family identity: a particularly showy way of exhibiting their membership of the elite. Although the Astleys were essentially of gentry standing, rather than magnates, they had secured for themselves a foothold on the lower ranks of the nobility, and for three successive generations were summoned to parliament as lords. In the case of Sir Thomas himself, however, the summonses came relatively late in life, from the mid 1340s, suggesting that he may have been especially concerned about his status in the years just before that.³⁸ Not inconceivably, his decision to upgrade to a college what had begun as an ordinary chantry foundation was arrived at partly in response to this anxiety. Whether or not this may have been the case, Sir Thomas could at least draw satisfaction from the marriage alliances that he had contracted for his family. He himself secured the hand of the daughter of Guy Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, while he negotiated a match for his son with Joan, daughter of John, Lord Willoughby d'Eresby of Lincolnshire. His wife's distinguished birth as a member of the noble house of Beauchamp was singled out for mention in the epitaph on her brass. If Dugdale's drawing of the memorial is to be trusted, further acknowledgements of her status were made in the details of its design. Elizabeth was shown in a mantle bearing the Beauchamp arms, and wearing a coronet. The two brasses, commissioned simultaneously with the foundation of the college, would have provided the focal points for the daily round of intercession offered by the dean and chaplains. We should interpret the striking presence of the banners on the canopies of the two memorials to the background of Sir Thomas's sensitivity to his family's standing in society.

36. *VCH, Warwickshire*, II, ed. W. Page (London, 1908), pp. 117–20.

37. P. Jeffery, *The Collegiate Churches of England and Wales* (London, 2004), pp. 374–7.

38. *Complete Peerage*, I, pp. 283–4; Dugdale, *Antiquities of Warwickshire*, I, pp. 109–10.

The next monument to show a banner is the remarkable one at Lytchett Matravers, Dorset, which is altogether without parallel in English funerary art – a brass which has a banner as its sole distinguishing feature (Fig. 5). Commemorating John, Lord Maltravers (d. 1364), it consists of a large Tournai marble slab with brass and lead inlays for a fret, the Maltravers arms, and an inscription around the perimeter. Although the inlays themselves are now all gone, the indents remain and are clearly legible. The inscription survives only in part, but was recorded by Richard Gough when more of it remained.³⁹

The extraordinary nature of this memorial is probably to be explained by the equally extraordinary circumstances of Maltravers's career. John Maltravers was born into a well-endowed Dorset knightly family, the son of Sir John Maltravers (d. 1341) of Lytchett, near Poole, a busy local administrator who had spent much of his early career in Ireland.⁴⁰ Active alongside his father in the 1320s in the opposition to the Despencers, Edward II's hated counsellors, after Edward's deposition in 1327 and the accession of his young son Edward III, he became a close associate of Queen Isabella, the new king's mother and her lover, Roger Mortimer. In that capacity, in September 1327 he was deeply implicated in the deposed king's murder at Berkeley castle, either committing the act himself or arranging for it to be committed by an agent. After Edward III's rejection of his mother's tutelage in 1330, he judged it prudent to flee the realm, and he spent the next twenty years abroad, mostly in Germany and the Low Countries. By

the late 1340s the king's attitude to him began to soften, however, and he was occasionally employed on royal business abroad. In 1347 he was granted permission to return to England to clear his name, and in 1352 his restoration was finally confirmed in parliament. In his last years he was resident on his estates in Dorset.

John may have conceived the idea for his unusual memorial in his years of exile, as the brass inlays are laid not, as might be supposed, in a slab of local Purbeck marble, but in a big imported slab, from the quarries at Tournai. John may have drawn his inspiration from memorials he had seen in the Low Countries. The attraction of Tournai marble is that it is black not grey, and so could perfectly represent the black sable field of the Maltravers arms, *sable a fret or*.⁴¹ The slab did not come to England as a finished product, however. It was not to receive its inlays until after its arrival in this country, probably as ballast in a ship, as the inscription is a product of London B. The omission of a date of death strongly suggests that it was set in place in John's lifetime, probably in the early 1360s. In taking the unusual form that it does, the brass may be seen less as a personal memorial than an affirmation of family status. John had been taken on as a banneret of the king's household in 1329 but had spent the greater part of his life in exile, and now wanted to assert his respectability. His singular career finds its parallel in a highly singular brass.

From the late fourteenth century, the number of brasses with banners included in their

39. W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield, P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Dorsetshire* (London, 2001), pp. 112–13.

40. For John's career, see C. Shenton, 'Maltravers, John, first Lord Maltravers (c. 1290–1364)' *ODNB*, online edn, ref:odnb/17907 accessed 25 September 2017.

41. P.I. McQueen, 'The Maltravers Fret', *MBS Trans*, X pt iv (1963–8), pp. 244–8.

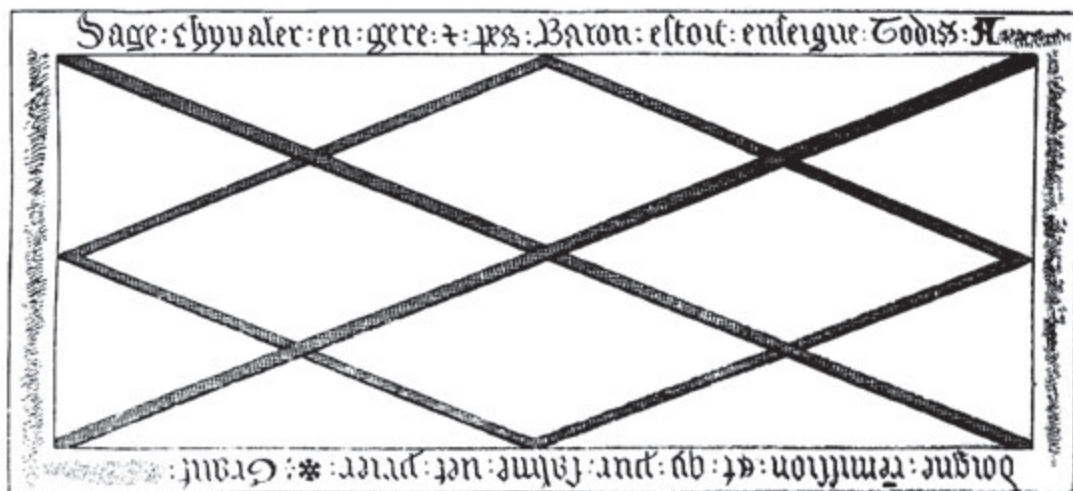


Fig. 5. Indent of brass, now mostly lost, of John, Lord Maltravers (d. 1364), Lychett Matravers, Dorset (M.S.I.)
(© Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, Dorset)

imagery begins to increase significantly. The next example to be considered is the brass, now mutilated, at Ashford, Kent, to Elizabeth (d. 1375), widow of David de Strathbogie, earl of Athol (Fig. 6). It is a striking memorial which, in its original form, must have been one of the richest and most elaborate brasses of its day. What remains is the greater part of the figure, the canopy pediment, a couple of banners (now inaccurately placed) and pieces of the inscription. From antiquarian sources we can reconstruct the rest. Elizabeth was shown with her arms pointing outwards, grasping the side shafts of the canopy, which terminated in banners with the arms of Strathbogie and Ferrers, a third banner rising from the canopy pediment with the English royal arms, further shields of arms at the sides, and a marginal inscription surrounding the whole. According to Stow, Elizabeth was apparently buried not at Ashford, but in the church of the White Friars in London, a more prestigious location.

Stow's report is unlikely to be correct, however, as the Ashford inscription clearly says '*Icy gist*', translating as 'Here lies ...'.⁴²

The complex imagery of Elizabeth's brass needs to be understood in the context of her distinguished ancestry and connections. She was a lady who could lay claim to banner-bearing credentials through both her parents and her husband. Her parents were the wealthy Midlands lord, Henry, Lord Ferrers of Groby, Leicestershire, and his wife, Isabel, daughter and co-heiress of Sir Theobald de Verdon, also of Leicestershire.⁴³ Through her mother's family she could trace her descent from none other than Joan of Acre, the daughter of Edward I and Eleanor of Castile, which may account for the presence of the royal arms on her brass. The background to her marriage to a Scottish earl is to be found in the tangled web of Anglo-Scottish relations in the 1330s, in the wake of Bruce's dramatic

42. P. Whittemore, 'The Athol brass at Ashford, Kent', *MBS Bulletin*, 133 (October, 2016), pp. 650–3.

43. For Elizabeth's ancestry, see *Complete Peerage*, I, pp. 306–9.



*Fig. 6. Brass of Elizabeth (d. 1375), widow of David de Strathbogie, earl of Athol, Ashford Kent.
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)*

seizure of the Scottish throne and the failure of English attempts to unseat him. Bruce's takeover had resulted in the rapid flight of a group of Anglo-Scottish nobles with loyalties to the English king, who together headed south of the border to seek refuge at the English court. One of this group was Sir Henry de Beaumont, titular earl of Buchan, a man with whom Henry Ferrers developed close connections, and through whom he became acquainted with David de Strathbogie, earl of Athol, another prominent exile and Beaumont's son-in-law. In 1332 the three of them were in the forefront of the English army which defeated the Scots, under Bruce's son, at Dupplin Moor and temporarily reinstated the English-backed government in Scotland.⁴⁴ Strathbogie was to meet his death in Scotland just three years later, leaving a son, another David, aged three at his father's death, whose wardship Ferrers obtained in 1340, and whose hand he claimed for his daughter.⁴⁵ The newlyweds were to spend almost the whole of their lives in England, as the English-backed regime in Scotland was soon to collapse again. They resided chiefly at Brabourne near Ashford, Kent, a manor held by Elizabeth's husband by virtue of his grandfather's marriage to one of the co-heiresses of Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, who had once owned the property. It is because of the Brabourne connection that on her death in 1375, six years after her husband's, she was buried in the otherwise unlikely location of Ashford.⁴⁶ Since the couple's only surviving children were their two daughters, on her husband's death the direct line of the Strathbogies came to an end. It

may very well have been for this reason that either Elizabeth or her executors chose to load her brass with such a grand heraldic display. The brass was conceived as a memorial not just to a lady of distinguished birth but to an episode in English history that must have seemed a remote memory by the time of her death.

From the second decade of the fifteenth century comes the next banner-displaying brass, and another which shows a fascination with history, albeit in a quite different way. It is the well-known brass of Sir Simon Felbrigg and his wife at Felbrigg, Norfolk, which shows Sir Simon with the royal banner tucked under his arm by way of a tribute to his years as Richard II's standard-bearer.

The brass was commissioned in 1416 on the death of Sir Simon's wife, Margaret, the daughter of Premislaus, duke of Teschen, and one-time lady-in-waiting to Richard II's queen, Anne of Bohemia. Simon himself is not buried at Felbrigg, as he was to live for nearly another thirty years and was to be interred at his request alongside his second wife in the Black Friars church at Norwich, where he had property. His later years were to be spent for the most part in relative obscurity following the Lancastrians' ousting of Richard II, with him reflecting ruefully on his days at court in the 1390s. The brass, as John Milner has shown, constitutes a quite remarkable study in Ricardian nostalgia.⁴⁷ After Henry IV had usurped the throne, Simon forfeited virtually all of his positions of honour at court. He not

44. Ferrers and Strathbogie appear alongside each other as early as 1327 at Roxburgh, when they were both witnesses to a charter, of which an *inspeximus* was granted in 1341 (*CPR*, 1340–3, p. 173).

45. *Ibid.*, p. 500.

46. For the complex descent of the manor of Brabourne, see E. Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of*

the County of Kent, 12 vols, (Canterbury, 1797–1801), VIII, pp. 14–27.

47. J.D. Milner, 'Sir Simon Felbrigg K.G.: the Lancastrian Revolution and personal fortune', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 37 (1978–80), pp. 84–92.

only lost offices and keeperships; he was also sidelined by such committed Lancastrians as Sir Thomas Erpingham in his native Norfolk. The imagery on the brass harks back to the days when he had enjoyed position and power. He is shown wearing the garter, the symbol of the Order to which he had been elected on Richard's initiative in 1397. Evidence of his association with the former king abounds on the brass. A white hart, the king's personal symbol, peeps out from under the central canopy gable. On the banner itself, the royal arms of England are impaled with the retrospective arms of St Edward the Confessor, the king's patron saint. In the inscription, Simon's office as Richard's standard bearer is proudly recorded, as are the details of his wife's exalted birth and her connection with Richard's queen. The decision to include a banner in the design was prompted not so much by any appreciation of personal status and lineage as by a recollection of times past in an age of turmoil and instability.

Two other brasses commissioned in this period, now represented only by indents, which included banners in their imagery may be dealt with more briefly. The first is a slab at Fyfield, Essex, today obscured by the organ, which bears the well preserved outlines of a floriated cross on a stepped base, flanked on each side by a banner on a staff.⁴⁸ There is no outline of an inscription in the stone, and it is not known whom the brass could have commemorated. It may be significant, however, that from the late fourteenth century the manor was held by the Scropes, a family of banneret rank, and it

may have been one of their kin for whom it was commissioned.⁴⁹ The other memorial is a fragment of an indent now preserved in an English Heritage store, which came from Bury St Edmunds Abbey and shows the clear outline of a banner and, by it, a circle which may be a garter.⁵⁰ It is possible that this is a portion of the lost brass of Thomas Beaufort, duke of Exeter (d. 1426), Henry V's half-brother, who had requested burial in the Lady Chapel of the abbey. The duke, a distinguished military commander, had died without issue, and he had provided the considerable sum of £100 for his monument, enough to pay for an extremely lavish commission.⁵¹

A fourth memorial dating from these years is one of the most instructive for what it tells about the concerns of those who asked for banners to be represented on their memorials. It is an extant example, the brass at Lingfield, Surrey, commemorating Eleanor (d. 1420), daughter of Sir Thomas Culpeper and first wife of Sir Reginald Cobham III of Sterborough (Fig. 7). The brass, an ornate product of style D, shows Eleanor in a close-fitting kirtle and a mantle under a low canopy surmounted by an entablature with, above the entablature, a banner with the arms of Cobham impaling Culpeper. On each side of the banner is a shield, one with the arms of Cobham, the other with those of Culpeper; and surrounding the whole is a marginal inscription. The brass was missing a number of its component parts by the late nineteenth century, and these were replaced on the evidence of the surviving indents by the Wallers.⁵²

48. W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield, P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Essex*, 2 vols, (London, 2003), I, pp. 280, 283,

49. P. Morant, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Essex*, 2 vols, (London, 1816), I, p. 134.

50. J. Bertram, *Icon and Epigraphy*, 2 vols, (Lulu, 2015), I, p. 200.

51. *Register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414–1443*, ed. E.F. Jacob, 4 vols, (Oxford, 1943–7), II, pp. 355–61.

52. Saul, *Death, Art and Memory in Medieval England*, p. 175.



Fig. 7. Brass of Eleanor (d. 1420), daughter of Sir Thomas Culpeper, first wife of Sir Reginald Cobham III of Sterborough, Lingfield, Surrey.
(rubbing: © Martin Stuchfield)

The brass is both a witness and a reaction to the Cobhams' sense of anxiety at their growing loss of status. The family claimed its descent from Reginald, Lord Cobham (d. 1361), a successful captain in the French wars, a household banneret of Edward III, and one of the first successor Knights of the Garter.⁵³ Reginald had been amply rewarded for his services, receiving many grants of land, and in recognition of his status from 1347 until 1360 was summoned to parliament as a peer. At the time of his death the position of his family in the parliamentary peerage seemed relatively secure. Yet appearances were deceptive. From the perspective of the long-term future, the foundations of the Cobhams' success were built on insecure ground. Many of the manors which the family had acquired were small and of relatively low value and, being scattered, were difficult to organise economically. For a banneret lineage that relied on continued military achievement for recognition, moreover, it was a problem that from the 1370s the tide of war turned against the English, leaving future generations few opportunities to win fame. Worst of all, perhaps, in the next reign, that of Richard II, the new head of the family, Reginald II, found himself out of favour for being a supporter of the king's opponents, the Appellants. For a year or two after he came of age Reginald was honoured with a parliamentary summons, probably in deference to his distinguished parentage; but no summonses were issued to him thereafter. Reginald II's son and successor, Sir Reginald III, Eleanor's husband and the patron of her brass, was likewise not to be honoured with a summons, and the same was to be true of his son in turn, Sir Reginald IV. Within three generations the family's political fate had been sealed: despite their promising

53. For what follows on the Lingfield brass, see *ibid.*, pp.124–45, 175–6.

start, they had failed to maintain their parliamentary position, and they were to be relegated to the ranks of the gentry, whence just over a century before they had arisen. For all their relative decline, however, the family remained affluent and comparatively well endowed, and they continued to marry well. Reginald II's first wife was the daughter of the earl of Stafford, and Reginald IV's second none other than the daughter of Humphrey, duke of Buckingham. In terms of status, however, they had definitely lost out. By the fifteenth century they were distinguished, well-to-do-gentry, but they were gentry nonetheless.

In their increasing size and use of imagery, the monuments to the Cobhams in Lingfield church present a defiant response to their lapse from their former nobility. Over the years, in proportion as the family's status and standing went down, so the monuments became more ornate. The tomb of Reginald I, the family founder, commissioned in the 1360s, had been a relatively run-of-the-mill product, consisting of a panelled chest with a sculpted effigy on top. Its most noteworthy feature was the heraldic display, which made a point of honouring Reginald's campaign alliances and so constituted a record of his career in arms. In terms of design and decoration, however, the monument did not stand out except for the inclusion of the garter on Reginald's left leg. Reginald II's monument, which originally stood next to his father's, likewise took the form of a routine stone chest, but this time with a brass on top, a superb product of London style A. In a deliberate attempt to highlight the Cobham family's noble credentials, its inscription stressed Reginald's wisdom, his courage in battle, and his hospitality as a host. The preoccupation with nobility and status came across still more clearly in the next monument in the series, the banner-displaying

brass which Reginald III commissioned for his first wife in 1420. The decision to include a banner constitutes a direct reference to the family's past, recalling Reginald I's position as a banneret in Edward III's household. The last monument in the series, the magnificent tomb of Reginald III himself and his second wife, placed centre-stage in the chancel, the honorific position due to him as founder of Lingfield college, was the grandest of all in the series. A massive, superbly executed alabaster product, again rich in heraldry, it constituted a defiant affirmation of status by a man whose family had finally lost their claim to nobility but still considered themselves a cut above the bachelor knights. The employment of a battlemented parapet around the edge of the chest provided a strong visual link to Reginald I's tomb close by, stressing the commemorated's descent from his distinguished forebear. The family had not forgotten its glorious past and were determined to carry the memory of it into the future.

The final monument in this group from the early years of the century to be considered is yet another high-quality brass, the memorial to Bartholomew, Lord Bourchier (d. 1409) at Halstead, Essex (Fig. 8). Formerly placed on an altar tomb and today on the floor of the south aisle, it shows Bartholomew with his two wives, with three shields at the bottom and two at the top, and a banner, now lost, rising from the Saracen's-head helm below Bartholomew's head. The inscription is now lost.

The brass was laid some six or seven years after Bartholomew's death, and its retrospective character may provide a clue to why a banner was included. Bartholomew was the last in a long line of careerist soldiers. His grandfather had fought at Crécy, and his father, a Knight of the Garter, had fought in both France and in Brittany and had acted as Richard



Fig. 8. Brass of Bartholomew, Lord Bouchier (d. 1409) and his two wives, Halstead, Essex (M.S.I).
(rubbing: © Martin Stuchfield)

II's governor of Flanders.⁵⁴ Both men were of banneret rank. The Bouchiers set great store by their military credentials, and these underpinned their claims to social and political recognition. Bartholomew, however, was living at a time when there was a long lull in the war and had failed to find an opportunity to prove himself in arms. When he died in 1409 without male issue, it was left to his daughter Elizabeth, his sole heiress, to recall and perpetuate the distinction of his line.⁵⁵ This she did by commissioning a brass to his memory on which a banner was represented.⁵⁶

Alongside this monument may be considered another which has a close connection to it, the freestone tomb monument in Westminster Abbey commemorating Sir Lewis Robsart (d. 1430) (Fig. 9). Robsart, a Knight of the Garter and a distinguished war captain of Hainaulter origin, had been fortunate enough to secure the hand in marriage of Bartholomew Bouchier's daughter. By virtue of this match, he was summoned to parliament as a lord from 1425 to 1429, and was dignified as Lord Bouchier.⁵⁷ His interment in Westminster Abbey was a tribute to him for his heroic death at the battle of Conty on 27 November 1430 when, despite being heavily outnumbered, he refused to flee the field.⁵⁸ Robsart's monument takes the form of a rich panelled chest with shields encircled by garters, above which rises a magnificent screen separating the adjacent St Paul's chapel from the ambulatory and acting

as a sort of canopy to the tomb. What makes the monument so exceptional in the present context is the inclusion on it of banners, a unique feature on a relief monument. A couple of banners are placed on each side of the composition, one at each end, with their staffs rising from heraldic falcons and lions at the base. The two banners on the east bear the arms *a lion* for Robsart, quartering *a cross engrailed between four water bougets* for Bouchier, *three buckles* and *a chaplet*; and their counterparts at the west Robsart quartering Bouchier.⁵⁹ This remarkable and complex monument, which was almost certainly commissioned in about 1431 or 1432 by Bouchier's widow, should be seen as reflecting her acute sense of dignity and importance. While there can be little doubting her awareness of her husband's status as a banneret and a Knight of the Garter, it is clear she was also appreciative of her own distinction as heiress to a banneret lineage. The square banner had come into existence back in the early twelfth century as a military ensign. By the later Middle Ages, however, when the military significance of the bannerets was beginning to fade, it was as a badge of status and honour that it was to find a new lease of life in the battery of aristocratic insignia.

Considerations of a more purely military nature explain the appearance of banners on the brass of another distinguished captain of the closing stages of the Hundred Years War, the East Anglian knight, Sir William Chamberlain

54. *Complete Peerage*, II, pp. 246–8; M. Jones, 'The Fortunes of War: the Military Career of John, 2nd Lord Bouchier (d. 1400)', *Essex Archaeology and History*, 26 (1995), pp. 145–61.

55. *CIPM*, XIX, 7–14 *Henry IV (1405–1413)* (London, 1992), no. 640.

56. Interestingly, no banner was represented on the tomb of either Robert, the 1st Lord Bouchier, or his son John, the Knight of the Garter: see the antiquarian drawings of the tombs before their mutilation reproduced in T.D.S. Bayley, 'The Bouchier Shield

in Halstead Church', *Trans. Essex Archaeological Society*, new series 25 (1949–60), pp. 80–100. So the inclusion of one on Bartholomew's brass was the result of a quite conscious decision on his daughter's part.

57. *Complete Peerage*, II, pp. 247–8.

58. D.A.L. Morgan, 'From a Death to a View: Louis Robsart, Johan Huizinga and the Political Significance of Chivalry', in *Chivalry in the Renaissance*, ed. S. Anglo (Woodbridge, 1990), pp. 93–106.

59. *RCHM An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in London. I, Westminster Abbey*, 2 vols. (London, 1924), I, p. 37.



*Fig. 9. Tomb monument of Sir Lewis Robsart (d. 1430), Westminster Abbey.
(photo: © Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey)*

(d. 1462). On his brass at East Harling, Norfolk, now lost but the indent of which remains, Chamberlain is shown in armour with a tabard alongside his wife Anne, his coat of arms and crest between the two figures, and a tall banner rising one on each side of the composition (Fig. 10).⁶⁰ Chamberlain's elevation to banneret rank was made in recognition of his role as a commander in France. A scion of an old Suffolk family, he served in the French theatre almost continuously from 1431 to the expulsion of the English from Normandy at the end of the following decade.⁶¹ Between 1431 and 1438 his career included stints as lieutenant of Pont-de-l'Arche and Pontoise and captain of Meaux, while in the 1440s he served as captain of Gournay and Gerberoy and lieutenant of Rouen. He seems to have exerted considerable pulling power as a military recruiter. In 1439 he and two other knights between them assembled retinues totalling no fewer than 214 men-at-arms and 678 archers. His exalted reputation owed something to his role in a daring raid mounted from Creuil when, according to the later witness of Holinshed, 'he behaved himself so bravely that with 500 Englishmen he issued out of the town, discomfited his enemies, slew 200 of them, and took a great number prisoner.' Yet, if he had enjoyed his moments of glory, he also experienced some of the setbacks of war. In 1439, the year of his great recruiting effort, he was obliged to surrender the town of Meaux, and he suffered a brief imprisonment. Seven years later he was captured again, only securing his freedom through payment of a ransom that was long to burden him financially.

In 1461, when the Yorkist Edward IV became king, he was elected a Knight of the Garter alongside no fewer than a dozen other knights, all of them men distinguished in arms, in a vivid expression of the new king's commitment to renewing the chivalric credentials of the Order. Given his many connections in the world of chivalry, Chamberlain's election is hardly surprising. Through his wife, Anne, the daughter and heiress of Sir Robert Harling, he stood at the heart of Garter society. Anne was the granddaughter of the Lancastrian Garter knight, Sir John Radcliffe, himself a banneret, and as a ward had been raised by another Garter luminary, Sir John Fastolf. Anne's third and last husband was to be yet another Garter knight, John, Lord Scrope of Bolton.

The indent of Chamberlain's lost brass lies on a high chest standing between the chancel and the north chapel of East Harling church and was almost certainly commissioned by his widow.⁶² Although the inscription is lost, it can be dated fairly precisely to the late 1460s. To judge from the outline of the lost figures, the brass was a product of London style D. Its design links it with a number of other brasses from the same workshop which all commemorate members of the Yorkist elite, among them those of Sir John Say and his wife at Broxbourne, Hertfordshire, and Henry Bouchier, earl of Essex, and his wife at Little Easton, Essex.⁶³ At both Broxbourne and Little Easton the man's sword is slung sideways in front of the figure, just as at East Harling, while at Broxbourne a rich heraldic achievement is

60. I am grateful to Martin Stuchfield for drawing my attention to this important indent, which I would otherwise have overlooked.

61. For Chamberlain's career, see N.E. Saul, *For Honour and Fame: Chivalry in England, 1066–1500* (London, 2011), p. 340; Bell, Curry, King, and Simpkin, *Soldier in Later Medieval England*, pp. 61, 91; D.J. King, 'Anne Harling Reconsidered', in *Recording Medieval Lives*, ed. J. Boffey and V. Davis (Donington, 2009), pp. 204–22.

62. For a description of the monument, see W.B. Slegg, 'The Chamberlaine tomb at East Harling, Norfolk', *MBS Trans*, VII (1934–42), pp. 126–9.

63. S. Badham, 'Patterns of Patronage: Brasses to the Cromwell-Bouchier Kinship Group', *MBS Trans*, XVII pt v (2007), 423–52.



*Fig. 10. Indent of lost brass of Sir William Chamberlain (d. 1462), East Harling, Norfolk.
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)*

placed in the centre of the composition, partly above the figures, again just as at East Harling. All of the brasses in this group are noteworthy for their intense preoccupation with heraldry and the trappings of status. Anne's inclusion of the two banners on her and her late husband's brass may be a reference not only to her husband's status but also to her own descent from another banneret, Sir John Radcliffe.

When we move on to the next monument, we can see again, as we have in the case of the Bouchiers' commissions, a connection with a monument which we have already considered. The dynastic linkage this time is between the brass of Elizabeth de Strathbogie, countess of Athol, at Ashford of *c.* 1380, and that dating from some sixty years later to Sir Hugh Halsham (d. 1442) and his wife at West Grinstead, Sussex (Fig. 11). On both memorials a striking feature is the inclusion of a banner bearing the arms of Strathbogie. The brass at West Grinstead affords another excellent example of the work of London style B, which executed the Ashford brass. It shows Sir Hugh and his wife, Joyce, at prayer under a tall double canopy, with a shield between them and three banners at the top and a chamfered inscription around the edge. Two of the banners and much of the inscription are now lost, and the shield between the figures is a modern restoration. On the banner the arms are those of Halsham quartering Strathbogie.

Sir Hugh Halsham claimed descent from the Anglo-Scottish Strathbogie line through his mother, Philippa, one of the two daughters

and coheiresses of Elizabeth, countess of Athol, and her husband, David, the last of the Strathbogies.⁶⁴ The wardship of the two young girls was purchased from the crown in 1373 by Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, who married them off to his two younger sons, in Philippa's case to his thirdborn, Ralph.⁶⁵ The marriage was destined not to last, however, and Philippa eloped with John Halsham, scion of a Yorkshire gentry family, the two settling down in southern England, in Sussex.⁶⁶ Philippa was to bear her husband three sons, Richard, Hugh and John. As Richard, the eldest, predeceased his father, it was the second son, Hugh, who in 1417 succeeded to the family inheritance with its seat at West Grinstead, and he lived at that manor until his death in 1442. The brass at West Grinstead was almost certainly one which he commissioned himself, as he outlived his two wives and he had no heirs of his body to succeed him.⁶⁷ The brass forms a companion piece to a second brass in the church, that commemorating his mother, a retrospective product, again dating from *c.* 1440. Sir Hugh, the last of his line, acutely conscious that his earthly years were drawing to a close, was evidently taking all necessary measures to ensure the preservation of his family's memory at West Grinstead. On the epitaph of his mother's brass he made a point of singling out her distinguished Strathbogie lineage for mention. On his own memorial, it was the heraldic banners that were to tell the story. The details of both memorials show Sir Hugh to have been highly sensitive to his family's history. In a codicil to his will, made

64. *Complete Peerage*, I, p. 309; C.E.D. Davidson-Houston, 'Sussex Monumental Brasses, III', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 78 (1937), pp. 73–6.

65. *CPR*, 1370–4, pp. 330–1.

66. *CCR*, 1381–5, pp. 452, 459, 571; *CPR*, 1381–5, pp. 399, 423, 439.

67. In his inquisition *post mortem* his heir was said to be Joan, the wife of his cousin, John Lewknor: *CIPM*,

XXV, 16–20 Henry VI (1437–1442), ed. C. Noble (London, 2009), nos. 596–8. He had granted all of his extensive landholdings in Kent, Sussex, Norfolk and Wiltshire to feoffees in stages between 1425 and 1438 (*CPR*, 1422–9, p. 316; *CPR*, 1429–36, p. 428; *CPR*, 1436–41, p. 164).



Fig. 11. Brass of Sir Hugh Halsham (d. 1442) and his wife, Joyce, West Grinstead, Sussex.
(photo: © author)

in 1442, he instructed his executors to use the surplus revenues of his manor of Brabourne, Kent, to pay for two honest priests to say masses perpetually for his and his wives' souls, the souls of his parents and brother, and the souls of all his ancestors.⁶⁸

The gentry's appreciation of family and dynastic history is a theme which emerges likewise from a consideration of the next brass to show a banner, the now lost memorial to Sir Edmund Ingoldesthorpe (d. 1456) at Burrough

Green, Cambridgeshire (Fig. 12). This brass is known to us from a drawing made by the herald Richard St George (1555–1635) and showed Sir Edmund in armour with shields at three of the corners of the slab and a banner at the fourth bearing the arms of Ingoldesthorpe, *an engrailed cross*.⁶⁹ The Ingoldesthorpes were descended from a fourteenth-century banneret family, the Bradestons of Winterbourne, Gloucestershire. Sir Thomas de Bradeston (d. 1360), a friend and ally of Edward III and a veteran of Crécy, had risen steadily through the

68. *Register of Henry Chichele*, ed Jacob, II, pp. 608–11.

69. W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield, P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Cambridgeshire* (London, 1995), pp. 15, 18.



Fig. 12. Indent of lost brass of Sir Edmund Ingoldesthorpe (d. 1456), Burrough Green, Cambridgeshire (M.S.10).
(© Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, Cambridgeshire)

ranks from esquire to knight to banneret, and from 1347 to his death had been summoned to parliament as a lord. He had raised his family from relative obscurity to the heights of the peerage but, as with the Cobhams, the later generations of the lineage were unable to maintain this high estate. Thomas's son, Robert, showed the capacity to follow in his father's footsteps, but he was to predecease the latter. Neither Thomas's grandsons nor his single great-grandson were to be honoured with summonses, however, and the family sank back into the ranks of the gentry.⁷⁰ Yet, for all the reality of social decline, the memory of the higher status which the Bradestons had once enjoyed was to live on over the generations.

In the next century it was to be recalled on his brass by their descendant, Sir Edmund Ingoldesthorpe. Sir Edmund was the son of Sir Thomas Ingoldesthorpe, who had married Margaret, the daughter of Sir Walter de la Pole of Sawston, Cambridgeshire, and his wife, Elizabeth, who was Thomas, Lord Bradeston's great-granddaughter.⁷¹ The Ingoldesthorpes' knowledge of the complexities of their family descent was a quality to be revealed too in the evidence which they were to give to the escheator when the inquisition was taken on Sir Edmund's death. It was reported very precisely that Sir Edmund was the son of Lady Margaret, who was the daughter of Elizabeth, who was the daughter of Robert, who was the son of Thomas de Bradeston.⁷² A banner had not been represented on the brass which was placed to Elizabeth de la Pole's memory at Sawston by her husband, and which is still extant.⁷³ The close interest in the family's past was evidently one which was developed by the Ingoldesthorpes, not their predecessors. The position of Sir Edmund's tomb in Burrough Green church, right in the centre of the chancel, suggests that he was a man who attached considerable importance to his status.

The last brass we have to consider, and the last on which a banner is represented, is one which in many ways sums up these related themes of lineage history and the importance of an appreciation of status. It is the brass at St Columb Major, Cornwall, commemorating Sir John Arundell III and his two wives, Elizabeth Grey and Katherine Grenville (Fig. 13). Sir John died in 1545, but the brass was commissioned

70. For the Bradestons, see *Complete Peerage*, II, p. 273; R. Austin, 'Notes on the Family of Bradeston', *Transactions Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 47 (1925), pp. 279–86.

71. *Complete Peerage*, II, p. 273; W.M. Palmer, *A History of the Parish of Borough Green, Cambridgeshire* (Cambridge, 1939), pp. 4–5, 14–15.

72. Actually, for all the precision, a generation was omitted from the family's descent (Palmer, *History of the Parish of Borough Green*, pp. 14–15).

73. Lack, Stuchfield, Whittemore, *Monumental Brasses of Cambridgeshire*, p. 199.



Fig. 13. Brass of Sir John Arundell III (d. 1545) and his two wives, Elizabeth Grey and Katherine Grenville, St Columb Major, Cornwall (M.S.I).

(photo: © Paul Cockerham)

some twenty years later, on the evidence of style probably in the mid-1560s. It is a large and complex composition showing Sir John in armour with a banner rising from his crest, his wives one on each side of him, the figures of the children arranged in four groups below those of their parents, a generous scattering of shields of arms above and below, and a marginal inscription surrounding the whole. The brass is a late product of London style G.

The most noteworthy characteristic of the brass is its intense status-consciousness. The clearest indication of this is found in the inclusion of

the banner, exceptional on a sixteenth-century memorial, but hardly less noteworthy is the rich display of heraldry, which almost overwhelms the main figures. Above the female figures are two big shields, one on each side of the banner, while at the bottom are no fewer than another six shields, distributed randomly between and below the groups of children. The Arundells were a very wealthy and well-connected family, one of the most important in Cornwall. In the absence of a resident titled nobility in the county, they were effectively noble in all but name, and to contemporaries they were known as the 'great' Arundells.⁷⁴ In 1523 Sir John

74. P.Y. Stanton, 'Arundell family (*per.* 1435–1590)', *ODNB*, online edn, ref:odnb/41331 accessed 19 April 2017.

had actually been offered a barony by Wolsey, although he was to turn it down, ostensibly on the grounds that he had not been given enough notice, but more substantially because he considered the rank a burden. Sir John's two marriages reflected his and his family's standing. His first wife, Elizabeth, was the daughter of a magnate, Thomas Grey, marquess of Dorset, and his second a member of another of the West Country's great families, the Grenvilles of Stowe. The epitaph pays due tribute to the deceased's high rank and offices. It says that he was a 'knyght of the bath and knight banneret Receyver of ye duchye of Cornewall'. Yet, for all his local standing, in his last years Sir John was to face growing difficulties as the religious landscape changed around him. He and his family were adherents of the Catholic religion, and after his death, in Edward VI's reign, when there was a shift to Protestantism, his son and successor, John IV, was to find himself in serious trouble. In 1549 he was summoned before the privy council to answer charges that he had failed to respond adequately to the Western Rising, and over a period of some three years he faced intermittent imprisonment. The family's fortunes were to pick up in the next reign, that of Mary, whom John IV's sister, Jane, served as a lady-in-waiting, but they were to suffer a setback again five years later when the protestant Elizabeth became queen. It is almost certainly the political uncertainties of the age which led to the long delay in the commissioning of the brass, a product in the event of the patronage of Sir John's grandson, John V. The inclusion of the banner may be seen as a defiant reaffirmation of the family's

standing in the face of social and religious upheaval.

The presence of the banner, however, tells us something more: it tells us about the Arundells' sense of lineage and their familiarity with their family's history. Sir John's brass, although it is today the earliest surviving in St Columb church, was at the time merely the most recent in a series of family memorials stretching back to the late fourteenth century. According to the antiquary Ralph Sheldon, there were tombs and brasses in the church to Sir John (d. 1379) and his wife, Sir Bernard (d. 1411) and his wife, Sir John (d. 1435) and his wife, and finally Sir Thomas (d. 1443) and his second wife, Elizabeth; and there may have been others which escaped the antiquary's notice.⁷⁵ Some of these memorials were lost in 1676, when there was a big explosion in the church, and others later, in the nineteenth century, when the church was re-pewed.⁷⁶ In 1427 Sir John II had established a chantry college in the church for a warden, four priests and a clerk, with provision for the priests to say their offices in the Lady chapel on the south side of the chancel. It was this intercessory foundation which was to provide both the spur to and the focus for family commemoration in the church, the regular saying of prayers and masses by the chaplains for those interred there contributing to the build-up of ancestral memory. In 1513, by the terms of a will, which he made just before setting off on Henry VIII's expedition to France, Sir John III supplemented his ancestor's foundation by establishing a chantry of his own in the church with the chaplains

75. W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Cornwall* (London, 1997), p. 111. Ralph Sheldon made his notes between 1658 and 1674, and these were to be incorporated by Anthony à Wood in his own notes, now Bodleian Library, MS Wood C 11 (F. Madan, H.H.E. Craster, N. Denholm-Young, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in*

the Bodleian Library at Oxford, 7 vols, (Oxford, 1937), II, pt 2, p. 1188). I am grateful to Paul Cockerham for advice on the brasses at St Columb Major.

76. C. Henderson, *St Columb Major Church and Parish, Cornwall* (Long Compton, 1930), pp. 45–53.

praying specifically for the souls of his late wife and his brother.⁷⁷ On the epitaphs which adorned the tombs and brasses in the chapel would have been recorded the honours and offices held by those who were commemorated there. Whether or not any earlier heads of the family had been raised to banneret rank is not altogether clear, although it is quite possible that Sir John II may have been as he was an active soldier in Henry V's wars. Sir John III's own elevation to banneret can be dated quite precisely: it took place in the course of Henry VIII's expedition of 1513 and was in recognition of the courage he had shown in the sieges of Tournai and Théroutanne.⁷⁸ In the context of the family mausoleum, the precise recording of a knight's rank mattered because the tombs in the mausoleum constituted a witness to the family's standing in local society. It is highly significant that over half-a-century after Sir John III's dubbing, when banneret rank was well on its way to oblivion, his grandson still recalled his grandfather's standing and deemed it worth recording on his memorial.

After the Arundells' magnificent brass at St Columb there were to be no more memorials on which banners were represented. As we have seen, there were actually to be no more elevations to banneret rank after those made in the wake of Edward VI's accession in 1547. Even in the Middle Ages, representations of the banner on funerary monuments had been

relatively rare. Other than the cases which we have considered, there is only one other extant example, the outline of two banners on the indent of the lost brass of a boy at Dennington, Suffolk. This brass probably commemorated a son of William, Lord Bardolf, a magnate banneret, whose tomb is close by. Most earls, barons and bannerets appear to have been content to have heater-shaped shields displayed on their memorials, rarely moved to have onlookers' attention drawn to their status through the presence of banners. The relative rarity of banner representation serves only to highlight the exceptional character of those examples which we do come across. For the most part, these are found on the memorials of those who, for one reason or another, wanted to draw attention to their standing in society. Such people might be establishing a religious foundation, such as a chantry or a college which, at one level, might constitute a statement of their family's local importance. Alternatively, in an age of high social mobility, they might feel their position in the hierarchy threatened and thus seek the comforting reassurance of a display of ancestral credentials on their monuments. Although the banner had originated in the twelfth century as a military ensign, it was as a marker of social rank that it was valued on memorials in the late medieval and early modern period. In its highly selective use in funerary art it affords a sharp insight into the ambitions and anxieties of those whose memorials it adorns.

77. *Cornish Wills, 1342–1540*, ed. N. Orme Devon and Cornwall Record Society, new series 50 (2007), pp. 67, 149, 211.

78. W.A. Shaw, *The Knights of England*, 2 vols, (London, 1906, repr. 1971), II, p. 36. Shaw suggests that the

dubbing, one of twenty-eight made at the same time, took place after the battle of the Spurs, a minor engagement fought during the siege of Théroutanne.



*Fig. 1. Thomas Stapel (d. 1372), Rochford, Essex (LSW.I).
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)*

The Brass of Thomas Stapel (d. 1372), Sergeant-at-Arms to Edward III: A Monument to a Career in Household Service

Matthew Hefferan

In 2016, the brass of Thomas Stapel, a notable Essex esquire who died in 1372, was moved from Sutton Church, Essex, to nearby St Andrew's in Rochford. This was the second time the brass had been moved, having originally been placed in Shopland Church, just a few miles from Rochford. Stapel's brass is significant as it is the earliest of just three to survive depicting a royal sergeant-at-arms. The sergeants-at-arms were a group of lay individuals of gentry stock who were retained within the king's household in later medieval England, and formed the basis of his personal bodyguard. Studying this brass, and the man behind it, therefore reveals a great deal about the obligations and rewards of royal household service in fourteenth-century England.

Introduction

The London B style brass commemorating Thomas Stapel (d. 1372), a notable Essex esquire, now residing in St Andrew's Church, Rochford has had an eventful life (Fig. 1). Originally it was placed in Shopland Church, just over two miles from Rochford. Despite residing at Shopland for nearly six hundred years, after the closure of the church in 1957, Stapel's brass was moved to nearby Sutton Church. The brass remained at Sutton for the next sixty years but, following the announcement that Sutton Church too was surplus to requirements in 2016, the decision was made to move the brass once more, this time to its (hopefully) final resting place at St Andrew's, Rochford. This turbulent past

has had a detrimental impact on the condition of the brass (Fig. 2). The canopy, along with Thomas's legs and the inscription which originally ran around the outside of the monument, have long been lost.¹ Nevertheless, what remains to us is a splendid monument to a man whose career can tell us a great deal about the value of service in the royal household in late-medieval England.

The Brass

Although of moderate size, measuring 1700 mm by 650 mm overall, its grandeur suggests that it is the brass of a man of standing in society. In its prime it included not only an intricate, cinquefoil ogee canopy, two pinnacles and two shields displaying arms, but also an inscription in French. The inscription, now lost, was recorded by John Weever in the seventeenth century, and read:

*Tho. Stapel, iadis Seriant d'Armes nostre Seigneur le Roi, q̄i morust le secunde iour de Mars, l'An de Gras Mil. CCC.L.XXI, gist ici. Dieu de s'alme eit mercy. Amen.*²

(Thomas Stapel, formerly Sergeant-at-Arms to Our Lord the king, who died the second day of March 1371/2, rests here. God have mercy on his soul. Amen.).

It is perhaps significant that Stapel chose French for his inscription, rather than Latin.

1. In his list of monumental brasses, Mill Stephenson recorded that the 'legs from knees, canopy, and marg. inscr. in Fr. lost' (M. Stephenson, *A List of Monumental Brasses in the British Isles* (London, 1926), p. 132). They had probably been missing for some time even by then.

2. J. Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments* (London, 1631), p. 655.



Fig. 2. The full extent of the Stapel brass, Rochford, Essex (LSW.I).

(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

French, often found on lay monuments, was the ‘language of lordship and landownership’, a sign of ‘power and status’, and further emphasised Stapel’s standing.³ Weever also recorded Stapel’s arms – *a salter mixt with Staples*.

Stapel is shown wearing the typical plate armour of the second half of the fourteenth century. His head is protected by a bascinet helm, attached to which is a chain mail aventail covering the neck and throat. While the majority of his body armour is hidden behind a jupon, a mail shirt is visible at the armpits. His shoulders are protected by a pair of undecorated spaulders, while on his arms he wears plain vambraces, with rondels at the elbow. His gauntlets are similarly plain. Though little survives of Stapel’s legs, what does remain shows leather studded cuisses, a style which was replaced by plate early in the fifteenth century. Finally, at his waist is a finely decorated belt, from which a sword hangs. Stapel’s armour, then, while not overly elaborate, was typical of the best available in the 1370s.

What is particularly noteworthy about the Stapel brass is that it is one of just three to survive depicting royal sergeants-at-arms. The sergeants were a group of lay individuals of gentry stock who were retained within the king’s household in later medieval England, and formed the basis of his personal bodyguard.⁴ Thomas’s status as a sergent-at-arms is confirmed not only by the inscription on his brass, but also because he is shown wearing the sergent’s mace of office on his right hip,

3. N. Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2009), p. 354.

4. For a useful overview of the sergeants-at-arms under Edward III, see R. Partington, ‘Edward III’s Enforcers: The King’s Sergeants-at-arms in the Localities’, in *The Age of Edward III*, ed. J.S. Bothwell (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 89–106.

in place of a dagger, as was the standard form. While the mace itself no longer survives, we can be confident that this is what was once depicted from the indent shown in Figure 3. Moreover, it is no coincidence that the two other surviving brasses commemorating sergeants-at-arms also include the sergeant's mace of office.⁵ These were those of Nicholas Maundyt (d. 1420), sergeant-at-arms to Henry V, whose brass resides at Wandsworth Church, Surrey, and John Borrell (d. 1531), sergeant-at-arms in the household of Henry VIII, whose brass is at Broxbourne Church, Hertfordshire.⁶ This level of careful personalisation suggests that all three men were tremendously proud of their status as a sergeant-at-arms, and that it was perhaps Thomas himself who commissioned the monument during his lifetime.⁷

It is also interesting to note that, while a medium sized brass such as Thomas's would have been relatively affordable in the 1370s, probably costing around £10 – this was a period when brass production was still recovering from the effects of the Black Death.⁸ Consequently, a brass of the grandeur of Thomas's is rarely found commemorating an esquire: the brasses of esquires at this time usually consisted of little more than a coat of arms accompanied by a short inscription. In terms of size and scale, Stapel's brass is more in keeping with that of someone of higher rank such as Sir Nicholas Burnell of Acton Burnell, who served alongside Stapel in the royal household, and was a knight



Fig. 3. Indent of Thomas Stapel's mace of office.
(photo: © author)

banneret – the rank immediately below the baronage – with substantial landholdings in Shropshire.⁹

The Stapel brass thus represents the earliest example of a very select group of monuments which commemorate royal sergeants-at-arms on a scale that the rank and file of esquires could not hope to achieve. By examining the life and

5. See H. Haines, *Manual of Monumental Brasses*, 2 vols (London, 1861), I, pp. cxxvi-cxxvii. My thanks to Martin Stuchfield for bringing this to my attention.
6. For more on Maundyt and his brass, see M. Hunt, 'Nicholas Maundyt: A Wandsworth Knight', *Wandsworth Historian*, 70 (1984); for Borrell's brass, see H. Haines, *A Manual of Monumental Brasses* (Oxford, 1861), pp. cxxvi-cxxvii.
7. For more on the display of rank on brasses, see N. Saul, 'Bold as Brass: Secular Display in English Medieval Brasses', in *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social*

Display in Medieval England, ed. P. Coss and M. Keen (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 169–94. An interesting parallel can be found in the case of Sir Simon Felbrigg, standard bearer to Richard II, who chose to be depicted with the royal standard tucked under his right arm on his brass. See, *ibid.*, p. 182.

8. Saul, 'Bold as Brass', pp. 173–4.
9. J. Moor, 'Aristocratic Pretensions and Heraldic Skulduggery in Fourteenth-Century Shropshire: Sir Nicholas Burnell of Acton Burnell', *Trans. MBS*, 18 (2010), pp. 120–3.

career of the man behind the brass it is possible to shed new light on who the sergeants-at-arms were, why certain individuals were chosen for this role, what duties they performed, and what rewards were offered in return for their service. This is important because, although the centrality of the sergeants-at-arms' place in royal administrations has long been appreciated by historians, little has been written about what this entailed in practice, nor what such service meant for the individual involved.¹⁰ It is to this that our attention must now turn.

Thomas's Personal Background

Before examining Thomas's household career, it is important to consider his personal background. As Richard Partington has noted in his work on Edward III's sergeants-at-arms, in the majority of cases 'the sergeants' personal origins are largely obscure'.¹¹ Thomas Stapel is no exception. His date of birth can only be cautiously estimated at sometime between 1310 and 1320 based on the fact that his active career appears to have begun in the mid-1330s and he was still an active royal servant at the time of his death in 1372. Likewise, because Thomas's will does not survive, little can be said about his personal piety beyond what his religiously conventional brass and his patronage of Shopland Church reveals. Shopland was the natural choice for his monument as the manor was his principal residence. Stapel had enjoyed a close relationship with the church during his

lifetime, and it is unsurprising that he chose to continue this after his death. His coat of arms was displayed in the stained glass windows on the north side of the church.¹² Similarly, though they cannot be attributed with any certainty to the Stapel family, the expansion of the Norman chancel, and the addition of new roof to the church, in the mid to late fourteenth century may well have been funded by him.¹³

We are on firmer ground with regard to establishing Thomas's landholdings. The inquisition post mortem taken after his death records that Thomas held a range of properties in Essex, mainly in the Hundred of Rochford.¹⁴ These include the manors of Shopland, his primary residence, Prittlewell, Hadleigh, Rawreth, Bluets in Wakering, Shoebury Magna, Thundersley Highwood, Hawkwell, Apton Hall and Botelersham in Prittlewell (Fig. 4). Thomas also held the honours of Rayleigh and Basildon. Of these properties and rights, none is recorded as having been purchased by, nor granted to, Thomas during his lifetime, suggesting that they were his by right of birth through his father. He did, however, acquire two manors during his life, those of Pudsey and Canewdon, through his marriage to Margery de Chanceaux, the date of which is unknown. Together, these lands gave Thomas an estimated income of £33 per year – not far short of the £40 a year that was generally accepted as the minimum required to

10. The most detailed work on the sergeants-at-arms is Richard Partington's 'Edward III's Enforcers', which provides a useful introduction to who these men were and how they were used in local administration. The other major works that discuss them are: T.F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England*, 6 vols. (Manchester, 1920–33), III, pp. 362–72, 434; M. McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1959), pp. 407–12, 458; M. Prestwich, *War, Politics and Finance under Edward I* (London, 1972), pp. 47–8; C. Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity: Service,*

Politics and Finance in England, 1360–1413 (New Haven and London, 1986), pp. 11, 13, 21–2, 32, 53–5, 60.

11. Partington, 'Edward III's Enforcers', p. 92.

12. Weever, *Funerall Monuments*, p. 655.

13. RCHM, *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Essex, Volume 4, South East* (London, 1923), pp. 135–6.

14. *Calendarium inquisitionum post mortem*, 4 vols (Record Commission: London, 1808), II, p. 320. For no clear reason, Thomas's inquisition post mortem was omitted from the relevant *CIPM* (vol 13) published in 1954.

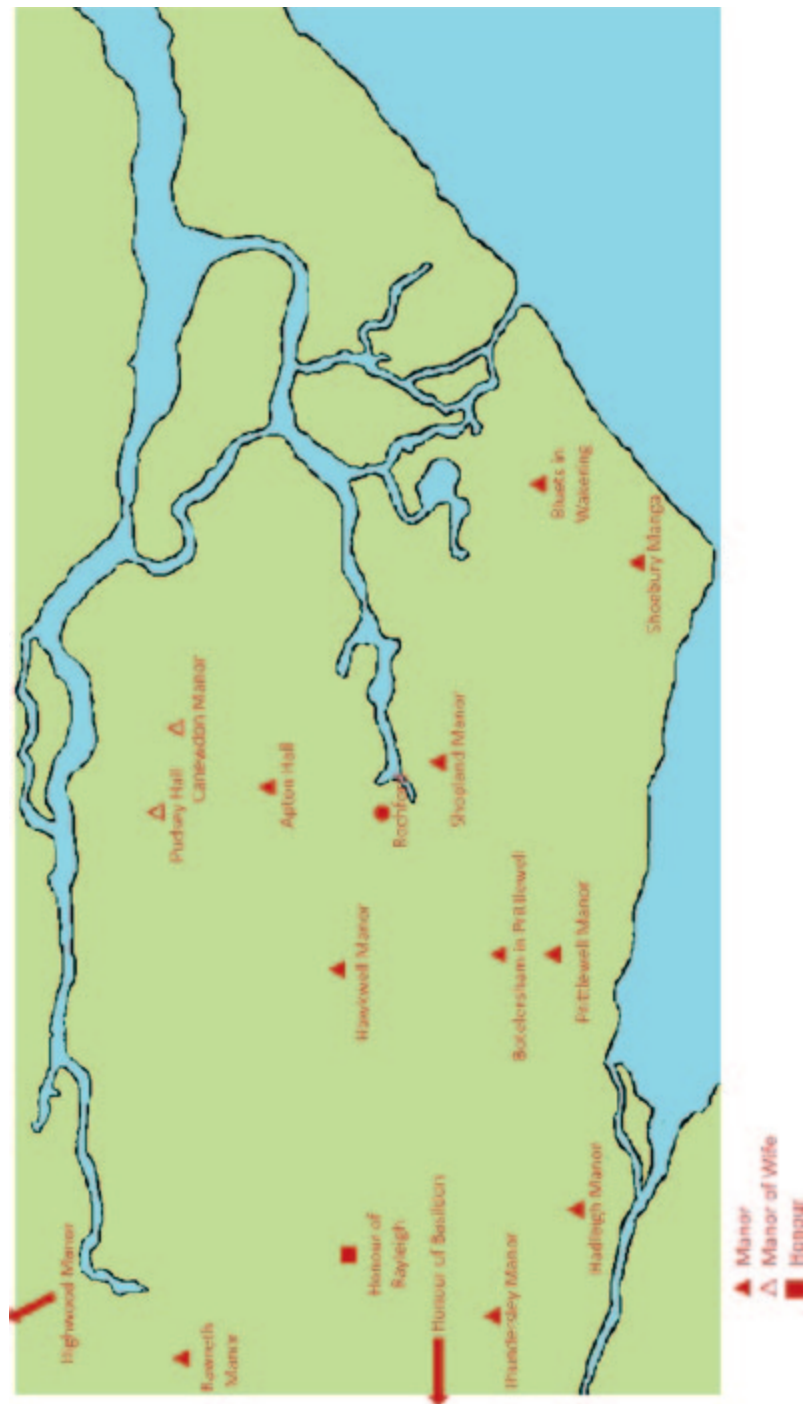


Fig. 4. The properties of Thomas Stapel.

maintain knighthood.¹⁵ Though Thomas was by no means amongst the very wealthiest men in Essex at this time, then, he was nevertheless a man of reasonable means who would have been well-known throughout the county, and probably the southeast more broadly. Thomas, however, had no sons to inherit, and after his death his lands were divided between his two daughters, Alice and Elizabeth, and their respective husbands, John Sutton and John Prittlewell, neither of whom were men of more than local standing.¹⁶ One of the largest collection of manors in Essex was, as a consequence, broken up.

There is also evidence to suggest that Thomas was an active member of his local community, both in Essex and neighbouring Kent. The first reference to Thomas's activities comes in 1334/5, when he was named alongside a John Stapel and six others as 'men of liberty of the Cinque Ports' in the Kent Lay Subsidy Roll and tasked with preventing the smuggling of wool from the ports.¹⁷ Thereafter, references to Thomas are rare until the 1350s. Consequently, it is unclear whether he served on the Crécy campaign in 1346, the largest campaign of Edward III's bellicose reign. Given the number of men recruited from Essex for the campaign, however, it seems probable that he did.¹⁸ All that is known from this period is that Thomas was forced to borrow 11 marks from a Thomas

de Bath of Bircholt, Kent, in 1341, suggesting he fell on hard times early on in his career.¹⁹

From 1350 onwards, references to Thomas and his activities in Essex are more frequent. He found himself in some trouble in 1352 when on 17 May, a commission of oyer and terminer was issued to Richard Kelleshall, William Hatton and John Berland in response to a complaint from Thomas alleging that Edward and Thomas Woodham of Little Shoebury, Thomas Atwood, chaplain, Thomas Lodkin, Stephen Bamfleet and others had assaulted him at Great Shoebury.²⁰ Three days later Thomas is recorded as having agreed to lend the aforementioned Edward Woodham the sum of £30.²¹ It is unclear what happened here, though the two incidents were undoubtedly linked; perhaps the assault was an attempt to intimidate Thomas to lend to money. Whatever the case, the fact that Thomas was now in a position to lend a sum just £3 short of his estimated annual income shows how dramatically his fortunes had improved in the two decades since he was forced to borrow 11 marks himself.

Thomas became embroiled in another local dispute in 1354, one that was to run at least until the late 1360s and that was reportedly 'commonly spoken of in the neighbourhood'.²² This centred on the manor of Southchurch

15. It is not entirely clear to whom these lands went after Thomas's death, although according to a nineteenth-century history of Rochford Hundred Margery's lands were inherited by the two daughters she had with Thomas, Elizabeth and Alice. So too, presumably, were Thomas's lands (P. Benton, *The History of Rochford Hundred* (Rochford, 1867), p. 91).

16. Benton, *History of Rochford Hundred*, p. 91.

17. 'The Kent Lay Subsidy Roll of 1334/5', ed. H.A. Hanley and C.W. Chalklin in *Documents Illustrative of Medieval Kentish Society*, ed. F.R.H. du Boulay (Kent Archaeological Society, Records Series, 18, 1964), p. 84. The original roll can be found at TNA, E179/123/12.

18. For military recruitment from Essex during the Hundred Years War see J. Ward, 'Essex and the Hundred Years War: Taxation, Justice and County Families', in *The Fighting Essex Soldier: Recruitment, War and Society in the Fourteenth Century*, ed. C. Thornton, J. Ward and N. Wiffen (Hatfield, 2017), pp. 27–50.

19. TNA, C241/115/303.

20. *CPR, 1350–54*, p. 287.

21. TNA, C241/131/26.

22. Quotation from a quitclaim of 1369 (Canterbury Cathedral Archives [CCA]-DCc-ChAnt/S/15. For the registered version see CCA-DCc-Register/B, f. 94v).

in Rochford Hundred, to which a number of competing parties had a claim, including Canterbury Cathedral Priory. Though Thomas had no claim to the manor himself, he was included as a witness on a series of quitclaims and declarations in which individuals ceded their right to the manor in favour of Canterbury Cathedral Priory.²³ The inclusion of Thomas as a witness in relation to such a notable case in the locality is a clear indication that he had by this time established himself firmly as one of the leading authorities in the region.

The Royal Household in Fourteenth-Century England

As will be discussed shortly, it was around this time that Thomas first entered royal service. Before examining Thomas's career in detail, however, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of the structure of the royal household in the fourteenth century. The late-medieval royal household was both a domestic establishment and an institution of government.²⁴ On the one hand, it provided the king with all his daily needs: food, clothing and entertainment. On the other, it was through the household that royal armies were paid, large swathes of royal patronage distributed and the personal writs of the king issued. In addition, the household also had a military function: included within its ranks were a number of knights, esquires, foot archers and yeomen (Fig. 5). Together, these ranks formed the royal bodyguard, around which larger royal armies could be formed. These men also offered a group of capable and reliable

individuals who could be called upon to carry out important additional responsibilities, such as investigate crimes against royal demesne lands, enforce important statutes, or raise men, weapons and supplies for royal armies.²⁵ It was in this branch of the royal household that the sergeants-at-arms were retained. The sergeants-at-arms, all of whom were county esquires, were a subset within the wider rank of household esquire and represented the pinnacle of the rank. Consequently, though the sergeants were outranked by the household knights, they were still relatively senior within the household and had far greater responsibilities than did the regular household esquires, foot archers or yeomen.

The precise responsibilities of the sergeants-at-arms were set out in 1318 in ordinances which established the ideal number of sergeants to be retained, along with their core duties and the equipment they were to have.²⁶ Although they are only broad guidelines, these ordinances offer a valuable insight into the life of a sergeant-at-arms. There were to be thirty sergeants-at-arms retained at any one time. Each man was to be 'sufficiently armed' and given three horses – a palfrey for riding, and a hackney and pack-horse for their equipment. It is unclear what the term 'sufficiently armed' meant in practice, but if the armour on display on Thomas's monument is anything to go by – and the addition of a mace of office in place of a dagger certainly suggests a level of personalisation – then these men were equipped to the highest standard available for the day.

23. See for instance, CCA-DCc-ChAnt/S/15, registered at CCA-DCc-Register/B, f. 94v; CCA-DCc-ChAnt/S/11, registered at CCA-DCc-Register/B, f. 94r.

24. For more, see Given-Wilson, *Royal Household and the King's Affinity*; J.H. Johnson, 'The King's Wardrobe and Household', in *The English Government at Work, 1327–1336. Volume 1: Central and Prerogative Administration*, ed. J.F. Willard and W.A. Morris (Cambridge, Mass., 1940), pp. 206–49.

25. For more, see M. Hefferan, 'Edward III's Household Knights in War and Peace, 1327–1377' (unpub. Ph. D. thesis, University of Nottingham, 2018) and C. Shenton, 'The Royal Court and the Restoration of Royal Prestige, 1327–1345' (unpub. D. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 1995), pp. 78–122.

26. The ordinances are printed in T.F. Tout, *The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History* (Manchester, 1913), pp. 281–2.

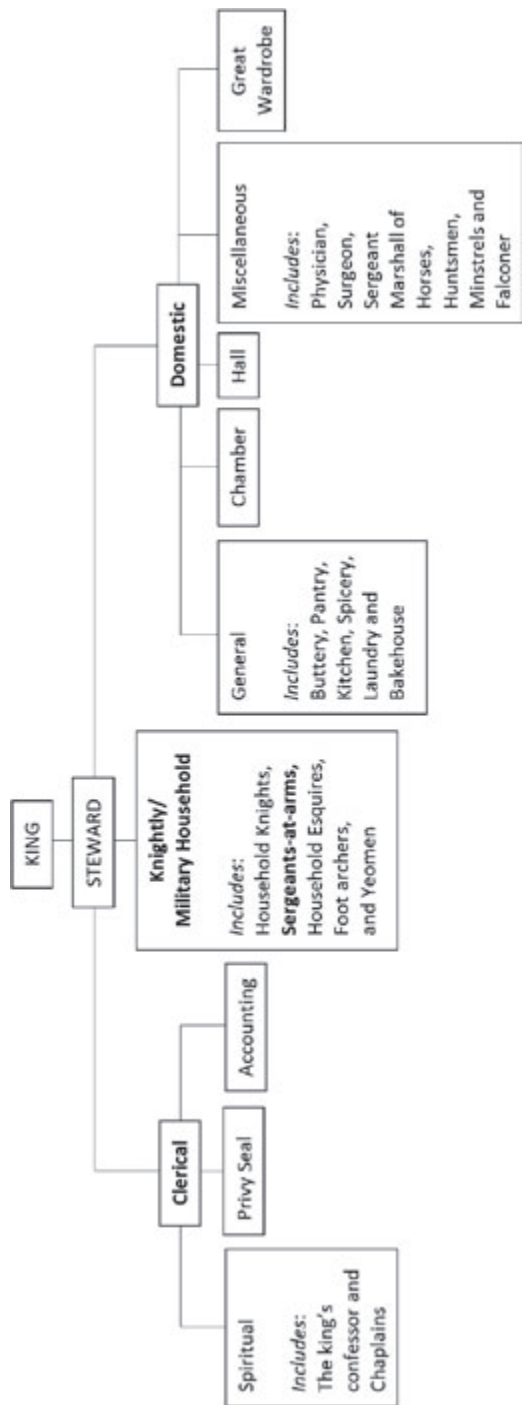


Fig. 5. The basic structure of the fourteenth-century royal household.

Of the thirty sergeants, four were to sleep outside the king's room at night as protection, while the other twenty-six were to sleep in the hall, ready to come at once if the king called. The four sergeants at the king's door were to be provided with one pitcher of wine, two candles and a torch while on duty. Those in the hall, meanwhile, were to have three pitchers of wine, six candles and one torch. Likewise, each day when the king travelled, all thirty, along with the foot archers of the household, were to ride before the king for his protection. The core duties of the sergeants-at-arms implied a close physical proximity between these men and the king, which in the case of Edward III, renowned for his personable nature, almost certainly meant that the sergeant-at-arms were intimate companions of the man they served.

Naturally, these guidelines were not always strictly adhered to in practice. Chris Given-Wilson, for example, has calculated that Edward III maintained an average of between sixteen and twenty-two sergeants across his reign, and that this figure could rise dramatically at times of war, such as in 1346, when as many as sixty sergeants-at-arms were retained for the duration of the Crécy campaign.²⁷ Likewise, it was stipulated in the 1318 ordinances that the sergeants were only to be resident in the household when they had 'no other order from the king or steward', indicating that they could be used for a range of other purposes beyond those specifically outlined. There appear to have been few limits on what these included. Partington has shown how extensively sergeants were used to enforce the royal will in England's localities, and, as will be seen below, Thomas was used for a variety of tasks not stipulated in the ordinances

of 1318. The role of sergeants-at-arms was, therefore, a clearly defined position within the household, into which a pragmatic degree of flexibility was woven to allow the king to utilise them as he best saw fit.

Entry to the Household

When and how did Thomas find his way into the royal household? We can be confident that Thomas was not a member of it any earlier than 1353, for he does not feature amongst the recipients of household robes listed in the wardrobe account book for that year, the primary means by which household retainers can be identified.²⁸ As he is recorded as a sergeant-at-arms in the wardrobe account book for the period 1359 to 1361, we can be certain that he was being retained in the household by then.²⁹ The precise date at which Thomas became a sergeant-at-arms is recorded as 20 September 1359 in a grant made to him in which it was confirmed that Thomas would receive the 12d. a day in wages, due to all sergeants.³⁰ Interestingly, however, the grant stated that, prior to this date, Thomas had been serving as a 'yeoman of the household' – the lowest rank of the military arm of the household. Clearly, then, Thomas did not enter the household for the first time in 1359, but rather had entered as a yeoman at some point between 1353 and 1359, and was promoted not once, but twice, to become a sergeant-at-arms in 1359.

Ascertaining the principal reason behind Thomas's inclusion is difficult. There were two main ways in which a man might recommend himself for service in the royal household in the fourteenth century. The first was by having a familial or personal connection to the king or his household. It was common,

27. Given-Wilson, *Royal Household and the Kings Affinity*, pp. 21–2; Partington, 'Edward III's Enforcers', pp. 90–2.

28. TNA, E101/392/12, f. 40r.

29. TNA, E101/393/11, f. 76r.

30. *CPR, 1358–61*, p. 290.

for example, for the sons, brothers, nephews, or associates of existing household retainers to find their way into service, presumably on the recommendation of their relative.³¹ Thomas had no clear familial link to the household, although his time investigating smuggling at the Cinque Ports in the 1330s may have resulted in a beneficial acquaintance with William Clinton, warden of the Cinque Ports from 1330 to 1343 and a household knight from 1327 to 1337.³² However, it seems more likely that it was Thomas's influence in Essex and Kent, along with his record of distinguished administrative work in those counties, that led to him being recruited by the king. Indeed, the second main way of ensuring that one was noticed was the possession of particular skills or talents which the king could exploit. Partington identified a number of sergeants, including Thomas, who were 'picked up by the crown because they had the local knowledge' that the position required.³³ Given the fact that by the mid-1350s Thomas had spent the best part of two decades establishing himself as the foremost administrator in his region, it seems probable that this was what lay behind his selection for the household.

Thomas's Household Career

Thomas's career after he entered the royal household supports the hypothesis that he was recruited for his knowledge of, and influence in, the southwest of Essex. Though nothing is recorded of Thomas's time as a yeoman, his career as a sergeant-at-arms can be

reconstructed in some detail. His promotion to the rank of sergeant coincided – probably deliberately – with the launch of one of the largest military campaigns of Edward III's reign, the Reims campaign. This campaign came on the back of two decades of English success in the war against France, which had witnessed the great victory at Crécy, the taking of the town of Calais, and even the capture of the king of France at the battle of Poitiers in 1356. Though the Reims campaign accomplished little militarily, the show of English strength it demonstrated was sufficient to induce the French regency government – in the absence of their imprisoned king – to agree to a treaty that largely favoured the English, the treaty of Brétigny.³⁴

As a consequence of this timing, Thomas's first few months as sergeant were amongst the busiest of his household career. As a sergeant-at-arms, he was expected to accompany the king on the campaign. However, Thomas appears to have been more of an administrator than a warrior, and for much of the campaign he travelled back and forth between England and France securing supplies for the English army in France. In January 1360, Thomas was ordered alongside Ralph Kesteven to provide various cereals for the English army in France from the granaries of the ports and towns of King's Lynn, Boston, Kingston upon Hull, and elsewhere on the east coast – seemingly making use of his knowledge of the region.³⁵ Thomas had performed a similar task a few

31. For more on recruitment into the household see Hefferan, 'Edward III's Household Knights', pp. 72–85; Shenton, 'The English Court', pp. 78–122; Prestwich, *War, Politics and Finance*, pp. 42–9; J.S. Hamilton, 'A Reassessment of the Loyalty of the Household Knights of Edward II', in *Fourteenth Century England VII*, ed. W.M. Ormrod (Woodbridge, 2012), pp. 55–61.

32. Hefferan, 'Edward III's Household Knights', p. 118; W.M. Ormrod, 'Clinton, William, earl of Huntingdon

(d. 1354)', *ODNB*, online edn, ref:odnb/53080 accessed 20 July 2018.

33. Partington, 'Edward III's Enforcers', pp. 92–3.

34. For more on the campaign see C.J. Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp: English Strategy under Edward III, 1327–1360* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 385–422.

35. TNA, E156/28/70.

months earlier when he had secured food and other provisions from the southwest of England for the English garrison at Calais.³⁶ He was apparently extremely rigorous in this, for in early 1360 he was the subject of a complaint from John de Watton of Yarmouth, who petitioned the king requesting payment for wheat recently taken from him by Thomas for the Calais garrison.³⁷ We need not suppose as a result of this complaint that Thomas was in anyway abusing his position. Indeed, complaints against sergeants-at-arms were far from uncommon. Under Richard II, two sergeants, John Legg and Richard Imwoth, were targeted specifically by the Peasants' Revolt, while the sergeant Thomas Usk was executed by the Merciless Parliament in 1388, although in these cases there had been some abuse of the office.³⁸ Thomas's role in the Reims campaign of 1359–60 thus shows us that he was not simply a soldier, but also a central part of the vast infrastructure that surrounded military campaigning in the fourteenth century.

Thomas would undoubtedly have hoped to continue proving his military uses in the years that followed. His timing, however, was unfortunate as the treaty of Brétigny, which resulted from the Reims campaign, brought with it a period of peace with France that lasted until 1369. He thus had little opportunity to build on the excellent military service he had rendered in 1359–60. Even so, Thomas's conspicuous skills as a royal administrator ensured that he was not idle during this time. In May 1360, the same month in which the treaty of Brétigny was provisionally agreed, he was placed on a commission alongside five other sergeants-at-arms to investigate the

management of the king's free chapel of St Martin le Grand in London during the time of the last dean, William de Cusantia, because it was suspected that many of the goods and possessions of the deanery were wasted by William, particularly its books, vestment and ornaments.³⁹ Thomas and his colleagues were ordered to compile their findings and pass them on to the king's chief clerk, William Wykeham.

This commission was typical of the sort of work Thomas carried out for the king over the next decade. In June 1360, he was placed on commission of the peace in Rochford Hundred to tackle criminal activity in the area.⁴⁰ In April 1362, he was appointed with Godfrey de la Rokele and Robert Grayton to search all granaries on the coast and rivers of Essex for wool and corn that was being 'shipped contrary to the king's proclamation'. This commission was extended to include the counties of Suffolk and Norfolk shortly afterwards.⁴¹ A month later, in May 1362, he was appointed to arrest all ships of fifty tons capacity or greater in the ports of London and along the Thames in response to threats of invasion from the continent.⁴² In January 1363, meanwhile, he was included on a commission of *wallis et fossatis* covering the Thames from Middlesex to Essex, which required him to ensure that the river was free of debris.⁴³ Finally, in July 1365 he was ordered to re-weigh all wool from the ports on the east coast of England because reports had reached the king that a great many people were defrauding crown of the customs due to them. Thomas was then to report to the king the names of any who was found to have cheated the system (both the merchants and those who did the initial weighing).⁴⁴

36. TNA, E358/5; E 101/174/3.

37. TNA, SC8/149/7416.

38. Partington, 'Edward III's Enforcers', pp. 89–90.

39. *CPR, 1358–61*, p. 417.

40. *CPR, 1361–64*, p. 65.

41. *Ibid.*, pp. 62–3.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 215.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 212.

44. *CPR, 1364–67*, p. 150.

Clearly, Thomas was one of the king's most valuable servants in the southeast of England in the 1360s: his knowledge of and influence in the area saw him widely utilised on several commissions. Some of these were important in extending royal authority and justice into the region. Others were of national significance, such as the protection of royal revenues through the prevention of smuggling. Importantly, he was not alone in this work. Indeed, as Richard Partington has shown, he was just one of a group of sergeants-at-arms who carried out similar work for the king across the realm.⁴⁵ Thomas, along with his household companions, were, therefore, an integral part of the exercise of royal authority in later medieval England.

Rewards of Service

The time that Thomas dedicated to serving Edward III in the 1360s did not go unrewarded. As a sergeant-at-arms he was entitled, at the very least, to 12d. a day in wages (£18 4s. a year) and robes worth £2 6s. 8d. a year – adding more than another 50 per cent to his annual income from his estates. He was also appointed to several potentially lucrative posts in the 1360s. In November 1369, he was made clerk of the king's works at Queenborough Castle on the Isle of Sheppy, which Edward had begun construction of in 1361 'for the defence of the realm and for the refuge of the inhabitants of the island'.⁴⁶ The following year, he was made controller of the customs at the castle.⁴⁷ Similarly, in October 1370 Thomas was made bailiff of Rochford Hundred, although he only held the position for six months until his death in March 1372.

In addition to these formal posts, Thomas appears to have enjoyed a number of less tangible benefits. For example, he clearly became intimate with the king and gained his trust: in 1364, he was said to have been 'prosecuting business very near to the king's heart' in the county of Essex, though it is not recorded precisely what this was.⁴⁸ This trust was important as it enhanced Thomas's personal authority, particularly in the southeast of England. This can be seen in the fact that he was able to intercede with the king on behalf of a number of merchants and secure them valuable contracts at a time when the Hundred Years War had encouraged strict royal regulation of overseas trade.⁴⁹ In February 1364, he stood as mainpinner for an English merchant who was granted a licence to travel abroad to secure grain and bring it to London.⁵⁰ Similarly, in June of that year he acted in the same capacity for a merchant who was travelling to Brittany with £80 of silver with which he intended to buy salt and bring it back to England to sell. Thomas also appears to have grown in stature in his own neighbourhood of Rochford. Thomas continued to act as a witness, for example, in the case in which the Canterbury Cathedral Priory slowly tightened its grip on the manor of Southchurch, to which there were multiple claimants. What is interesting, however, is that, while in the earlier documents relating to the case Thomas was included towards the end of the list of witnesses, by the end of the 1360s he was usually the first named.⁵¹

45. Partington, 'Edward III's Enforcers', pp. 99–105.

46. *CPR*, 1367–70, p. 318; TNA, E101/683/52. E101/545/1 records that the former clerk, Richard Blore, was to hand over all necessary building materials to Stapel, worth some £325.

47. *CPR*, 1367–70, p. 460.

48. *CPR*, 1361–64, p. 534.

49. W.M. Ormrod, 'The English Crown and the Customs, 1349–63', *Economic History Review*, 2nd series, 40 (1987), pp. 27–40.

50. *CPR*, 1361–64, p. 467.

51. See, for instance, CCA-DCc-ChAnt/S/15, registered at CCA-DCc-Register/B, f. 94v; and CCA-DCc-ChAnt/S/16, registered at CCA-DCc-Register/B, ff. 94r–94v.

There were limits to the king's generosity. Thomas received no substantial annuities or properties from the king, as many members of the king's household did, though this was not uncommon for sergeants-at-arms.⁵² Perhaps more interestingly, Thomas was never made a knight. This might have been Thomas's choice – the financial obligations of knighthood, coupled with the changing demands of warfare, certainly led to an increased number of individuals who would previously have been expected to assume knighthood to decide not to take it up in the last quarter of the fourteenth century.⁵³ More likely, however, it seems that it was a result of timing. First, typically it was distinguished military service that led to a man being promoted to a knighthood. With the prolonged period of peace between England and France in the 1360s, such opportunities were few and far between for Thomas. Moreover, Thomas died in 1372, just as war was being renewed. Had he lived longer, he might have had the opportunity to prove himself worthy of the honour. That said, there was a far greater barrier to Thomas's career progression than simply a lack of military opportunity. Indeed, partly as a result of the peace with France, the structure of the royal household underwent a significant change in the last two decades of Edward III's reign. The household knights, who had been a feature of the royal household for over two centuries by 1360, ceased to be retained after this time. In their place, a much smaller group of chamber knights, whose role was more domestic in focus, were retained.⁵⁴ Consequently, there was only very limited opportunity for Thomas to secure a promotion to a knighthood within the confines

of the household, something which had been common practice earlier in Edward's reign.⁵⁵ While service in the king's household thus brought clear benefits, because in Thomas's case it came only late in Edward III's reign, it took him only so far.

Conclusion

Although he never became a knight, it cannot be doubted that Stapel's time in royal service constituted the pinnacle of his career and was of unparalleled benefit to his financial and social standing. Indeed, his life stands as a testament to how far a career in the king's household could take one in the fourteenth century. By the time of his death in 1372, he had come a very long way from the man who had been forced to borrow 11 marks from a neighbour in 1334/5, and who was attacked by a group of disgruntled associates in 1341. His tenacity and astuteness as an administrator and an enforcer of the king's will had served him well and allowed him to become one of the king's most trusted and widely used servants, particularly in the southeast of England. Moreover, it provided him with the means and desire to memorialise his time in royal service in a monumental brass that, thanks to its recent move to St Andrew's Church Rochford, we can still enjoy today. The brass itself reinforces the centrality of royal service to Thomas's career and identity. By including the mace of office on his brass – as the two later sergeant-at-arms Nicholas Maundy and John Borrell were also to do – Stapel was ensuring that, when future generations looked upon his monument, they were left in no doubt as to his royal connections.

52. Hefferan, 'Edward III's Household Knights', pp. 249–82.

53. For a useful discussion on this see M. Prestwich, *Plantagenet England, 1225–1360* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 389–413.

54. See M. Hefferan, 'Household Knights, Chamber Knights and King's Knights: The Development of

the Royal Knight in Fourteenth-Century England', *Journal of Medieval History*, 45 (2019); Given-Wilson, *Royal Household and the King's Affinity*, pp. 204–11.

55. Hefferan, 'Edward III's Household Knights', pp. 76–7.



Fig. 1. Schloss Gottlieben, Thurgau, Switzerland. (photo © Harke, 2015).

Bishop Hallum's Brass in Konstanz Minster

Nicholas Rogers

Robert Hallum, bishop of Salisbury, who played a prominent part in the Council of Constance, died and was buried in Konstanz. Unusually, he is commemorated not by a locally produced monument but by a London D brass, which survives in almost perfect condition. The rationale of its iconographic programme is explored in this article.

On 4 September 1417 Robert Hallum, bishop of Salisbury, lay dying in Schloss Gottlieben, the castle of the Bishop of Konstanz, which can still be seen, just over the Swiss border in the canton of Thurgau (Fig. 1). What had brought Bishop Hallum to the shores of Lake Constance? He was one of the English delegates at the Council of Constance, which had been summoned in 1414 by Pope John XXIII to bring an end to the Great Schism, which had lasted since 1378 and had seen first two and then three claimants to the papal throne. It began when a group of cardinals, dissatisfied with the rule of the recently elected Urban VI, alleged that he had been improperly elected.¹ After attempts at reconciliation had failed, the College of Cardinals proceeded to elect a new pope, Robert of Geneva, who took the name Clement VII and established himself at Avignon, which had been the site of the papal court earlier in the fourteenth century. Urban VI countered by creating twenty-eight new cardinals. Europe split along national lines, with Germany, England, Hungary and most of Italy apart from Naples supporting Urban, and France, Scotland, Naples and the Spanish

kingdoms siding with Clement. The scandal of competing jurisdictions exacerbated ecclesiastical corruption, but also stimulated earnest efforts to both heal the schism and bring about church reform. The first attempt was the Council of Pisa, convened in 1409, when twenty-two cardinals who had previously adhered to the rival claimants, together with some 600 bishops, abbots and other religious superiors, and doctors of theology and canon law, formally deposed Gregory XII and Benedict XIII, the Roman and Avignon popes. The cardinals elected a new pope, Alexander V, who attracted considerable support throughout Europe. However, both Gregory and Benedict refused to accept their deposition. The impetus behind the successful resolution of the schism came from the Emperor Sigismund, who issued an edict summoning a general council to be held at Konstanz, which was then formally convoked by John XXIII, who had succeeded Alexander V as pope.² It soon became apparent that the only practicable solution was the *via cessionis*, whereby all three claimants abdicated, clearing the way for the election of a universally recognised pope. John XXIII, who had hoped initially that the delegates would confirm his authority, agreed in principle to abdicate, but was deposed on 31 May 1415. Gregory XII, having authorised the actions of the Council, duly abdicated on 4 July 1415. The last claimant, Benedict XIII, refused to accept the authority of the Council and was eventually formally deposed as a

1. The classic study of this period is W. Ullmann, *The Origins of the Great Schism* (London, 1948). On the English response to the Great Schism, see M. Harvey, *Solutions to the Schism: A Study of Some English Attitudes 1378 to 1409* (St Ottilien, 1983).

2. The best history of the Council of Constance is W. Brandmüller, *Das Konzil von Konstanz 1414–1418*, 2 vols (Paderborn, 1991–7).

persistent schismatic on 26 July 1416. Shortly after Hallum's death, on 11 November (St Martin's Day) 1417, Oddone Colonna was elected pope, as Martin V.

When the Great Schism began, Robert Hallum, a Lancastrian by birth, was in his teens.³ He studied at Oxford, where he eventually became a doctor of canon law and, from 1403 to 1406, served as chancellor of the university. He began his ecclesiastical career in the service of two archbishops of Canterbury, Courtenay and Arundel, whom he named as his benefactors in his will. He was an executor of Courtenay's will, and thus involved in the establishment of the college at Maidstone. Arundel appointed him archdeacon of Canterbury and chancellor of the diocese. Attempts to appoint him to a see, first as bishop of London and then as archbishop of York, were both blocked, but eventually he became bishop of Salisbury, on 7 October 1407. His episcopal register shows him as an efficient administrator, and locally he was remembered by the people of Salisbury as a major benefactor. He was soon called away from his diocese as an envoy for the province of Canterbury to the Council of Pisa. There he presented a programme of church reform devised by his Oxford colleague Richard Ullerston and assisted in the promulgation of decrees withdrawing obedience from the Roman and Avignon claimants. An attempt by John XXIII to make him a cardinal was frustrated by Henry IV, unwilling to lose the services of such a skilful ecclesiastic. When the Council of Constance was summoned Hallum

was sent as a representative both of the king and of the province of Canterbury. From the time he arrived in Konstanz on 21 January 1415 Hallum was prominent in the Council's proceedings, preaching formally on several occasions. It is likely that he was instrumental in the adoption of the method of voting by 'nations' or regional blocks, which weakened John XXIII's influence. He also participated in the commission which formulated the charges against Benedict XIII. As part of a group close to the Emperor Sigismund who were active in seeking ecclesiastical reform, he incurred the enmity of several cardinals. Hallum was also called on to engage in diplomatic activity while at Konstanz. At various times he was commissioned by Henry V to treat for alliances with Aragon, German princes, the Hanse cities and Genoa.⁴

The Councils of Pisa and Constance were ideal opportunities for cultural interchange. From Ulrich von Richental's *Chronicle of the Council of Constance* we learn of a feast given by Hallum and five other bishops to the burghers of Konstanz at which guests were treated to a mime of scenes from the Nativity. The English also entertained the Emperor Sigismund with a banquet and a mystery play on his return to the city from a diplomatic mission.⁵ It was while he was at Konstanz that Hallum, together with Nicholas Bubwith, bishop of Bath and Wells, and Cardinal Amadeo de Saluzzo, commissioned a Latin translation of Dante's *Divina Commedia*, together with a commentary, from Giovanni di Serravalle. The translation

3. On Hallum, see A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500 [BRUO]*, 3 vols (Oxford, 1957–9), II, pp. 854–5; *The Register of Robert Hallum, Bishop of Salisbury 1407–17*, ed. J.M. Horn, Canterbury and York Society 72 (1982); R.N. Swanson, 'Hallum, Robert (d. 1417)', *ODNB*, online edn, ref:odnb/12005, accessed 17 Aug 2017. On Hallum's role at Pisa see Harvey, *Solutions to the Schism*,

pp. 151–4, 160–74. On Hallum at Constance see R.N. Quirk, 'Bishop Robert Hallum at the Council of Constance', *Friends of Salisbury Cathedral Twenty-Second Annual Report* (1952), pp. 3–15.

4. *BRUO*, II, pp. 854–5.

5. Quirk, 'Bishop Robert Hallum and the Council of Constance', p. 10.

was finished by May 1416 and the commentary by January 1417,⁶ so Hallum would have had some opportunity to appreciate the work before he succumbed to an infectious disease, possibly pneumonic plague.⁷

In his will Hallum asked to be buried in Konstanz Minster, near the high altar, in front of the image of the Virgin, his protector.⁸ If he had died in England he would presumably have requested burial, like Bishop Wyvil, before the high altar of Salisbury Cathedral, in front of the patronal image of the Virgin. Salisbury received a set of copes and two books, with a request for prayers for his soul and those of his parents and patrons. Hallum's funeral, which took place on 13 September, is described in detail in Richental's *Chronicle of the Council of Constance* (Figs 2 and 3). The body was brought to the Minster covered by two golden cloths. For the funeral the hearse, again covered with golden cloths, and with large candles at head and foot, stood in the nave, surrounded by twenty-four mourners in white gowns with hoods, bearing candles. On the choir-screen stood thirty-six five-pound candles. The Mass, attended by patriarchs, cardinals and bishops, as well as the Emperor Sigismund, was '*vast kostlich*'.⁹ When Hallum's grave was opened in

1729, during the construction of a new floor in the crossing, it was found that he had been buried in a 'tin' (most probably lead) coffin within a wooden shell. He was in pontifical vestments, his head upon a gold-embroidered cushion, and wearing a pectoral cross and ring.¹⁰

Several English bishops died abroad, either on diplomatic service or in exile. Where we have information about the form of their tombs they were constructed locally.¹¹ The earliest surviving one is the mid-thirteenth-century incised slab at Fontenay commemorating Everard, bishop of Norwich (d. 1147), who had retired there following his resignation as bishop of Norwich. This is a standard Burgundian product.¹² Two thirteenth-century Savoyard bishops, Peter d'Aigueblanche, bishop of Hereford, and Boniface of Savoy, archbishop of Canterbury, had cast metal effigial monuments in their homeland, both destroyed in the French Revolution. That of Peter d'Aigueblanche at Aiguebelle was made by one Henricus de Colonia.¹³ The tomb of Archbishop Boniface at Hautecombe, which may have been made by the same Rhenish craftsman, is recorded in a seventeenth-century engraving.¹⁴ In

6. On Serravalle's translation, see N.R. Havelly, *Dante's British Public: Readers and Texts, from the Fourteenth Century to the Present* (Oxford, 2014), pp. 15–18.

7. C.L. Nighman, 'Prudencia, Plague and the Pulpit: Richard Fleming's Eulogy for Robert Hallum at the Council of Constance', *Annuaire Historiae Conciliorum*, 38 (2006), pp. 183–98 adduces the evidence for this. For the deaths of several other English delegates in 1417 see *ibid.*, pp. 189–90.

8. For Hallum's will, see *The Register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414–1443*, ed. E.F. Jacob, 4 vols, Canterbury and York Society 42; 45–7 (1937–47), II, pp. 126–30. An English summary is provided in *Register of Robert Hallum*, ed. Horn, pp. 245–8.

9. *Chronik der Konstanzer Konzils 1414–1418 von Ulrich Richental*, ed. T.M. Buck (Ostfildern, 2010), pp. 97–8.

10. H. Reiners, *Das Münster Unserer Lieben Frau zu Konstanz* (Konstanz, 1955), p. 448.

11. Unfortunately, nothing is known about the tombs of William Longchamp, bishop of Ely (d. 1197), at the Abbey of Le Pin, Vienne, France, or William Bateman, bishop of Norwich (d. 1355), in Avignon Cathedral.

12. F.A. Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, 2 vols (London, 1976), I, pp. 79–80; II, p. 90, pl. 12b.

13. N. Rogers, 'English Episcopal Monuments, 1270–1350', in *The Earliest English Brasses*, ed. J. Coales (London, 1987), pp. 21–2, fig. 10; S. Badham and S. Oosterwijk, '"Monumentum aere perennius"? Precious-metal effigial tomb monuments in Europe 1080–1430', *Church Monuments*, 30 (2015), pp. 42–3.

14. S. Guichenon, *Histoire genealogique de la royale maison de Savoye* (Lyon, 1660), p. 261, pl. on p. 262.



Fig. 2. Bishop Hallum's coffin being carried to Konstanz Minster, Ulrich von Richental's Chronicle, c. 1464. (© Konstanz, Rosgartenmuseum, MS 1, f. 81v)



Fig. 3. Bishop Hallum lying in state, Ulrich von Richental's Chronicle, c. 1464. (© Konstanz, Rosgartenmuseum, MS 1, f. 82v)

Santa Croce, Florence, is the low-relief marble effigial slab of John Catterick, bishop of Exeter (d. 1419), who like Hallum had been a delegate at Constance (Fig. 4). The monument closely resembles that of Lodovico degli Obizi (d. 1424) in the same church and is therefore attributable to the Ghiberti workshop.¹⁵ John Shirwood, bishop of Durham, who died in Rome in 1493 and was buried in the English Hospice, was formerly commemorated by an incised marble slab of standard Roman design.¹⁶ Christopher Bainbridge, Cardinal Archbishop of York, who was the victim of either a bad meal or a treacherous servant in 1514, was also buried in the English Hospice, now the English College, where his tomb, consisting of a recumbent effigy (possibly reworked in the nineteenth century) resting upon two lions, of typical Italian form, can still be seen.¹⁷

So it may come as a surprise to learn that, in front of the high altar in Konstanz Minster is one of the finest surviving English episcopal brasses, a product of the London D workshop (Fig. 5).¹⁸ The bishop's executors, headed by his brother Richard Hallum, guided by the supervisors, Richard Clifford, bishop of London, and John Catterick, bishop of Lichfield, both of



Fig. 4. John Catterick, bishop of Exeter (d. 1419), Santa Croce, Florence. (© Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazi)

15. U. Middeldorf, 'Additions to Lorenzo Ghiberti's Work', *Burlington Magazine*, 113 (1971), p. 75, fig. 5; G. Marchini, *Ghiberti Architetto* (Firenze, 1978), pp. 26–7.
16. J. Bertram, 'Incised Slabs in the English College, Rome', *MBS Trans*, XII pt 4 (1978), p. 279.
17. G.B. Parks, *The English Traveler to Italy, I, The Middle Ages (to 1525)* (Rome, 1954), pl. between pp. 328 and 329.
18. R. Pearsall, 'Account of the Monumental Brass of Bishop Hallum in the Cathedral Church of Constance', *Archaeologia*, 30 (1844), pp. 430–7, pl. XIX; E. Kite, *The Monumental Brasses of Wiltshire* (London, 1860), pp. 97–9, pl. XXXII; *Die Kunstdenkmäler des Grossherzogthums Baden, I, Die Kunstdenkmäler des Kreises Konstanz*, ed. F.X. Kraus (Freiburg i. Br., 1887), pp. 115, 162, Fig. 52; H.K. Cameron, *A List of Monumental Brasses on the Continent of Europe* (London, 1970), p. 48;

M. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Memorials*, 2 vols (London, 1977), I, pp. 84, 94, 98; II, fig. 105; M. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Craft* (London, 1978), pp. 50, 72; I. Stadie, 'Das Grabdenkmal für Robert Hallum im Chor', in *Das Konstanzer Münster Unserer Lieben Frau: 1000 Jahre Kathedrale – 200 Jahre Pfarrkirche* (Regensburg, 2013), pp. 87–88; J. Bertram, 'Brass of the Month June 2013 – Robert Hallum, Bishop of Salisbury, 1416 [sic], Konstanz Cathedral (Baden-Württemberg)', M.B.S. website (<http://www.mbs-brasses.co.uk/brass%20of%20the%20month%20june%202013.html>); H. Derschka, 'Die Grabplatte des Robert Hallum: Zur Beisetzung des Bischofs von Salisbury im Konstanzer Münster vor 600 Jahren', *Schriften des Vereins für Geschichte des Bodensees und seiner Umgebung*, 135 (2017), pp. 97–121.



Fig. 5. Robert Hallum, bishop of Salisbury (d. 1417), Konstanz Minster. (photo © Franz-Josef Stiele-Werdermann, Konstanz)

whom were at Constance, took the deliberate decision not to order a monument locally. The most likely person to have recommended a London brass would be Richard Clifford, who in the will he made shortly before setting out for the Council set aside £100 for his funeral and a marble stone.¹⁹ It may be worth noting here that Richard Hallum, who died on 22 November 1419, was commemorated by a monument, most probably a brass, in the London Greyfriars, with an inscription which seems to have mentioned the bishop.²⁰

The brass is set in a Purbeck marble slab which, as Jerome Bertram notes, 'must have added enormously to the cost of transportation'. It was not a serious logistical problem to ship the brass from London to Konstanz. Probably the most arduous part was getting the slab from the workshop to the wharf, whence it could be shipped across the North Sea and down the Rhine. The Hallum brass is not a unique example of an English medieval brass outside the British Isles. The Musée d'Aquitaine at Bordeaux has the brass, formerly in the church of Saint-Pierre, of John Scot, a merchant resident in Bordeaux, and his wife Christiane.²¹ Hallum's brass shows him in pontifical vestments, holding a crozier and blessing, standing on a crenelated base beneath a canopy. Set in the gable of the canopy is a roundel containing the letters 'robs' for 'Robertus'. This is easier to interpret than the two letters visible on the apparel of the amice: a and r (or possibly v). Jerome Bertram, assuming that it represents part of an inscription running along the apparel, suggests that a word such as 'regia' is intended. Another possibility, in view



Fig. 6. Royal coat of arms, from the brass of Robert Hallum.
(photo © Harald Derschka)

of the monument's location in front of a statue of Our Lady, might be 'regina'. Alternatively 'ar' could stand for the words 'ave regina'. Above the arch are two shields. On the dexter side are the royal arms encircled by the Garter, a notably early example of this heraldic practice (Fig. 6).²³ On the sinister side are the arms of Hallum, surrounded by a scroll, designed to match the Garter, with the Bishop's motto

19. *Register of Henry Chichele*, ed. Jacob, II, p. 224.

20. TNA, PROB 11/2B/297; C.L. Kingsford, *The Grey Friars of London* (Aberdeen, 1915), p. 122.

21. Cameron, *List of Monumental Brasses*, p. 35.

22. S. King and I. Stadie, 'Bischof Hallum und die "Zwiebel": der Weg eines englischen Architekturmotivs in Konstanzer Münster', in *Vom Weichen über*

den Schönen Stil zur Ars Nova, ed. J. Fajt and M. Hörsch (Köln, 2018), pp. 183–98, argue that the distinctive form of this canopy was copied by architects in Konstanz.

23. P.J. Begent and H. Chesshyre, *The Most Noble Order of the Garter, 650 Years* (London, 1999), p. 194.



Fig. 7. Hallum coat of arms, from the brass of Robert Hallum. (photo © Harald Derschka)

‘*Misericordias domini in eternum Cantabo* (I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever)’ taken from Psalm 88.2 (Fig. 7). This shield was restored in the nineteenth century, most probably during the general restoration of the minster between 1844 and 1857.²⁴ The earliest illustration of the brass, published in *Archaeologia* in 1844 and based on a rubbing made in 1842, shows a roughly etched area within the outline of the shield (Fig. 8).²⁵



Fig. 8. Pre-restoration state of Hallum arms. (*Archaeologia*, 30 (1844), pl. XIX)

It is probable that the original shield was made of lead and composition. Hallum’s arms, which appear in the Konstanz manuscript of Richtenthal’s Chronicle and a sixteenth-century copy of a mid-fifteenth-century English heraldic manuscript (BL Harleian MS 2169), were *Sable a cross engrailed in dexter chief a crescent ermine*.²⁶ The ermine spots were, however, misinterpreted by the restorer as trefoils.

The inner canopy is set within a super-canopy with a crenelated pediment and side-shafts with eight inhabited niches. The motif of the inhabited canopy can be found in English monuments from the thirteenth century onwards, an early sculpted example being the tomb of Bishop Northwold at Ely.²⁷

24. *Kunstdenkmäler*, ed. Kraus, pp. 129–30. As Derschka notes, the arms were in place by 1872.

25. Pearsall, ‘Monumental Brass of Bishop Hallum’, pl. XIX.

26. Derschka, ‘Die Grabplatte des Robert Hallum’, p. 110, Abb. 8; *Two Tudor Books of Arms, Harleian MSS. Nos. 2169 and 6163*, ed. J. Foster (London, 1904),

frontispiece (I am grateful to David Lepine for the latter reference).

27. M. Roberts, ‘The effigy of Bishop Hugh de Northwold in Ely Cathedral’, *Burlington Magazine*, 130 (1988), pp. 77–84.

In the brass of Maud de Burgh (d. 1320) at Tewkesbury, the accompanying figures were isolated under separate canopies, but usually the attendant figures are integrated fully within an architectural structure. An early example was the brass of Walter de Haselshaw (d. 1308) at Wells and the most elaborate that of Bishop Beaumont (d. 1333) at Durham. In most English examples of inhabited canopies we only have the evidence of indents or antiquarian records. Even where the main figure survives, as at Gedney, the accompanying imagery has usually been purged (Fig. 9). Fortunately, prior to the early fifteenth century most subsidiary figures are cut out figures, so it is possible to make some deductions about iconographic types. Of twenty-five pre-1420 English brasses with inhabited canopies listed in the Appendix, three definitely and one possibly show relatives or companions as mourners. Two (Bishop Ketton at Ely and Abbot Upton at Hawkesbury) have attendant monks. In six cases the figures can be identified with reasonable confidence as apostles, and a further nine have miscellaneous saints. Hallum's brass is unique in having eight six-winged angels, their hands joined in prayer.

Angelic iconography is commonplace on tombs. One of the earliest English episcopal monuments, the Tournai slab found beneath the floor of St Mary's, Ely, and reasonably assigned to Bishop Nigel (d. 1169), depicts St Michael in his role as psychopomp, bearing up the soul of the bishop in a napkin.²⁸ The motif of an angel or angels bearing up the soul of the deceased is familiar from brasses and incised slabs. Angels also occur as shield-bearers or cushion supporters, functions that can be seen as emphasizing their role as guardians. It should be noted that, whereas



Fig. 9 Indent of ?Roos lady, c. 1390, Gedney, Lincolnshire.
(*Portfolio Plates of the Monumental Brass Society 1894–1984*, pl. 70)

the Hallum brass seems to be unique among English brasses in its assembly of attendant angels, there are numerous examples from the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries of sculpted monuments with angels on the sides of the tomb-chest, which performs the same function as a locus of subsidiary imagery as the canopy on a two-dimensional monument.²⁹

28. G. Zarnecki, *The Early Sculpture of Ely Cathedral* (London, 1958), pp. 40–2, pl. 100.

29. N. Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages: History and Representation* (Oxford, 2009), p. 168.



Fig. 10. Angel, from the brass of Robert Hallum. (photo © Franz-Josef Stiele-Werdermann, Konstanz)



Fig. 11. Seraph, from Sidney Sussex MS 76, f. 1. (reproduced by permission of the Master and Fellows of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge).

Hallum's angels, with their six wings, are usually identified as seraphim (Figs 10 and 11). In Isaiah's vision of the Lord in the temple the seraphim who stand upon the throne, crying 'Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of hosts, all the earth is full of his glory', are described as having six wings. Seraphim eternally praising God are also mentioned in the Apocalypse. By the time of St Gregory the Great (d. 604) the angels had been marshalled into a hierarchy of nine orders, in which seraphim are always the first. One complication, as Nigel Morgan noted in his 2004 study of the iconography of the orders of angels in late medieval England, is that there were 'relatively few iconographic norms' in the

depiction of angels.³⁰ Not all six-winged angels are seraphim. They may be cherubim, as in the diagrammatic image in the De Lisle Psalter,³¹ or archangels, as in the Trinity Sunday page in the Sherborne Missal.³² Despite this iconographic uncertainty, one can say that Bishop Hallum's angels are evidently meant to represent a higher angelic order, almost certainly seraphim. There are two other early fifteenth-century English examples of seraphim on brasses. On the brass of John Sleaford (d. 1401) at Balsham, Cambridgeshire, the outer pinnacles of the canopy are surmounted by seraphim (Fig. 12). An indent in the crypt at Canterbury Cathedral

30. N. Morgan, 'Texts, Contexts and Images of the Orders of the Angels in Late Medieval England', in *Glas, Malerei, Forschung: Internationale Studien zu Ehren von Rüdiger Becksmann* (Berlin, 2004), pp. 211–20, at p. 220.

31. L.F. Sandler, *The Psalter of Robert de Lisle in the British Library* (London, 1983), p. 80.

32. J. Backhouse, *The Sherborne Missal* (London, 1999), p. 30.

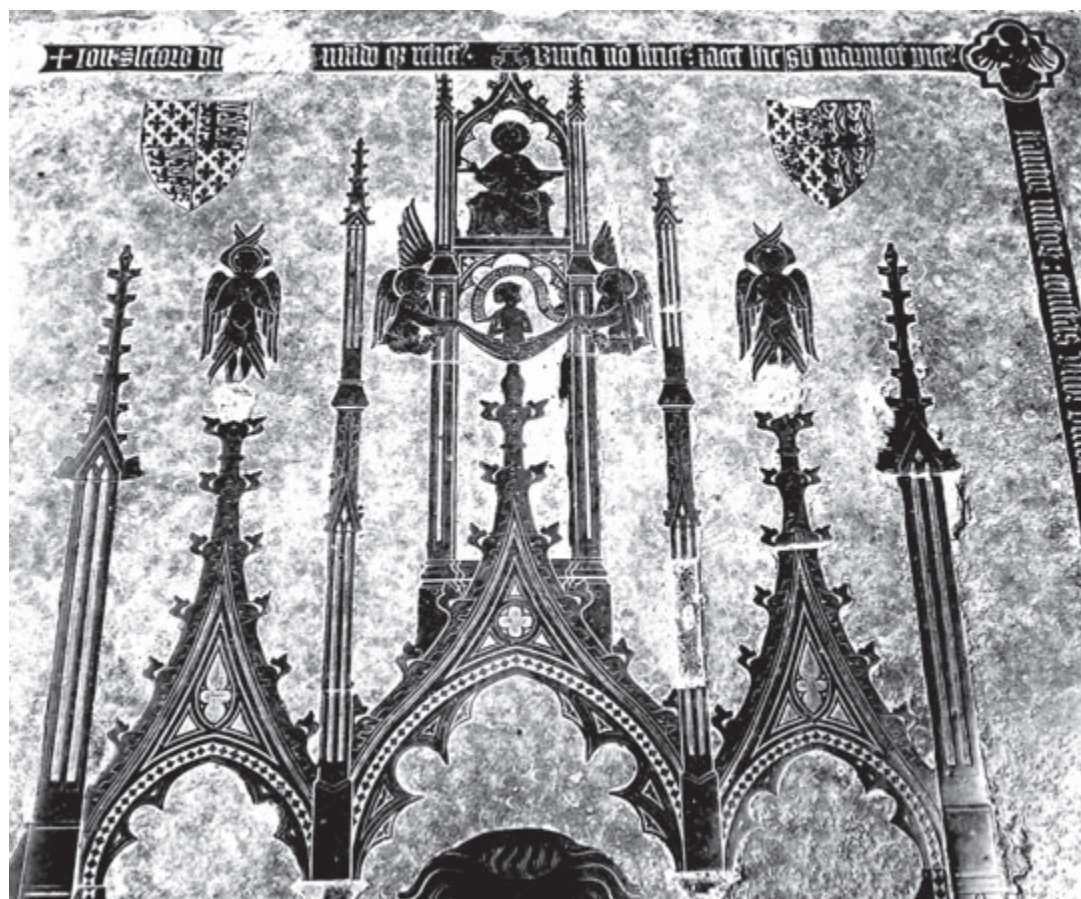


Fig. 12. John Sleford (d. 1401), Balsham, Cambridgeshire, detail of upper part of brass. (photo © Malcom Norris)

shows the distinctive outline of two seraphim with upraised wings on the pinnacles of the canopy.³³ The mitred figure has been identified with a high degree of confidence as Prior Thomas Chillenden (d. 1411). There is an interesting link with Hallum, since Chillenden also attended the Council of Pisa.³⁴

What do seraphim signify? A rood-beam in St Michael's, Coventry, destroyed in the Second World War, had inscriptions giving the characteristics of each order of angels. Of seraphim it is stated that they 'burn in the love of God'. An inscription in the glass at All Saints, North Street, York gives a variant of

33. *Some Illustrations of Monumental Brasses and Indents in Kent* (Ashford, 1946), pl. IV; A.G. Sadler, *The Indents of Lost Monumental Brasses in Kent*, 2 vols (Ferring-on-Sea, 1975–6), I, pp. 20–1.

34. M.E. Mate, 'Chillenden, Thomas (d. 1411)', *ODNB*, online edn, ref:odnb/38470, accessed 18 Sept 2017.

that: 'The Seraphim burning with love and moving around God'.³⁵ Some depictions of seraphim show them with fiery red faces or against a red background to convey their burning love of God. In medieval cosmology the nine orders of angels were seen as corresponding to the nine spheres of heaven, with the seraphim closest to God, presiding over the *Primum Mobile*. A monumental visualization of this angelic cosmography, painted by Piero di Puccio c. 1390, is to be found in the Camposanto at Pisa, which would have been seen by Hallum.³⁶ This association of angels with the heavenly spheres is also to be found in Canto XXVIII.94–102 of Dante's *Paradiso*, in which Beatrice explains the angelic hierarchy:

I heard them sing Hosanna, choir on choir,
Unto the Point which holds them in the place,
And ever will, there where they ever were.

Reading my mind's confusion in my face,
She said: "The Seraphim and Cherubim
The first ring, and the next, to thee displays.

In eagerness to grow the more like Him,
Their path they follow, and succeed so far
In measure as their vision is sublime.³⁷

There is even the intriguing possibility that the iconography of the Hallum brass was inspired by a recent reading of Dante.

Nigel Morgan has noted that angels often define the entrance to a sacred space as those in the spandrels of the mid-thirteenth-century pulpitum at Salisbury do. At Barton Turf, Norfolk, they line the rood-screen separating

the layfolk in the nave from the liturgical actions in the chancel. The seraphim on the Hallum brass can be seen as performing a similar liminal function, representing the threshold of the empyrean. An interesting parallel can be found on a late fourteenth-century German brass, that of Ruprecht von Berg (d. 1394) in Paderborn Cathedral, where the bishop is surrounded by angels playing musical instruments.³⁸ Bishop Hallum's seraphim can also be read as attendant on the image of the Virgin before which he wished to be buried. They are thus analogous to the angels on the Wilton Diptych or the angels accompanying numerous Italian Madonnas from Cimabue onwards.

In 1977 Malcolm Norris speculated that Hallum's brass 'may well have been prepared shortly before his death' and 'unexpectedly exported to the bishop's resting place'. Certainly bishops prepared their monuments in their lifetime more commonly than any other group. An objection to this idea would seem to be presented by the last element of the Hallum brass to be considered: the inscription, which takes the form of a border fillet with Evangelists' symbols at the corners. Curiously there is an error in the mathematics of the versified year of death, which is given as 1416. It is possible that the brass was prepared except for the inscription, to be added *post mortem*. There is no mention of a previously prepared monument in Hallum's will, made on 23 August 1417, but this silence is not proof that it did not exist prior to his death. However, it is more likely that the brass was commissioned by the bishop's executors, who could quite easily

35. Morgan, 'Texts, Contexts and Images of the Nine Orders of Angels', pp. 213–14.

36. C. Baracchini and E. Castelnuovo eds, *Il Camposanto di Pisa* (Torino, 1996), p. 34, pls 113, 114, where it is suggested that the *auctor intellectualis* of this fresco was the Dante commentator Francesco da Buti.

37. *The Comedy of Dante Alighieri the Florentine, Cantica III, Paradise (Il Paradiso)*, transl. D.L. Sayers and B. Reynolds (Harmondsworth, 1962), pp. 303–4.

38. R. Lamp, 'The Brass of Rupert of Jülich-Berg, Bishop of Paderborn' *MBS Trans*, XVI pt 3 (1999), pp. 221–8.

have arranged shipping and installation of the monument in liaison with English delegates still at Konstanz. The distinctive iconography does, however, suggest that the executors were acting in accordance with a deathbed request from Bishop Hallum.

The Leonine hexameters of the inscription set out Hallum's career and his death at Konstanz. Despite the error in the date, the style and content of the inscription are consonant with an authorship in his immediate circle, perhaps a fellow envoy or a member of his household.

Subiacet hic stratus Robert(us) Hallum vocitatus /³⁹
Quondam p(re)latus Sar(um) sub honore creatus
Hic decretor(um) doctor pacis q(ue) creator
Nobilis anglor(um) Regis fuit ambaciator. /
Festu(m) cuchberti septembris mense vigeat /
In quo Rob(er)ti mortem Constantia flebat.
Anno Milleno trecent(um) octuageno
Sex cu(m) ter deno cu(m) (Christ)o vivat ameno.

(Beneath here lies the man called Robert Hallum,
 once created prelate of Sarum, for honour;

He was a doctor of decretals and maker of peace,
 and ambassador of the noble King of the English.

The feast of Cuthbert was being kept in the month of September
 on which day Konstanz mourned the death of Robert.

In the year one thousand, three hundred and eighty,
 with thrice ten and six [1416]; may he live
 with our dear Christ.)⁴⁰

If Robert Hallum had been buried at Salisbury, his brass, with its religious iconography, would at the very least have been mutilated at the Reformation. The misfortune of his death at Konstanz led to the fortunate survival of his brass, which also serves as a memorial of one of the most significant events in late medieval history.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Sally Badham, Dr Harald Derschka and Martin Stuchfield for their help in preparing this article for publication.

39. The incipit '*Subiacet hic stratus ... vocitatus*' is an epitaphic commonplace. Other examples are the brasses of John Fynexs (d. 1514), St. Mary's, Bury

St. Edmunds (M.S.II) and Roger Godeale (d. 1429), Bainton, East Riding, Yorks. (M.S.I).

40. Translation by Fr Jerome Bertram.

Appendix: English brasses with inhabited canopies to c. 1420¹

Person Commemorated	Date	Location	Iconography
Thomas Bitton, bishop of Exeter	d. 1307	Exeter Cathedral	8 figures, BVM and Child in supercanopy ²
Walter de Haselshaw, bishop of Wells	d. 1308	Wells Cathedral	12 figures, (?Apostles) ³
?John Ketton, bishop of Ely	d. 1316	Ely Cathedral	6 monks reciting Office of the Dead, Christ blessing in supercanopy ⁴
Maud de Burgh	d. 1320	Tewkesbury Abbey	4 figures, Coronation of Virgin in supercanopy ⁵
Lewis de Beaumont, bishop of Durham	d. 1333	Durham Cathedral	12 Apostles (inner), 12 ancestors (outer), 5 figures in supercanopy ⁶
Lawrence Seymour	c. 1337	Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire	12 saints, incl. 4 Evangelists, Christ, 4 saints (angel on L. side is Gabriel balancing lost BVM) ⁷
Sir Hugh Hastings	d. 1347	Elsing, Norfolk	8 companions in arms, St George and Coronation of Virgin in supercanopy ⁸
John Barnet, bishop of Ely	d. 1373	Ely Cathedral	inhabited canopy ⁹

1. Excluded from this list is the Norbury palimpsest, probably from Croxden and commemorating Matilda de Verdun (d. 1316), which appears to be from a French workshop (W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Derbyshire* (London, 1999), pp. 160–3).
2. N. Rogers, 'English Episcopal Monuments, 1270–1350', in *The Earliest English Brasses*, ed. J. Coales (London, 1987), pp. 52–3, 77, 185, figs. 41, 59; P. Cockerham, 'Bishops, Deans and Canons: Commemorative Contexts Across Two Centuries at Exeter Cathedral', *MBS Trans*, XIX pt 4 (2017), pp. 287–93.
3. Rogers, 'English Episcopal Monuments' in *Earliest English Brasses*, ed. Coales, pp. 51–2, 75, 208, figs. 40, 57.
4. Rogers, 'English Episcopal Monuments' in *Earliest English Brasses*, ed. Coales, pp. 45, 47, 183, figs. 15, 16, 31; W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Cambridgeshire* (London, 1995), p. 116, illus. p. 117.
5. P. Binski, 'The Stylistic Sequence of London Figure Brasses', in *Earliest English Brasses*, ed. Coales, pp. 77, 189, fig. 60; M.W. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Portfolio Plates of the Monumental Brass Society 1894–1984* (Woodbridge, 1988), pl. 12.
6. Rogers, 'English Episcopal Monuments' in *Earliest English Brasses*, ed. Coales, pp. 60, 62, 104, 106, 186, figs. 49, 98; Norris, *Portfolio Plates*, pl. 21.
7. Binski, 'Stylistic Sequence of London Figure Brasses', in *Earliest English Brasses*, ed. Coales, pp. 106, 108, 203, figs. 99, 100, 109; Norris, *Portfolio Plates*, pl. 25.
8. M. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Memorials*, 2 vols (London, 1977), I, pp. 18–19, figs. 21, 22; M. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Craft* (London, 1978), figs. 103, 129, 130; L. Dennison and N. Rogers, 'The Elsing Brass and its East Anglian Connections', in *Fourteenth Century England*, I, ed. N. Saul (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 167–93.
9. Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, *Cambridgeshire*, p. 116.

Person Commemorated	Date	Location	Iconography
?William Rede, bishop of Chichester	d. 1385	Chichester Cathedral	6 figures, 2 ?censing angels above canopy ¹⁰
?Thomas de Brinton, bishop of Rochester	d. 1389	Rochester Cathedral	8 saints, ?Holy Trinity in supercanopy ¹¹
? Roos lady	c. 1390	Gedney, Lincolnshire	8 saints with ?St George at bottom L. and ?St Leonard at bottom R. St Gabriel and BVM on pinnacles of canopy ¹²
Unknown	c. 1390	formerly palimpsest, Costessy, Norfolk c. 1470	Apostles with Creed clauses ¹³
Sir William Thorp	d. 1394	Ely Cathedral	8 saints, Annunciation on pinnacles of canopy ¹⁴
John de Waltham, bishop of Salisbury	d. 1395	Westminster Abbey	8 saints ¹⁵
Bishop or abbot	c. 1395	Exton, Rutland	wide side shafts which probably included inhabited niches ¹⁶
William Courtenay, archbishop of Canterbury	d. 1396	Maidstone, Kent	8 saints, Mercy-seat Trinity flanked by 4 figures at top ¹⁷
Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester	d. 1397	Westminster Abbey	8 relatives at sides, 3 at bottom and 3 at top, Holy Trinity, BVM and St Thomas in central niches ¹⁸
Walter Pescod and wife	d. 1398	Boston, Lincolnshire	8 Apostles, 4 Apostles (two now missing) at top flanking central motif (three figures) ¹⁹

10. A.G. Sadler, *The Indents of Lost Monumental Brasses in West Sussex* (Ferring-on-Sea, 1975), pp. 11–12.

11. *Some Illustrations of Monumental Brasses and Indents in Kent* (Ashford, 1946), pl. XX; Sadler, *Indents of Lost Monumental Brasses in Kent*, II, pp. 12–13.

12. Norris, *Portfolio Plates*, pl. 70.

13. J. Page-Phillips, *Palimpsests: The Backs of Monumental Brasses*, 2 vols. (London, 1980), 3N1, pl. 140.

14. Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, *Cambridgeshire*, p. 116, illus. on p. 118.

15. J.S.N. Wright, *The Brasses of Westminster Abbey* (London, 1969), pp. 9–11.

16. Norris, *Portfolio Plates*, pl. 86.

17. R.H. D'Elboux, 'Some Kentish Indents. IV', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 64 (1951), pp. 118–20, pl. II; Sadler, *Indents of Lost Monumental Brasses in Kent*, I, pp. 74–6.

18. Wright, *Brasses of Westminster Abbey*, pp. 11–13.

19. Norris, *Portfolio Plates*, pl. 88; 'The beste and fayrest of al Lincolnshire': the Church of St Botolph, Boston, Lincolnshire, and its medieval monuments, ed. S. Badham and P. Cockerham, BAR British Series 554 (Oxford, 2012), pp. 148–9, 173, figs. 8.1, 11.1, 11.2.

Person Commemorated	Date	Location	Iconography
Thomas de Eure, dean of St Paul's	d. 1400	St Paul's Cathedral	8 Apostles, Annunciation flanked by 4 Apostles in supercanopy ²⁰
Canon in cope	c. 1400	St Paul's Cathedral	8 or 10 saints. Sinister shield: <i>on a cross five mullets</i> ²¹
Canon in cope	c. 1400	St Paul's Cathedral	8 saints, Annunciation flanked by 4 saints in supercanopy. Sinister shield: <i>on a bend three unidentified charges</i> ²²
?Thomas Upton, abbot of Pershore	d. 1413	Hawkesbury, Gloucestershire	8 figures (?monks), BVM and Child in supercanopy ²³
Robert Hallum, bishop of Salisbury	d. 1417	Konstanz Cathedral	8 seraphim
John Wotton, master, All Saints College, Maidstone	d. 1417	Maidstone, Kent	8 saints, BVM and St Gabriel on brackets above triple canopy ²⁴
Richard Young, bishop of Rochester	d. 1418	Rochester Cathedral	wide shafts which may have included inhabited canopied niches ²⁵

20. W. Dugdale, *The History of St. Pauls Cathedral in London* (London, 1658), pp. 60–1; C. Steer, 'The Canons of St. Paul's and their Brasses', *MBS Trans*, XIX pt 3 (2016), pp. 227, 229, fig. 10.

21. Dugdale, *St. Pauls*, p. 78; Norris, *Portfolio Plates*, pl. 98; Steer, 'Canons of St. Paul's', p. 227, fig. 7. Sedgwick's drawing shows four saints on each side, the Hollar engraving five.

22. Dugdale, *St. Pauls*, p. 78; Norris, *Portfolio Plates*, pl. 228; Steer, 'Canons of St. Paul's', p. 227, figs. 8,9. Misidentified by Dugdale as John Newcourt (d. 1485).

23. W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Gloucestershire* (London, 2005), p. 235, illus. on p. 233.

24. D'Elboux, 'Some Kentish Indents. IV', pp. 120–1, pl. III; Sadler, *Indents of Lost Monumental Brasses in Kent*, I, pp. 77–8.

25. *Some Illustrations ... Kent*, pl. XXI; Sadler, *Indents of Lost Monumental Brasses in Kent*, II, pp. 7–8.

Ex terra vis: The Cadaver Brass of Richard and Cecily Howard at Aylsham, Norfolk

Julian Luxford

‘Let them be dygged out thence agayne for ensample unto the rest.’¹

The fundamental goal of this article is to suggest that many well-known brasses can comfortably absorb more study than they have received to date. As such, it is intended as a statement of optimism about the future potential of monumental brass studies. More specifically, it is a contribution to the study of pre-Reformation cadaver imagery through the monument of Richard and Cecily Howard at Aylsham in Norfolk. At first glance, the brass component of this late medieval monument is familiar enough. However, by paying close attention to it, and to related imagery and documentation, a fuller, arguably more interesting, understanding of it emerges. Thus, as well as encouraging prayer, the brass can be seen as a work of public service, as part of an extended programme of Howard family commemoration, and – even – a statement of optimism about death. This last point is pressed with reference to the Sarum burial service. Together with the activities of late medieval funerals, the text of this service suggests both the status of death as a ‘rite of passage’ and the ability of the grave to heal and purify its contents. While no liturgical text is sufficient to account for historical attitudes to tombs, the suggestive language of the burial service and the contexts of its use are more likely to have influenced these attitudes than the lack of attention paid to it in the past might imply.

Cadaver tombs have become a popular object of medieval art history. While medical scholars

have embraced the so-called ‘electronic cadaver’, researchers in the humanities are increasingly looking backwards to the dead bodies represented on tombs and in manuscripts, and one has gone so far as to have a mock-medieval *transi* effigy sculpted in lime-wood.² The fascination can be rationalised as a pedantic manifestation of the *thanatopsis*, or contemplation of death, that has always captivated self-aware people. As anyone who teaches medieval art at a university knows, attention to the topic does not arise simply from the mid-life crises of scholars grappling with these objects as a sort of counter-phobic therapy. There are plenty of younger enthusiasts, keen to immerse themselves in this and other aspects of what have become known, with fitting bluntness, as ‘death studies’.³ Somewhere in this is a latter-day expression of a contrast which medieval moralists loved. Death and the Maiden was a theme before Northern Renaissance artists like Hans Baldung developed a line in it. Thus, the medieval preacher could tell of a hermit who dug up the remains of his dead sweetheart to purge his physical desire for her, and the maidservant who produced a skull when her mistress asked for a mirror. Elsewhere, the black monk eagerly recorded the epitaph of Rosamund, Henry II’s mistress and ‘*puella spectatissime*’, who was buried at Godstow: ‘Here in this tomb lies the rose of the world, though it

1. BL, MS Additional 11303, f. 80.

2. See <http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/guy-the-gaunt>, accessed 4 January 2016. On the ‘electronic cadaver’ see e.g. M.A. Aziz and J.C. McKenzie, ‘The Dead Can Still Teach the Living: The Status of Cadaver-Based Anatomy in the Age of Electronic Media’, *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, 42 (1999), pp. 402–21.

3. In August 2015 I received advice of the conference ‘Death and Identity in Scotland from the Medieval

to the Modern’ (held in Edinburgh, 29–31 January 2016), described in a covering email as a contribution to ‘Scottish death studies’.

is not a pure rose: that which smelled so sweet, smells sweet no longer, but rather stinks'.⁴

Yet the impression of scholarly industry in this quarter masks the fact that many individual monuments and images of the type have barely been considered. Some of the ideas which help one to understand cadaver tombs collectively have been trampled in the rush to show how they exemplify themes which modern scholars, like the medieval moralists, tend to express in Latin: *vanitas*, *memento mori*, *contemptus mundi* and of course *commemoratio*. In response to this, and as a sort of scoping exercise, I will take a single, materially modest tomb and try to look at it with a fresh eye. I want particularly to think about it in relation to the Sarum burial service, a ritual largely neglected in previous work on these monuments, but which for several reasons seems a useful medium for thinking about them as signifiers of the social and ceremonial identities so important to people of quality in the later middle ages.⁵ Naturally, I do not think the burial service sufficient for grasping medieval attitudes to cadaver tombs. The remarks offered here are only meant to suggest ways in which the authority, actions and words of the ritual most nearly concerned with dead bodies could have informed these attitudes. To avoid possible confusion about the following

argument, it is necessary to insist that nothing in the liturgy transmitted meaning to material objects with blueprint precision: the tombs, and their settings, may be applied as usefully to our understanding of the burial service as vice versa. If one sets aside the thinking that went into the manufacturing process, medieval attitudes to cadaver imagery were presumably governed more by imagination and impulse than reason. Such display was not so much understood as apprehended and felt: the distinction here resonates with one made by Eamon Duffy between the medieval experience of the sacraments – polysemous, palimpsestic, polyphonic – and that of post-Vatican II Catholicism, where a clear-cut 'noble simplicity' of meaning has been promoted.⁶

The tomb in question is in St Michael's parish church at Aylsham, a large village eleven miles north of Norwich (Figs 1 and 2). It commemorates Richard Howard, a prosperous baker, and Cecily, his third wife, and displays two skeletons in semi-stitched winding sheets above an epitaph, the whole set into the upper half of a Purbeck slab.⁷ At 25.5 inches in length, the brass is larger and thus more striking than reproductions of it are likely to suggest. Currently, it is at the east end of the north nave aisle, at the intersection with

4. '*Hic iacet in tumba Rosamundi non Rosamunda, non redolet sed olet, quae redolere solet*' (*Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden monachi Cestrensis*, ed. C. Babington and J.R. Lumby, 9 vols (London, 1865–86), VIII, pp. 52–4). For the hermit and maidservant, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum*, ed. H. L.D. Ward and J.A. Herbert, 3 vols (1883–1910), III, p. 20 (no. 164); p. 446 (no. 25).
5. Compare H.K. Cameron, 'The Incised Memorial as Part of the Obsequies for the Dead: French Faith and Tournai Wills', *MBS Trans*, 13 pt 5 (1984), pp. 410–23; D. Lepine, 'High Solemn Ceremonies': The Funerary Practice of the Late Medieval English Higher Clergy', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 61 (2010), pp. 18–39; neither, however, does quite what I intend here. On the concept of ceremonial identity, see T.M. Greene,

'Ritual and Text in the Renaissance', in *Reading the Renaissance: Culture, Poetics and Drama*, ed. J. Hart (New York, 1996), pp. 7–34 at p. 17.

6. E. Duffy, 'Lay Appropriation of the Sacraments in the Later Middle Ages', *New Blackfriars*, 77 (1996), pp. 53–68.
7. For Richard's previous marriages see B. Cozens-Hardy and E.A. Kent, *The Mayors of Norwich 1403–1835* (Norwich, 1938), p. 31, and also the porch inscription in F. Blomefield and C. Parkin, *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, 2nd edn, 11 vols (London, 1805–10), VI, p. 277. For his trade, see *An Index to Norwich City Officers 1453–1835*, ed. T. Hawes, Norfolk Record Society 52 (Norwich, 1989), p. 85. According to Blomefield and Parkin, he was sheriff in 1488.



Fig. 1. Howard brass with its slab, Aylsham, Norfolk.
(photo: © author)

the north transept. This is unlikely to be its original position, because its condition shows it has been little trodden on. But it does not seem to have travelled far, as church notes taken in 1729 record it in the north transept.⁸ Richard Howard's will requests burial 'before the Image called the broun Rode', and although the location of this cross is not specified, another

Aylsham testator left money in 1459 for a light in front of 'the holy cross in the north part of the church', which he distinguished from the high rood.⁹

In translation, the epitaph reads 'Pray for the souls of Richard Howard, late a citizen and sheriff of the city of Norwich, who died on the 13th day of January in the year of our Lord 1499, and his wife Cecily'. (The Latin, with the main abbreviations silently expanded, is '*Orate pro animabus Ricardi Howard nuper ciuis et vicecomitis Ciuitatis Norwici et Cecilie uxoris eius, qui obiit xiiij die Ianuarij Anno domini M^occcc^olxxxix^oix^o.*') In fact, Richard's will is dated 21 January 1499 in the surviving transcript, so either the scribe of the document added an 'x' too many, the engraver one too few, or else some other mistake was made.¹⁰ If the death-date was not 13 January then the inscription was conceivably puzzling when the anniversaries Richard requested in his will were observed. No tomb is mentioned in the will, but this does not mean that the brass was made before he died. The chronology of the monument is hardly simple, and it may be that two artists were involved here. Stylistically, and notwithstanding an attempt at general conformity, certain details are handled differently, particularly the heads and the hatching on the shrouds (Figs 3 and 4).¹¹ While one of the heads is angular of face and slightly inclined, the other is round, frontal and moon-like, its lower jaw split off by a crescentic, tooth-filled grin. It is possible to identify the

8. Norwich, Norfolk Record Office (hereafter NRO), MS Rye 17, vol. 1, ff. 45 (date), 46 (epitaph and location). The north transept was known as St Peter's chapel (Blomefield and Parkin, *Norfolk*, VI, p. 277). The Purbeck slab is 6 feet 8 inches long.
9. TNA, PROB 11/12/61; NRO, Norwich Consistory Court (hereafter NCC) register Brosyard, f. 178v. The move may have occurred in 1813, when the slab was appropriated for the burial of one John Soame.
10. This problem would vanish if the scribe had simply misdated as 1499 a will actually made on 21 January

1498. However, he was unambiguous about the date, which he wrote as 'the xxj daie of Januarij in the yere of our Lord Jesu m^occcc^olxxxix^o'¹⁰ and the yere of the reign of king Henry vij the xiiij'. The date of probate is recorded as 25 February 1499.

11. Pace (with the greatest respect) P.M. King, 'Contexts of the Cadaver Tomb in Fifteenth-Century England' (unpub. D.Phil thesis, University of York, 1987), p. 124, who calls them 'virtually identical mirror images of each other'.



Fig. 2. Howard effigies.
 (photo: © author)



Fig. 3. Richard Howard effigy.
(photo: © author)



Fig. 4. Cecily Howard effigy.
(photo: © author)

skeleton on the south side with Richard, as the south was normally the side occupied by the man on double-effigy brasses. The skeleton on the north side is possibly a later addition (as opposed to contemporaneous work by a different hand), although its indent may have been carved on the slab from the outset.¹²

If the brass was made in two stages then this would tally with the fact that Cecily outlived Richard by as many as seventeen years. In an action brought against her in the Court of

Chancery sometime before 1515, one John Blundell complained that he 'hath often tymes required' Cecily, as her husband's executrix, to hand over documents relating to a parcel of land in Aylsham on which he had a claim.¹³ In two slightly later documents of the same court, Cecily's executor, Thomas Abbys, petitioned for the recovery of a debt of £19 and possession of another parcel of land, with appurtenances, called 'Newewark' in the village.¹⁴ The second of these is dated on the dorse 14 May 11 Henry VIII (i.e. 1519), and

12. J. Bertram, *Icon and Epigraphy: The Meaning of European Brasses and Slabs*, 2 vols (lulu, 2015), I, pp. 22–3, mentions brasses left incomplete 'so that the figure of a surviving spouse could be added after their death'. The north-side brass is less well fitted to its indent; this is visible at its head.

13. TNA, C1/119/42 (undated). On Howard property in Aylsham, including the house called 'Great Edmonds'

in which Richard and Cecily lived, see W. and M. Vaughan-Lewis, *Aylsham: A Nest of Norfolk Lawyers* (Aylsham, 2014), pp. 73–4, 88.

14. TNA, C1/381/21, 22. This 'Newewark', whose name indicates the presence of buildings, was granted to Cecily in Richard's will (TNA, PROB 11/12/61). It included ten acres of land.

in it, Abbys explains that he needs the property in order to carry out Cecily's bequests. He also mentions that she 'made and declared her last will and testament' while 'lyeng vpon her deth bede': this may explain why no written will can be found for her. Here, too, Abbys states that he has asked the defendant, one Robert Northgate, many times for satisfaction. While this complaint has a formulaic ring to it, the plaintiff is unlikely to have gone to law before trying less solemn and expensive methods of redress. For current purposes, the burden of this evidence is that Cecily lived on for many years after her husband's death, did not remarry, was dead herself by May 1519, and made a nuncupative will which probably did not mention a tomb.¹⁵

The brass on the Howard monument has been cited and reproduced in the literature since the nineteenth century.¹⁶ However, the sum of previous analysis amounts only to the facts that it was made in or near Norwich and is exemplary of a minor late medieval fashion in eastern England. Malcolm Norris classified it as 'Norwich third series'.¹⁷ In addition to this, Sally Badham has stated that the skeletons demonstrate 'medieval ignorance of anatomy', although it may be questioned whether the engravers were giving naturalism their best

shot here: pretty obviously, they sought affects rather than anatomical accuracy.¹⁸ Whatever one thinks about this, the expressive power of the images has been consistently ignored. Unlike some other cadavers, these figures do not look like pathetic victims. They grin back at the viewer through gaping sockets scored over by lines that suggest eyebrows and skin-wrinkles. Their teeth are perfect: if the ethnological and psychoanalytic idea of tooth-loss as a synecdoche of death is sensible – and large numbers of late medieval images seem to corroborate it – then there is a suggestion here of the awakening of the resurrected body.¹⁹ The Howard skeletons look almost as though satisfied with their lot. They have advanced, after all, to the seventh age noted by liturgists including John Beleth and William Durandus, and negotiated in the process something dreadful that the living spectator is yet to endure.²⁰ This experience has brought them one stage closer to God. Their cleanness – the absence of carnal accretions – implies the purgatorial cleansing of two ultimately blessed souls. There is no dried or wormy flesh here, sucked in upon or bursting from itself. Together, they project what might be called the 'passive-aggressiveness' of cadaver imagery in a different way from the weebegone effigy of Thomas Wymer (d. 1507) in the chancel

15. Vaughan-Lewis, *Aylsham*, p. 74, states (without reference) that Cecily died in 1517.

16. See e.g. G. Harraden, 'Brasses and Brass-Rubbing', *The Girl's Own Paper*, no. 780 (8 December 1894), pp. 148–51 at pp. 150–1.

17. M. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Memorials*, 2 vols (London, 1977), I, p. 209; *idem*, 'Later Medieval Monumental Brasses: An Urban Funerary Industry and Its Representation of Death', in *Death in Towns: Urban Responses to the Dying and the Dead, 100–1600*, ed. S. Bassett (Leicester, 1992), pp. 184–209, 248–51; King, 'Contexts of the Cadaver Tomb', pp. 372–428 and *passim*; J. Finch, *Church Monuments in Norfolk before 1850: An Archaeology of Commemoration*, BAR British Series 317 (Oxford, 2000), pp. 71, 74; N. Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages: History*

and Representation (Oxford, 2009), pp. 316–17; H.W. Macklin, *Monumental Brasses*, new edn (London, 1960), pp. 92–5.

18. S. Badham and M. Stuchfield, *Monumental Brasses* (Oxford, 2009), p. 47.

19. F. Sinclair, 'In the Teeth of Death: Synecdoche', in *The Death Drive: New Life for a Dead Subject?*, ed. R. Weatherill (London, 1999), pp. 174–92. Compare *As You Like It*, Act 2, Scene 7: 'Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything'.

20. On the liturgists see M. McLaughlin, 'On Communion with the Dead', *Journal of Medieval History*, 17 (1991), pp. 23–34.

of the same church, which is the more pitiful for its attempt to preserve its shrivelled dignity (Fig. 5).²¹

There are other lively skeletons on brasses, and certainly some lively corpses. Examples of the latter include the Brampton brass at Brampton, the Symondes brass at Cley (both Norfolk), the Spryng brass at Lavenham, Thomasine Tendring's brass at Yoxford (both Suffolk), and various non-East Anglian examples (Fig. 6).²² Liveliness was often the idea. But no example (to crib from T. S. Eliot) 'fixes the viewer in a formulated phrase' more effectively than that of the Howards. The question is, what this phrase was, and the answer, that it depended who did the viewing, and when. Striking as it is, such an image cannot have been equally significant to its viewers. It had generic connotations, of course, one of which was to state the obvious: *morieris* ('you will die'). This single word, a subject for medieval preachers, was painted by Hans Memling under one of his death's heads, and also appeared on the screen at Edgefield in Norfolk, where the phrasing was '*Memento finem quia morieris*'.²³ Whether conveyed in words, images or both, the advertisement of the *morieris* message was a sort of public service, the idea being the familiar one that *thanatopsis* can encourage people to lead a better life, which will increase both their prosperity and social usefulness, and also help them after death.

Images had the advantage of making this point through bald contrasts that all or most viewers could grasp. Thus, the Howards are reduced, prostrate and clad in the simplest, while their viewers were quite otherwise. As such, they were the opposite of mirror images, and this



Fig. 5. Brass of Thomas Wynter (d. 1507), Aylsham, Norfolk.

(photo: © author)

was part of the point: the viewer reflected, psychologically, on them, but was not reflected by them. How they were equipped to serve the public is spelled out with almost diagrammatical clarity by a coloured drawing in a spiritual miscellany which is probably from Norfolk (it had a document relating to Norwich and

21. Wymer is doubly pathetic for being, as his epitaph says, a 'Worsted Weaver', now visibly woven into a shroud.

22. On the brasses named here, see King, 'Contexts of the Cadaver Tomb', pp. 95–6, 113, 114–15, 128.

23. *Catalogue of Romances*, III, p. 9 (no. 42); D. de Vos, *Hans Memling: The Complete Works* (London, 1994), pp. 204–7 (part of the *Bembo Diptych*, c. 1480–3); Blomefield and Parkin, *Norfolk*, IX, p. 387.



Fig. 6. Symondes brass, Cley, Norfolk.
(photo: © author)

Sedgeford bound into it, and other associations with the county), made in the mid- or later-fifteenth century and now in Cambridge University Library (Fig. 7).²⁴ A youth, pompously attired and obviously symbolic of

pride, stands beside an open grave containing a shrouded skeleton.²⁵ Both figures look towards the viewer, not at each other; and each spells out the message in the mild homiletic terms of Ecclesiasticus. ‘Hasten the time

24. MS li.IV.9, f. 68v. This image, apparently unpublished until now, is noted in R. Hanna, *The English Manuscripts of Richard Rolle: A Descriptive Catalogue* (Exeter, 2010), pp. 35–6. For the manuscript’s Norfolk associations, see A. McIntosh et al., *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English*, 4 vols (Aberdeen, 1986), I, p. 68, and the sources cited there.

25. The youth in the Cambridge manuscript resembles the figures of pride in BL, Add. MS 37049, f. 47v, and the fifteenth-century painting formerly in the Hungerford chapel at Salisbury cathedral, for which see S. Brown, *Sumptuous and Richly Adorn’d: The Decoration of Salisbury Cathedral* (London, 1999), p. 23.

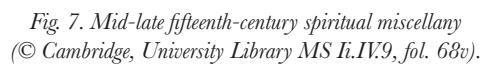


Fig. 7. Mid-late fifteenth-century spiritual miscellany
(© Cambridge, University Library MS Ii.IV.9, fol. 68v).

and remember the end', says the youth, and the skeleton, 'Remember your final end in everything you do, and you will never sin'.²⁶ Here, in a book, following the admonitory poem *Earthe upon earthe*, the message targeted suitably pensive private readers, but the drawing looks distinctly like a version of something larger which the artist had seen displayed somewhere.²⁷ The message is, anyway, no different in the context of a book, and both the looking out and at the viewer, and contrast between verticality and horizontality, are distinctive aspects of the drawing's semiotic which extend to cadaver tombs like that of the Howards. Although the underlying morality and iconographic means are shared, the image-rhetoric of the direct address from the grave differs from that of, say, the Three Living and Three Dead, or Death and the Gallant, or for that matter the cadaver which stares upwards or across at another (as John and Agnes Symondes at Cley, Norfolk, do: Fig. 6). The difference is essentially that between observing a drama from the stalls and being involved in it as an actor.

Of course, the idea behind the Howards' brass was not only one of public service. It was, very familiarly, also a way of getting prayers for the souls of the two deceased enduring the garish abstractions of purgatory. To this end, it functioned in tandem with the epitaph. In

theory, the words did not need the image, but in practice (and of course) the skeletons must have helped the inscription to be noticed and thus do its job. The image, however, really needed the words, at least to the extent that the Howards required viewers to understand that here were proxies of two specific people with particular claims on local sympathy. These claims extended in a civic sense to the good work of helping rebuild the church's south porch, which once had a closely similar version of the same epitaph inscribed over its inner door.²⁸

This bilocation of the epitaph underscores the fact that the tomb itself could only be in one place. As such, and notwithstanding those who gathered around it on Richard's anniversary, its main anticipated audience was presumably that portion of the parish which regularly used the north transept. Among these people, the relations and friends whose prosperity Richard and Cecily had nourished – through material investment, adroit stewardship, financial generosity and patronage – were particularly implicated. In a pointed way, the skeletons required the gratitude of these individuals, by reminding them of a root cause of their temporal comfort and social legitimacy.²⁹ The enduring evidence of this legitimacy was shot through the east end of Aylsham church, in the form of other Howard and Howard-related

26. '*Festina tempus et memento finis*' and '*In omni opere memorare nouissima et in eternum non peccabis*', Ecclesiasticus 36.10 and 7.46.

27. One instinctively thinks of the allegorical wall-painting of the same period in the nave of the Trinity chapel at Stratford-upon-Avon, which includes a version of *Earthe upon earthe* (K. Giles, A. Masinton and G. Arnott, 'Visualising the Guild Chapel, Stratford-upon-Avon: Digital Models as Research Tools in Buildings Archaeology', *Internet Archaeology*, 32 (2012–13), <http://intarch.ac.uk/journal/issue32/1/4.10.html>). Here, however, an angel rather than a man stands by the open grave, and the corpse is completely shrouded.

28. Blomefield and Parkin, *Norfolk*, VI, p. 277; compare NRO, MS Rye 17, vol. 1, f. 49v. Richard's initials are still there in the decorative woodwork over the door. Much of the porch seems to predate the Howards by a century or more (H. Lunnon, 'Making an Entrance: Studies of Medieval Church Porches in Norfolk', (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, University of East Anglia, 2012), p. 88).

29. Compare M. Craske, *The Silent Rhetoric of the Body: A History of Monumental Sculpture and Commemorative Art in England, 1720–1770* (New Haven and London, 2007), pp. 215–27; also Finch, *Church Monuments*, p. 70; Saul, *English Church Monuments*, pp. 139–42.

monuments.³⁰ Among these, Richard and Cecily's tomb stood out for its ostentatious humility and public service, which viewers could reflect on with the porch and other things in mind. It had a distinctive place as part of a pervasive, lineal iconography, by virtue of a design which, however rustic it may look to the synoptic eye of modern scholarship, was contextually perceptive.

I want now to turn to the burial service, by which I mean specifically the ritual called *Inhumatio defuncti* in the rubrics of some Sarum manuals.³¹ The post-mortem rites observed in church spanned two days, and comprised several components distinguished in the service books according to both their formal differences and when and where they were enacted.³² Of these rites, the office of the dead, and particularly matins of the dead – the *dirige* – is most often associated with sepulchral monuments. Among the reasons for this, the most obvious is the presence on numerous tombs of passages used in the office, particularly Job 19.25–27, beginning '*Credo quod redemptor meus vivit*' (part of the eighth lesson of the *dirige*).³³ There is an example in the chancel at Aylsham, commemorating a

vicar named Thomas Tylson, who witnessed Richard Howard's will.³⁴ In terms of how they were perceived, these passages were 'intervocal' ones, articulated by an effigy on behalf of the deceased, but also – and necessarily for their meaning – laced with the voices both of the prophet himself and the various celebrants whom the viewer had heard deliver them.³⁵ On cadaver tombs like that of Ralph Woodford (d. 1498) at Ashby Folville in Leicestershire, the perception was inflected intervisually, because the sinewy, sclerotic body in its bed of dirt was a manifest parallel for the desiccated condition of Job, couched on his heap of dung and ash.³⁶ There is a sharp evocation of this in the fourth lesson of the *dirige*: '[I] am to be consumed as rottenness, and as a garment that is moth-eaten' (Job 13:28). Shroud tombs like those at Ashby Folville and Aylsham imply both the carrion and the fretted garment. There is, incidentally, no mixed message here. The consistent and overriding implication is that the deceased will be saved because he or she has faith in God's redemptive power. The bodies are optimistically represented as evidence that death and physical decay are necessary rites of passage towards union with God: they are caused by God and form part of his plan. The

30. For some indication of this see Blomefield and Parkin, *Norfolk*, VI, pp. 277–8 (listing inscriptions on five pre-Reformation Howard tombs).

31. *Manuale ad usum percelebris ecclesie Sarisburiensis*, ed. A.J. Collins, Henry Bradshaw Society 91 (Chichester, 1960), pp. 152–62. A modern English translation is *The Rathen Manual*, ed. and trans. D. MacGregor (Aberdeen, 1905), pp. 51–8.

32. See R. Dinn, 'Death and Rebirth in Late Medieval Bury St Edmunds', in *Death in Towns*, ed. Basset, pp. 151–69; R. Gilchrist, *Medieval Life: Archaeology and the Life Course* (Woodbridge, 2012), pp. 191–2.

33. See N. Rogers, 'Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum': Images and Texts relating to the Resurrection of the Dead and the Last Judgement on English Brasses and Incised Slabs', in *Prophecy, Apocalypse and the Day of Doom*, ed. N. Morgan, Harlaxton Medieval Studies 12 (Donington, 2004), pp. 343–55.

34. NRO, MS Rye 17, vol 1, f. 48 (antiquarian drawing of the brass); TNA, PROB 11/12/61. The Tylson inscription was the usual one: '*Credo quod Redemptor meus vivit et in novissimo die de terra surrecturus sum et in carne mea videbo Deum salvatorem meum.*' Tylson is sometimes said to have died c. 1490, but this is evidently mistaken. There is no death-date on his brass, nor was there one in 1729.

35. On inscriptions invoking multiple voices see also R. Ellis, 'The Word in Religious Art of the Middle Ages and Renaissance', in *Word, Picture and Spectacle*, ed. C. Davidson (Kalamazoo, MI, 1984), pp. 21–38 at p. 27.

36. For this tomb, see Rogers, 'Et expecto', pp. 349, 352; P. M. King, 'Memorials of Ralph Woodford (d. 1498), Ashby Folville, Leicestershire: The Death of the Author?', in *Recording Medieval Lives*, ed. J. Boffey and V. Davis, Harlaxton Medieval Studies 17 (Donington, 2009), pp. 182–8.

inscription accompanying the cadaver effigy on the tomb of John and Isabella Barton at Holme, near Newark in Nottinghamshire, says simply '*Miseremini mei, miseremini mei, saltem vos, amici mei, quia manus Domini tetigit me*' ('Have pity on me, have pity on me, my friends, for the hand of the Lord has touched me': Job 19.21).³⁷ This is all God's handiwork. Such ideas are indispensable to current understanding of cadaver tombs.³⁸

While the iconography of these monuments is frank enough, it is expressionistic rather than illustrative of any liturgical text. By and large, tomb iconography was not illustrative in any literal sense. Aspects of funeral rites were commonly depicted at the beginning of the office of the dead in late medieval prayer-books, but (at least in England) this custom hardly extended to the grave, even though the

idea must have occurred to various patrons and artists.³⁹ The tombs that come closest to the prayer-book miniatures show vested priests with inscriptions from the *dirige*, like Thomas Tylson: here one could argue that an aspect of liturgical performance so often and virtuously played out in life is illustrated and thus perpetuated.⁴⁰ However, the literalism of the prayer-books was unnecessary on a tomb, because, whatever its form, a tomb did not need to spoon-feed an attentive viewer's imagination. I say 'attentive' here because many, even most, medieval people who looked at tombs must simply have glanced at them without pause for thought: familiarity tends to dull curiosity. The imagination was already primed by passing across the churchyard into a shadowy setting dotted with lamps, smelling of old incense, and dense with images, altars and other tombs.⁴¹ Under these circumstances,

37. See A.B. Barton, "The sheep hath paid for all": Church Building and Self-Expression in the Late Middle Ages', in *Of Churches, Toothaches and Sheep*, ed. N. Groves (Norwich, 2016), pp. 61–72 at p. 64.

38. See K. Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol: The Transi Tomb in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Berkeley, CA, 1973), pp. 96–132, and most later substantial contributions to the subject.

39. For the prayer-books, see S. Schell, 'The Office of the Dead in England: Image and Music in the Book of Hours and Related Texts, c. 1250–c. 1500' (unpub. Ph.D. thesis University of St Andrews, 2011, pp. 61–104 and passim; see also Schell's extensive bibliography.) For funerary influence on continental tomb-design, see e.g. H. s'Jacob, *Idealism and Realism: A Study of Sepulchral Symbolism* (Leiden, 1954), pp. 69–108; Bertram, *Icon and Epigraphy*, I, p. 225; L. Nys, *Les Tableaux Votifs Tournaisiens en Pierre 1350–1475* (Louvain-la-Neuve, 2001), pp. 200–2 (no. 20); F.A. Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, 2 vols (London, 1976), I, p. 309 (citing, *inter alia*, the alabaster slab of c. 1480 to John Lawe in Derby Cathedral).

40. For other examples, see Rogers, "Et expecto", pp. 346–7. Commemorative rituals relatable to funerals were sometimes evoked by including diminutive priestly figures on tombs, as on the Harrington monument in Cartmel Priory, William of Wykeham's tomb at Winchester, and Rahere's retrospective tomb in St Bartholomew's, Smithfield.

41. There is some medieval evidence for the now-vanished lights, images and tombs at Aylsham. For example, in his will (1459), Edmund Skeyton mentioned lights at the high rood, the image of the Virgin Mary on the same screen, the cross in the north transept, Our Lady of Pity, and SS Thomas, Margaret, Peter, Antony, and Nicholas (NRO, NCC register Brosyard, f. 178v). John Collet's will (1520) adds lights of 'our lady in the este' (i.e. the chancel) and St Christopher and St Erasmus (NRO, NCC register Robinson, f. 51v). Each light must have burned before an eponymous image, and there will also have been images of St Michael, the church's patron saint (there were guilds of St Michael, St Margaret, the Trinity and others: NRO, NCC registers Robinson, ff. 48, 51). Blomefield and Parkin, *Norfolk*, VI, pp. 275, 277–8, 285, list eighteen medieval epitaphs, and there were many more tombs than this. For instance, see the extraordinary provision in the will of the priest John Boller (1506): 'Item, I wull þat myn executors after my decesse shall bye or do to be bought xxx marbill stonys after the lenght and brede of the stony þat my faders graue ys couered with, and þerewith to couer my graue [and] cumpas about as the seid stonys may extend' (NRO, NCC, register Ryxe, f. 355). Thus, he effectively made his tomb, and those of his parents, the centrepiece of a sort of cemetery pavement in the chapel of St Thomas (i.e. the south chancel aisle).

any monument might inspire reflection on the universal themes of death, physical decay, resurrection and judgement. If the tomb had a corpse represented on it, or a passage from the *dirige*, or – as sometimes – an image of the Trinity or Christ on a rainbow, then it probably brought these things to mind more often, and for more viewers, than monuments that lacked such attributes.⁴² In practical terms, its ability to signify was closely related to where it was, what stood near it, how much ritual centred on it and who was buried under it. This is why knowledge of local context is so important to historical analysis of these objects.

Yet the fact that tomb iconography did not attempt to objectify the liturgy need not disguise parallels which amounted to a mutually reinforcing relationship between the two things. Because the relationship I am assuming here was psychological rather than one of ontological type, it is inherently slippery, but the general understanding of late medieval attitudes to death and commemoration that arises from the evidence sanctions its pursuit.⁴³ To prepare the way, it may be observed that much evidence exists for allusive relationships between words and actions on the one hand and material objects on the other. A familiar example, relevant to the current argument, is the marginal image of a coffin holding a shrouded corpse in the Luttrell Psalter, which evokes the words of Psalm 87.5–6: ‘I am counted among them that go down to the pit; I am become as a man without help, free among the dead, like

the slain, sleeping in the sepulchres’.⁴⁴ There is another example at Psalm 94 in the Gorleston Psalter, less familiar to scholars but if anything better suited to making the point, as it is more oblique in relation to the text and thus better illustrative of the conceptual elasticity I wish to stress (Fig. 8). It is also iconographically nearer the Howard brass. Here, a corpse in the rags of its shroud is shown straining upwards as if seeking God, under the verse ‘A high God is the Lord; a king high above all the gods; beneath whose hand lie the depths of the earth’.⁴⁵ In theory, any one of a number of images would have been fitting here, or indeed no image at all. However, an entombed body awaiting its resurrection suggested itself to the illuminator or his advisor as an evocative and memorable counterpart to the idea of being underground. It is probably also what sprang to mind first.⁴⁶

The physical and spatial correspondences between liturgy and tombs were various. For one thing, much ritual was enacted either at the tomb or sufficiently close by to bring the object to the attention of those present. This began with the funeral and continued through official commemoration, and the numbers in attendance must often have been considerable. By his will, Richard Howard paid, fed and watered the priests, assistants and everyone else present at his burial, provided for a chantry priest for five years, and established an anniversary for twenty years, again with cash doles for attendees. These anniversaries re-enacted much of the funerary ritual, with the

42. There are cadaver tombs with the Holy Trinity at Tideswell, Derbyshire, Childrey, Berkshire, Hunsdon, Hertfordshire and Woburn, Buckinghamshire. At Shorne, Kent, there is an example with a Last Judgement.

43. See, for a start, M. Aston, ‘Death’, in *Fifteenth-Century Attitudes: Perceptions of Society in Late Medieval England*, ed. R. Horrox (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 202–28.

44. BL, MS Additional 42130, f. 157v. P. Binski, ‘John the Smith’s Grave’, in *Tributes to Jonathan J. G. Alexander:*

The Making and Meaning of Medieval & Renaissance Manuscripts, Art and Architecture, ed. S.L’Engle and G.B. Guest (Turnhout, 2006), pp. 386–93, places this image in the context of shroud brasses (at p. 387).

45. Psalm 94.3–4. BL, MS Additional 49622, f. 123v.

46. The words ‘*iubilemus Deo salutari nostro*’ (‘let us joyfully sing to God our saviour’) in the first verse of Psalm 94 and a miniature representing Christ in the initial may explain the straining pose of the corpse but not the choice of image.

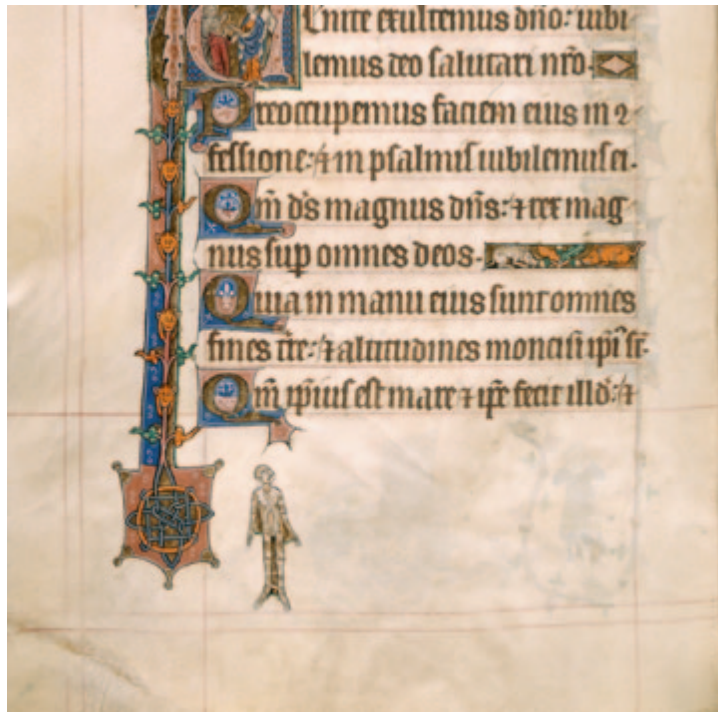


Fig. 8. *The Gorleston Psalter*
 © British Library Board, Add. MS 49622, fol. 123v (detail).

tomb doing duty for the body under the pall that had been present at the original funeral. Furthermore, the monument and grave beneath it were ritual creations to the extent that their significance and spiritual status were conferred by liturgical acts. During the burial service, the grave was transformed through the priest from a simple pit (albeit one in consecrated ground) into a sanctuary of healing for a specific corpse or corpses. This established a relationship which is represented on the Howard monument by shrouded skeletons set within a dark rectangle that maintains the notional dimensions of the grave, even to the extent that the relatively small size of the figures suggested depth. The words which accompanied the asperging and censuring of the grave, and the signing over it of

the cross, make this tolerably clear: 'O Lord [...] may it please you to bl+ess and sanctify this grave, and the body to be placed in it, so that it may be a means of healing to him that rests in it, and a defence and protection from cruel weapons thrown by the enemy'.⁴⁷

This marriage of corpse and grave can reasonably be pressed a little further with reference to the Howard tomb. In doing so, it is relevant to note that the burial service, as well as the office of the dead and requiem mass, must have been experienced often enough to be memorable (if not universally intelligible) to both the clergy and the poor of Aylsham, to the latter of whom the doles given for attendance at funerals were one means of staying alive.

47. *Manuale Sarisburiensis*, ed. Collins, p. 156.

As noted, corpse imagery provides a sensible parallel for the Job imagery prompted by the lessons of the *dirige*. In the context of the burial service, the parallels were more direct, because the ritual centred on manhandling and ogling the actual shrouded body, in or out of a coffin. Some of the language involved was highly resonant. For example, immediately before the grave was filled, the corpse received a cross of earth and further sprinkling and censing to the chant of Psalm 138 (*Domine probasti me*): 'My bone is not hidden from thee, who did make it in secret, along with my substance, in the bowels of the earth' (Psalm 138.15).⁴⁸ Again, among the things chanted and recited after the grave had been filled in were prayers said by the priest which reinforced the oneness of body and grave. 'Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust', 'all flesh is reduced to what it originally was', and so forth. Another prayer requested that the dead be 'clothed in the garment of heaven and the robe of immortality'.⁴⁹ Psalm 50, the *Miserere*, followed later in the service: 'Thou shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed: thou shall wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow [...] and the bones that have been humbled shall rejoice' (Psalm 50.9–10).⁵⁰ If the seven penitential psalms were chanted shortly afterwards, then Psalm 50 was repeated. The Sarum manual recommended this, 'or the *De profundis* at least'.⁵¹ The *De profundis* (Psalm 129), often chanted over tombs, and otherwise used in the ritual for visitation of the sick, vespers of the office of the dead, and the requiem mass (where its first verse was generally recited by itself), encouraged performers and listeners to think generally about burial and supplication in a way already suggested with reference to the Gorleston Psalter.

To better appreciate how the burial liturgy relates to the Howard tomb, it helps to consider the setting in the north transept, together with convictions expressed in Richard's will. The main emphasis of the ritual naturally falls on the hope and humble expectation of salvation. The body's resurrection and the Last Judgement '*per ignem*' are repeatedly mentioned. More than once, salvation is beseeched as a boon of Christ's own sacrifice: for example, 'Thou would not suffer that soul to be tormented with the pains of hell, which thou has redeemed with the precious blood of thy son, our Lord Jesus Christ'.⁵² With these petitions in mind, it is relevant to recall that the Howard tomb was located in front of, and below, an image of the Crucifixion, to which the skeletons can be thought to have directed both their gaze and their feet. Perhaps it is also germane to notice that Richard refers in his will to St Michael, whom he believed would eventually weigh his soul, as 'myne avowre', and that he left a legacy to the guild of that saint (and to no other guild).⁵³ This personal allegiance will not have cued any association between liturgy and tomb in the mind of a viewer unaware of it. However, anyone bothering to ponder the tomb must at least have noticed its physical association with the brown cross standing over it. The link was perhaps reinforced by knowledge of the small wooden crosses placed on the breasts of the corpses in the grave before they were buried, and the cross of earth sprinkled over them. One of these crosses is shown in the miniature on folio 157v of the Luttrell Psalter.

Little has been said here about the material and social context of the Howard tomb. Clearly, these things offer opportunities for investigation of a brass which seems in its own way to

48. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

49. *Ibid.*, pp. 158–9.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 162.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 162.

53. TNA, PROB 11/12/61. It was, however, common enough in some parishes (e.g. Southwold) for testators to refer to local patron saints as 'avowers'.

manifest enthusiasm rather than either horror or the crotch-covering embarrassment shown by the cadavers of Thomas Wymer and John Brigge at Salle, and others.⁵⁴ Enthusiasms would, after all, only be consummately indulged beyond the veil of death: if this is to read too much into the Howard skeletons for some, then the point, and others like it, are nevertheless worth teasing out. Often, this investigative process will reveal that monuments and concepts which seem familiar can easily absorb more attention than they have received in the past. The liturgy is only one possible avenue of approach. The richness of contextual information available for the late middle ages in England effectively renders

the domain of monumental brass studies an open field, capable of sustaining much more work than has been completed to date. With any luck, this optimism is both communicated and in some measure justified by what has been said here about the tomb of Richard and Cecily Howard.

Acknowledgements

This paper was first delivered at ‘Symbols in Life and Death’, the conference of the Monumental Brass Society held in Norwich from 18–20 September 2015. I thank Christian Steer and everyone else involved in organising that event, and David Lepine for the invitation to publish this paper and editorial work.

54. On Brigge’s brass, see D. Harry, ‘A Cadaver in Context: The Shroud Brass of John Brigge Revisited’, *MBS Trans*, 19 pt 2 (2015), pp. 101–10.

Conservation of Brasses, 2017–18

William Lack and Simon Nadin

This is the thirty-third report on conservation which has been prepared for the *Transactions* but marks a new departure in that it has been prepared by both of us and records the continuing collaboration with Skillington Workshop under the trading name of *Skillington Lack*. Thanks are due to Martin Stuchfield for invaluable assistance at Amersham, Great Berkhamsted, Brampton, Brantingham, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, Cheshunt, West Ham, Littlebury, Penzance and Sutton (now Rochford), and for funding the facsimiles at Brantingham and Brightwell-cum-Sotwell; to Hugh Guilford for assistance at Amersham; to Patrick Farman and the late Peter Hacker at Brantingham; and to the incumbents of all the churches concerned. Generous financial assistance has been provided by the Francis Coales Charitable Foundation at Amersham, Great Berkhamsted, Brampton, Brantingham, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, Cheshunt, West Ham, Littlebury and Sutton (now Rochford); the Religious Sisters of Mercy at Penzance; and the Monumental Brass Society at Amersham, Great Berkhamsted, Brampton, Brantingham, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, Cheshunt, West Ham, Littlebury and Sutton (now Rochford).

Amersham, Buckinghamshire¹

Four brasses were removed on 18 August 2017.

1. Described and illustrated in W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Buckinghamshire* (London, 1994), pp. 1–3. Browne Willis and George Lipscomb recorded their original locations and lost parts (Bod. Lib., Willis MS., XXXIII, pp. 1–9; G. Lipscomb, *History and Antiquities of the County of Buckingham*, 4 vols, (London, 1847), III, pp. 177–8). The figure brasses were taken up during the restorations of 1870 or 1888 and mounted on the north aisle wall. In 1973 they were relaid in a new

LSW.II. Thomas Carbonell, esq., 1439, and wife Elizabeth, 1438. This London B brass, comprising a civilian effigy (956×302 mm, thickness 3.8 mm, 9 rivets), a mutilated female effigy (941×367 mm, thickness 3.9 mm, 8 rivets) and a two-line Latin inscription (73×910 mm, thickness 3.7 mm, 4 rivets), originally laid down in the north aisle, was taken up from a modern slab in the north transept.

LSW.III. Inscription to Richard Champneys, 1439. This London D three-line Latin inscription (84×336 mm, thickness 4.2 mm, 3 rivets) was removed from the east wall of the south transept where it had been bedded in plaster and become considerably corroded. The half effigy of Richard Champneys is lost.²

LSW.IV. Civilian, c. 1450. This London D headless civilian effigy (originally about 1180×280 mm, now 932×280 mm, thickness 3.2 mm, 8 rivets), originally laid down in the north aisle, was removed from a modern slab in the north transept.³

LSW.V. John de la Penne, 1537, and wife Elizabeth. This London G brass, comprising a civilian effigy (628×166 mm, thickness 4.7 mm, 4 rivets), a female effigy (638×191 mm, thickness 3.5 mm, 4 rivets) and a four-line Latin inscription (125×676 mm, thickness

slab in the north transept by Bryan Egan (B. Egan and H.M. Stuchfield, *The Repair of Monumental Brasses* (Newport Pagnell, 1981), p. 16).

- Willis recorded it in the 'North Chancel' together with the 'demi-portraiture of a Man in brass'. The inscription was presumably moved to the south transept in 1870 or 1888.
- Willis noted that the effigy was headless and that a female effigy, inscription and four evangelistic symbols were lost.

4.6 mm, 4 rivets), originally laid down in the south transept, was removed from a modern slab in the north transept.⁴

After cleaning, fractures in the effigies of LSW.II and the male effigy of LSW.V were repaired, new rivets were fitted to the brasses and they were rebated into four separate cedar boards. A conjectural outline of the head of LSW.IV was lightly outlined on the board.⁵ The boards and brasses were returned and mounted in the Drake Chapel on 25 October 2018, LSW.II and III on the west wall and LSW.IV and V on the north wall.

Great Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire⁶

Five brasses were removed on 18 April 2016.

LSW.II. Man in armour, *c.* 1365, possibly John Raven, 1395. This London B effigy (760×188 mm, engraved on two plates, thicknesses 3.4 and 4.4 mm, 3 rivets) had formerly been relaid in the south chapel. It had subsequently been removed, inset into a pillar in St John's Chapel and secured with screws. The two plates are still joined with the original lead butt-joint which is in good condition. The lower part of the sword blade, the foot inscription and two shields (165×40 mm) are now lost. Indents for the two lost shields are shown on a rubbing in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries.

LSW.IV. Priest, *c.* 1400, possibly Thomas Brydde, rector, 1406. This London A half effigy of a priest in mass vestments (231×179 mm, thickness 4.3 mm, 2 rivets)

had been removed from its original slab and relaid in the floor of the old chancel which is currently used as a vestry. It had become considerably corroded. The indent for the lost inscription (85×445 mm) is shown in a rubbing in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries.

LSW.VI. Inscription to Robert Incent, 1485, engraved *c.* 1520. This London G eight-line English inscription (254×478 mm, thickness 4.1 mm, 6 rivets) had been removed from its original slab and inset into a pillar in St. John's Chapel. It was inadequately secured with screws and had suffered considerable corrosion.

LSW.VII. Katharine Incent, 1520. This London G brass, comprising a female effigy in shroud (632×167 mm, thickness 4.8 mm, 4 rivets) and a seven-line English inscription (227×455 mm, thickness 4.3 mm, 6 rivets), had been removed from its original slab and inset into a pillar in St. John's Chapel. The plates had been secured with screws and had suffered considerable corrosion. The lower right-hand edge of the inscription is broken off and lost as are two scrolls and the marginal inscription with evangelical symbols in roundels at the corners. A rubbing in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries shows the two lower roundels (103 mm diameter), a fillet of the marginal inscription (380×35 mm) and indents for the two scrolls (left-hand 170×50×35 mm; right-hand 165×55×35 mm).⁷

LSW.IX. Latin verses from the brass of John Waterhouse, gent., and wife Margaret [Turner],

4. Willis noted the loss of five sons, six daughters and two shields.

5. Based on an unknown civilian, engraved *c.* 1450, formerly in the collection of the Northamptonshire Archaeological Society, now in the church of Ashby St Ledgers, Northamptonshire.

6. Described and illustrated in W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Hertfordshire* (Stratford St Mary, 2009), pp. 96–113.

7. Weever noted that the inscription was already mutilated by 1631 and Henry Oldfield, *c.* 1790, noted the inscription survived (J. Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments*, second edn (London, 1767), pp. 586–7; Hertford, Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, D/EOf/2 p. 128.

1558. This London G brass comprises a six-line English inscription (138×378 mm), a plate bearing a six-line Latin verse (176×474 mm, thickness 3.6 mm, 6 rivets) and two shields (left-hand 144×120 mm; right-hand 139×118 mm). The verses plate had been relaid on a window sill in the north chapel and had become considerably corroded.⁸ It is a well-known palimpsest with the reverse showing part of the inscription with the figure of St Jerome in the initial letter, and the lower part the brass of Thomas Humfre of London, goldsmith, and wife Joan, *c.* 1510. It is lightly engraved goldsmith's work, and can be linked with Isfield, Sussex M.S.II.

After cleaning a facsimile of the reverse of LSW.IX was produced, new rivets were fitted to the brasses and they were rebated into five cedar boards. The facsimile was rebated into the same board as LSW.IX. The boards and brasses were returned and mounted on 26 July 2017, LSW.II being mounted on the same pillar in St John's Chapel and LSW.IV, VI, VII and IX on the north wall of the north aisle.

Brampton, Norfolk⁹

Five brasses were removed on 8 June and 4 September 2017.

LSW.II. Inscription to Robert Breton, 1479 (Fig. 1). This Norwich 2 three-line Latin inscription (84×381 mm, thickness 3.8 mm, 3 rivets) had been screwed directly on plaster on the splay of the north-east chancel window. It was originally part of a brass comprising a civilian effigy, inscription and four shields

which lay on the floor of the chancel.¹⁰

LSW.III. Inscription to Emme Reymes, 1483 (Fig. 2). This Norwich 2 three-line Latin inscription (84×516 mm, thickness 3.9 mm, 3 rivets) had been screwed to the same window splay as LSW.II. It was originally part of a brass comprising a female effigy, an inscription, groups of four sons and twelve daughters, and one shield (Reymes impaling Brampton) which was laid on the floor of the chancel.¹¹

LSW.IV. John Brampton, 1535, and two wives, Tomasseyng [Jermy] and Anne [Brome] (Fig. 3). This Norwich 6 brass, now comprising an armoured effigy (554×185 mm, thickness 2.1 mm, 6 rivets), two female effigies (dexter 557×178 mm, thickness 1.8 mm, 6 rivets; sinister 556×190 mm, thickness 2.1 mm, 6 rivets), a three-line English inscription (77×526 mm,



Fig. 1. Inscription to Robert Breton, 1479
Brampton, Norfolk (LSW.II)
(rubbing: © Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, Norfolk
(forthcoming))



Fig. 2. Inscription to Emme Reymes, 1483
Brampton, Norfolk (LSW.III)
(rubbing: © Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, Norfolk
(forthcoming))

8. Work carried out by Bryan Egan in 1979 (Egan and Stuchfield, *Repair of Monumental Brasses*, p. 30).

9. The 'LSW numbers' are those to be used in the forthcoming *County Series* volume.

10. In *c.* 1605 the four shields were noted in *The Chorography of Norfolk*, ed. C. Hood (Norwich, 1938), pp. 88–9 but by the mid-18th century, when recorded by Thomas

Martin, only one shield (lower right) together with the effigy and inscription remained (Norwich, Norfolk Record Office [NRO] Rye MS. 17, I, ff. 137–8).

11. Complete *c.* 1605 but only the inscription and shield were recorded by Thomas Martin and Anthony Norris (*Chorography of Norfolk*, ed. Hood, pp. 88–9; NRO, Rye MS. 6, I, pp. 511–13).

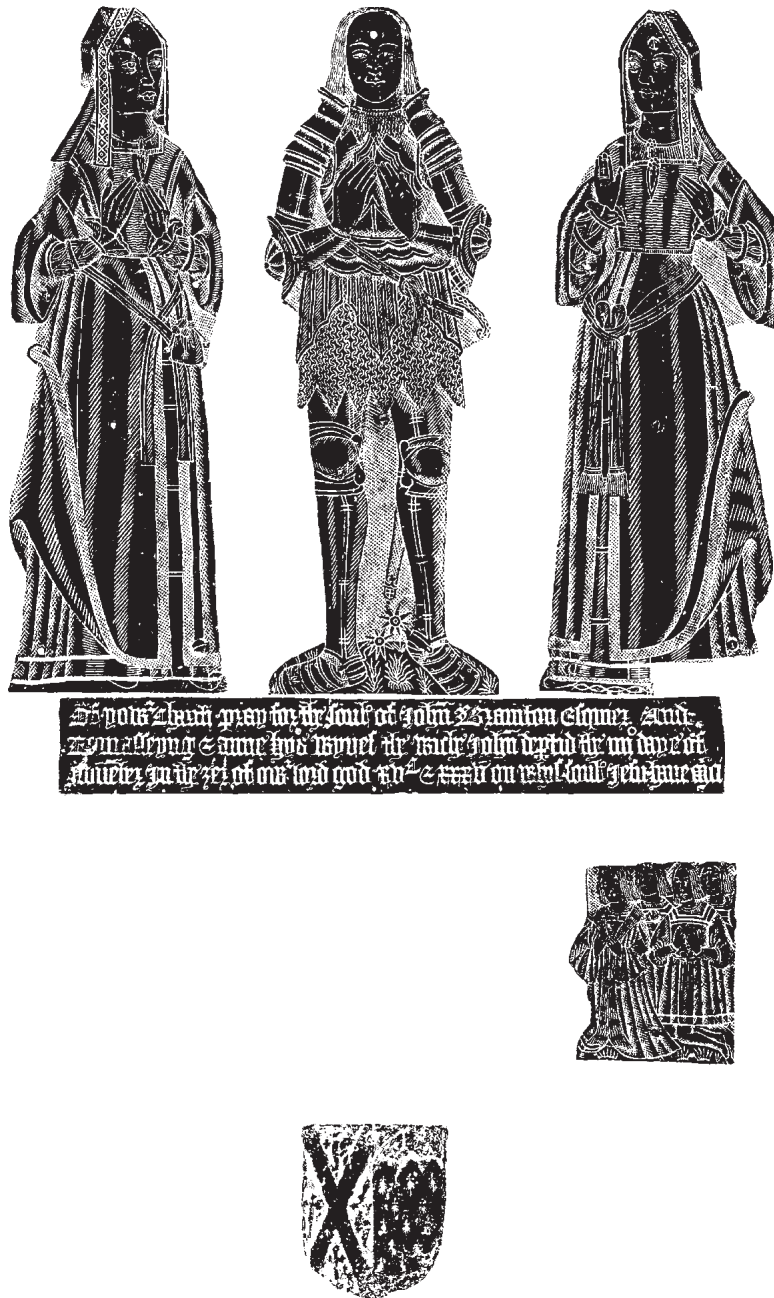


Fig. 3. John Brampton, 1535, and two wives, Tomasseyng [Jermy] and Anne [Brome]
 Brampton, Norfolk (LSW.IV)
 (rubbing: © Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, Norfolk (forthcoming))

thickness 1.6 mm, 4 rivets), a group of four sons (160×132 mm, 2 rivets) and a lead shield bearing the arms of Brampton impaling Brome (144×115 mm, thickness 5.6 mm, 2 rivets), had been screwed directly to plaster in a recess on the north chancel wall. The sinister female effigy is mutilated at the lower sinister corner. The brass was originally located on the floor of the chancel and there were also another group of children and three further shields.¹²

LSW.VI. Inscription to Charles Brampton, 1631. This six-line Latin inscription (178×274 mm, thickness 3.9 mm, 5 rivets) had been nailed to the same window splay as LSW. II and III.¹³

LSW.VII. Inscription to Guybon Goddard, 1671 (Fig. 4). This coffin plate, engraved with a six-line Latin inscription and one Latin verse (144×244 mm, thickness 1.0 mm, 8 rivets) had been nailed to the same window splay as LSW. II, III and VI.¹⁴

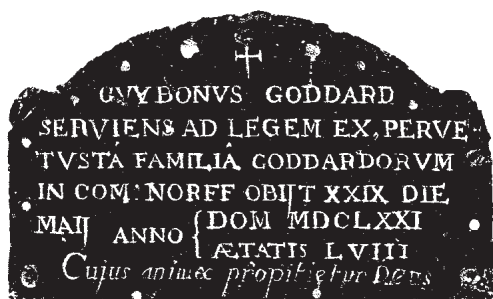


Fig. 4. Inscription to Guybon Goddard, 1671
Brampton, Norfolk (LSW.VII)
(rubbing: © Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, Norfolk
(forthcoming))

12. Complete with the exception of the lower left shield c. 1605 (*Chorography of Norfolk*, ed. Hood, pp. 88–9). Martin recorded the three effigies, inscription, group of four sons and two shields with a group of daughters, ‘more children’ and one shield lost, whilst Anthony Norris recorded the three effigies, inscription

After cleaning, fractures were repaired in LSW. III, the sinister female effigy and inscription of LSW.IV and LSW.VIII, and new rivets were fitted. LSW.II, III, VI and VII were rebated into a cedar board and LSW.IV into a second board. The boards and brasses were returned and mounted on 29 June 2018, LSW.II, III, VI and VII on the north wall of the chancel and LSW.IV on the south wall of the chancel.

Brantingham, Yorkshire

M.S.I. Inscription and achievement for Anthony Smethelye, 1578 (Fig. 5). This four-line Latin inscription in raised letter (145×516 mm, thickness 3.6 mm, 7 rivets) and achievement (331×255 mm, thickness 4.2 mm, 5 rivets) was removed from its Yorkshire magnesian limestone frame on the east wall of the south chapel on 13 November 2016. The achievement is engraved on two plates, the smaller of which proved to be palimpsest, the reverse showing



Fig. 5. Inscription and achievement for Anthony Smethelye, 1578
Brantingham, Yorkshire (M.S.I)
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

and one shield with two further shields lost (NRO, Rye MS). The brass was removed from its slab to the north chancel wall in 1884.

13. Recorded as loose by Norris.

14. Recorded as ‘lately dug Up, which had been fixd to a Coffin’ by Norris.

part of a shield bearing *a cross maline* quartering *a maunche*, engraved *c.* 1575 (Fig. 6). After cleaning, a facsimile of the reverse engraving was produced and mounted on a cedar board together with a commemorative plate. A fracture was repaired in the achievement, the two parts were rejoined and new rivets fitted to the brass. On 12 December 2017 the brass was reset in the frame and the board mounted beneath the frame.

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, Oxfordshire
(formerly Berkshire)¹⁵

Three brasses were removed from their slabs on 4 January 2018.

LSW.I. John Scolffylde, 1507. This London G brass, comprising an effigy in mass vestments with chalice and wafer (466×138 mm, thickness 4.8 mm, 3 rivets) and a three-line Latin inscription (75×273 mm, thickness 4.9 mm, 2 rivets) was removed from the original Purbeck slab (1380×670 mm) in the south aisle.

LSW.II. Robert Court, 1509, and wife Jane. This London F brass, comprising a civilian effigy (505×161 mm, thickness 3.7 mm, 3 rivets) a female effigy (491×167 mm, thickness 3.9 mm, 3 rivets) and a three-line English inscription (98×669 mm, thickness 4.5 mm, 3 rivets) was removed from the original Unio-Purbeck marble slab (2050×930 mm) in the nave. There is an indent for a lost son (195×75 mm). The male effigy had come loose previously and was kept in the church safe.

LSW.III. Richard Hampden and wife Jane, 1512. This London F brass, comprising a civilian effigy (389×120 mm, thickness 4.0 mm, 2 rivets), a female effigy (390×147 mm, thickness



Fig. 6. Palimpsest reverse of achievement to Anthony Smethelye, 1578

Brantingham, Yorkshire (M.S.I)
(rubbing: © Martin Stuchfield)

3.7 mm, 2 rivets) and a three-line English inscription (78×545 mm, thickness 4.4 mm, 3 rivets) was taken up from the original Purbeck slab (1610×865 mm) at the west end of the nave. The inscription proved to be palimpsest, the reverse showing eight almost complete Latin verses, probably wasted work (Fig. 7).

After cleaning, a facsimile of the palimpsest reverse was produced and mounted on a cedar board together with a commemorative plate. A fracture was repaired in the male effigy of LSW. II and new rivets were fitted to the brasses. The brasses were relaid in their slabs on 8 November 2018. The board carrying the facsimile will be mounted in the nave at a later date.

Cheshunt, Hertfordshire¹⁶

Three brasses were removed on 3 January 2018.

15. Described and illustrated in W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Berkshire* (London, 1993), pp. 27–9.

16. Described and illustrated in Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, *Hertfordshire*, pp. 154, 156–7 and 159.

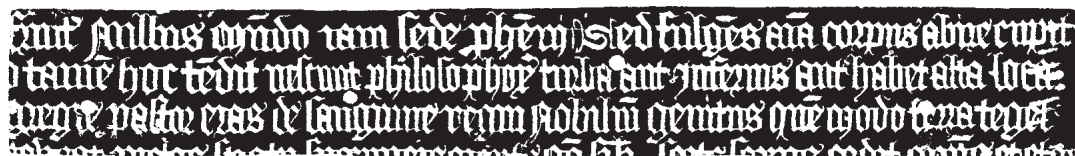


Fig. 7. Palimpsest reverse of inscription to Richard Hamden and wife, 1512
Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, Oxfordshire (formerly Berkshire) (LSW.III)
(rubbing: © Martin Stuchfield)

LSW.II. William Pryke, 1449, and wife Elen. This London B brass, comprising a headless civilian effigy (originally about 470 mm tall, now 414×138 mm, thickness 3.8 mm, 3 rivets), a female effigy (467×203 mm, thickness 3.7 mm, 3 rivets) and an inscription in two Latin lines (70×623 mm, thickness 3.8 mm, 3 rivets), was taken up from a modern slab on the north side of the nave.¹⁷ The inscription is broken into three parts.

LSW.IV. Inscription to Agnes Luthyngton, 1468. This London D four-line Latin inscription (151×442 mm, thickness 2.7 mm, 3 rivets) was taken up from a modern slab on the south side of the nave.¹⁸

LSW.VI. Inscription to Constance Parr, 1502. This London G three-line Latin inscription (75×389 mm, thickness 3.6 mm, 3 rivets) was removed from the north wall of the north aisle. It had been screwed directly on plaster and regularly cleaned with metal polish.

After cleaning, the three parts of the inscription of LSW.II were rejoined and a fracture in the female effigy of LSW.II was repaired. New

rivets were fitted to the brasses and they were rebated into three cedar boards.

Draycot Cerne, Wiltshire¹⁹

M.S.I. Sir Edward Cerne and widow Elyne, 1393. This fine London A brass, comprising an armoured effigy and the female effigy (engraved on a single plate 861×508 mm, thickness 3.1 mm, 17 rivets) and a two-line French inscription (58×558 mm, thickness 3.3 mm, 2 rivets), was taken up from the original Purbeck slab (2665×1170 mm) in the chancel on 11 July 2017. The brass had been relaid at some stage and secured with conventional woodscrews. After cleaning, two fractures in the effigies plate were repaired and new rivets were fitted. The brass was relaid in the slab on 21 September 2017.

West Ham, All Saints, Essex

LSW.I. Thomas Staples, 1592, and four wives.²⁰ This Southwark (Cure) brass comprises an irregularly-shaped plate engraved with the effigies of Thomas Staples and his four wives, Anne, Margaret, Denis and Alice and a shield bearing the arms of Staples?, . . . *a fess . . . between three trefoils . . .* impaling a monogram T.S. (423–

17. Originally in the south aisle, it was probably moved to the nave during the extensive restorations of the later part of the nineteenth century. The effigies were incorrectly positioned with the male effigy placed on the sinister side of the brass and there was no indent for the missing head of the male effigy.

18. Originally in the north aisle and subsequently moved to the south aisle, it was presumably moved to the nave at the same time as LSW.II.

19. Described in E. Kite, *The Monumental Brasses of Wiltshire* (Bath, 1860, reprinted 1969), pp. 20–1 and plate III; *Monumental Brass Society Portfolio*, VI (1964), pl. 34; and *Monumental Brasses, the Portfolio Plates of the Monumental Brass Society 1894–1984* (Woodbridge, 1988), pl. 81.

20. W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Essex* (London, 2003), pp. 313, 315.

484×511–515 mm, thickness 1.5 mm, 13 rivets) and an inscription in four English lines with 20 English verses (each verse representing a shilling that Staples left as an annuity to the poor) (537×493 mm, thickness 1.7 mm, 12 rivets). There are clear hammer marks on the reverse of each plate. The brass was formerly screwed to the east wall of the nave/south aisle and was taken down *c.* 1977 and deposited on loan at the Passmore Edwards Museum, Stratford. It was returned to the church in 2014 and collected for conservation on 19 March 2018. After new rivets were fitted and it was rebated into a cedar board which was mounted on the east wall of the nave/south aisle on 6 December 2018

Harpsden, Oxfordshire

M.S.IV. Sarah Webb, 1620 (Fig. 8).²¹ This Marshall brass comprises the female effigy (439×180 mm), inscription in three Latin lines and two Latin verses (134×562 mm, thickness 1.9 mm, 8 rivets), one son (157×79 mm) and one daughter (161×84 mm, thickness 1.7 mm, 1 rivet). The inscription came loose from the slab in 2017. In January 2018 the daughter was removed from the original Purbeck slab (1225×605 mm) in the chancel and the inscription was collected. After cleaning, new rivets were fitted and the two plates were relaid in the slab on 21 June 2018.

Littlebury, Essex²²

Six brasses were removed on 20 August 2016.



Fig. 8. Sarah Webb, 1620
Harpsden, Oxfordshire (M.S.IV)
(photo: © Simon Nadin)

LSW.I. Civilian, engraved *c.* 1480. This London D effigy (480×140 mm, thickness 3.1 mm, 3 rivets) had been mounted on a board affixed to the east wall of the north aisle. It originally formed part of a much

then considerably more complete. Cole's drawings are now in the British Library (BL, Add. MS. 5811, ff.5v–10v). At the restoration in 1871 the brasses were taken up from their slabs (which were also removed) and kept in a chest in the vestry, where Christy and Porteous recorded them. Their plea that they should be re-fixed in the church was heeded; by 1926 they had been mounted on boards in the north and south aisles (Mill Stephenson, *A List of Monumental Brasses in the British Isles* (London, 1926), p. 126).

21. Described but not illustrated in P. Manning, 'Brasses in the Deanery of Henley-on-Thames', *Oxford Journal of Monumental Brasses*, 1 (1898), p. 250.
22. Described and illustrated by M. Christy and W.W. Porteous in 'Some Interesting Essex Brasses', *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society [TEAS]*, new series 8 (1901), pp. 40–52, and in Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, *Essex*, pp. 472–6. When Thomas Martin and William Cole visited the church in *c.* 1735 and 1745 respectively, the brasses were

larger composition comprising a civilian and two wives, inscription, two groups of children, three scrolls and probably a representation of the Trinity which was laid on the floor at the east end of the south aisle.²³

LSW.II. Priest, engraved *c.* 1510, possibly William Hasyllbeche, 1504. This London G brass, now comprising a priest in mass vestments with chalice and wafer (468×140 mm, mean thickness 4.0 mm, 3 rivets) had been mounted on a board affixed to the east wall of the north aisle directly above LSW.I. A foot inscription and another plate are lost.²⁴

LSW.III. Civilian and wife, engraved *c.* 1510. This London G brass, now comprising a male effigy (641×202 mm, thickness 4.0 mm, 5 rivets) and a female effigy (643×220 mm, thickness 4.3 mm, 4 rivets) had been mounted on a board affixed to the south wall of the south aisle. There was originally a foot inscription (150×710 mm) and achievement (200×150 mm).²⁵

LSW.IV. Inscription to James Edwards, 1522. This Cambridge school four-line Latin inscription (103×490 mm, thickness 4.4 mm, 3 rivets) had been mounted on a board affixed to the south wall of the south aisle.²⁶

LSW.V. Jane Bradbuirye, 1578. This London G brass, now comprising a female effigy wearing the French hood and a richly embroidered petticoat (620×248, thickness 1.8 mm, 8 rivets) and a six-line English inscription (115×518 mm, thickness 2.4 mm, 6 rivets) had been mounted on a board affixed to the north wall of the south aisle, one son (165×50–55 mm), a group of three daughters (110×155 mm) and a shield bearing the arms of Bradbury impaling Poulton (140×155 mm) are now lost.²⁷

LSW.VI. Anne Byrd, 1624. This London brass, now comprising a female effigy in a broad-brimmed hat (518×192 mm, thickness 1.5 mm, 5 rivets) and a five-line English inscription (160×443 mm, thickness 1.6 mm, 6 rivets) had been mounted on a board affixed to the south wall of the south aisle adjacent to LSW.III. A shield bearing the arms of Byrd (160×150 mm) and a death's head (160×150 mm) are lost.²⁸

After cleaning new rivets were fitted and the brasses rebated into six cedar boards. The missing parts of LSW.III, V and VI were lightly outlined on the boards. The boards and brasses were returned on 20 July 2017, LSW.I and IV on the north wall of the south aisle, LSW.II on the east wall of the north aisle,

23. In *c.* 1735 Thomas Martin noted that, in addition to the male effigy, a dexter female effigy, a group of six daughters below the first wife, fragments of three scrolls remained. Cole's drawing is reproduced in Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, *Essex*, p. 474.

24. Martin and Cole both noted that the inscription was lost and Cole stated that it was located 'close to ye step wch separates ye Nave and Chancel, in ye Middle Isle' and that 'above his Head was a Brass Plate with some Picture' which almost certainly was a Trinity.

25. These were already lost when Cole recorded the brass which was located 'in ye Middle Isle, also just before ye Pulpit'. Christy and Porteous gave the dimensions of the missing plates, presumably from an old rubbing, and their illustration shows the outlines of them.

26. It was recorded by Cole on 'an old Grey Marble' which lay 'in ye Middle of ye S[outh] Isle'.

27. When recorded by Cole the brass was complete and lay 'exactly underneath this [the Altar], between ye rails of ye Altar and ye North Wall'. A rubbing of the lost son from the Cambridge Collection (now in the University Library) and Cole's drawing of the lost shield are reproduced in Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, *Essex*, p. 474.

28. The brass, which lay in the nave was complete when recorded by Martin and Cole. Rubbings of the lost shield from the C.K. Probert collection (now in the Essex Record Office) and Cole's drawing of the death's head are reproduced in Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, *Essex*, p. 475.

LSW.III and VI on the south wall of the south aisle and LSW.V on the west wall of the south aisle.

Church of the Immaculate Conception, Penzance, Cornwall

Rev. John Ambrose Hearn, 1846 (Fig. 9). This brass, designed by A.W.N. Pugin and engraved by Hardmans of Birmingham,³² comprises an effigy in mass vestments holding a chalice and wafer (692×227 mm, thickness 3.3 mm, 5 back-soldered rivets) and an eight-line Latin inscription (266×455 mm, thickness 3.3 mm, 4 back-soldered rivets).²⁹ It was laid down in the crypt in a slab of Cataclouse Marble (1130×615 mm). Early in 2018 the brass, which had become extremely corroded, was discovered to be extremely loose and was removed from the slab. It was delivered to our workshop on 25 June 2018 and the slab a month later. After cleaning, new rivets were soldered to the reverse and the brass reset in the slab. The brass and slab were collected on 4 August 2018 and have now been reset in the crypt.

Sutton, Essex (now in Rochford, Essex)

LSW.I. Thomas Stapel, Serjeant-at-Arms to Edward III, 1371.³⁰ This important London B brass, now comprising a mutilated effigy in armour (originally 1085 mm tall, now 764×310 mm), is laid in the original Purbeck slab (1910×840 mm) which has indents for a single canopy (1710×845 mm), two shields (165×125 mm) and a marginal inscription (1870×720×40 mm). It was originally laid in the nave at nearby Shopland church, which



Fig. 9. Rev. John Ambrose Hearn, 1846
Church of the Immaculate Conception, Penzance, Cornwall
(photo: © William Lack)

29. D. Meara, *A.W.N. Pugin and the Revival of Memorial Brasses* (Donington, 1991), ref. no. 1851/16, p. 95. It was noted in W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Cornwall* (London, 1997), p. 93, but incorrectly located.

30. When at Shopland it was described and illustrated in M. Christy and W. Porteous, *Essex Review*, 5 (1896),

pp. 217–20, and by M. Christy, W. Porteous and E. Smith, *TEAS*, new series 12 (1913), pp. 244–6. See also Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, *Essex*, pp. 678–9 and for the more recent conservation work H.M. Stuchfield, *MBS Bulletin*, 138 (Oct. 2018), pp. 767–9.

was demolished in 1957.³¹ The brass was then moved to Sutton and mounted on a wooden board affixed on the south wall at the east end of the nave. The slab was also transported to Sutton and laid face downwards in the churchyard, close to the entrance gate. In 1971 the slab was brought into the church and the brass relaid in the slab by Bryan Egan.³² Sutton church has been declared redundant and has been sold for alternative use. After protracted negotiations it was agreed that the

brass and slab should be moved to Rochford church. The slab and brass were lifted together from the floor at Sutton on 16 April 2018 and the void beneath the slab made good with a limecrete fill followed by the finished coat of hydraulic lime and sharp sand mix flush with the retained tiles. The brass and slab were transported to Rochford and mounted against the north wall of the tower. The work was completed on 19 April 2018.

31. It was complete apart from the two shields in 1631 (Weever, *Funerall Monuments*, p. 655). William Holman and Nathaniel Salmon recorded that the marginal was lost when they visited in c. 1719 and c. 1740 respectively (N. Salmon, *History and Antiquities of Essex* (London, 1740), p. 375). The brass was covered for many years until the antiquary H.W. King uncovered the upper

part in 1850. A rubbing of a now lost fragment of the marginal inscription inscribed 'Thomas' discovered under the font in 1932 is illustrated in Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, *Essex*, p. 679.

32. Egan and Stuchfield, *Repair of Monumental Brasses*, p.27.

Reviews

Ursula Wolkewitz, *Die Gravierten Messinggrabplatten des 13 und 14 Jahrhunderts im Bereich der Norddeutschen Hanse – Ihre Herkunft und ihre Bedeutung* (*Engraved Brass tomb-plates of the 11th and 14th centuries in the area of the North German Hanse, their Origin and Meaning*) (Kassel: Kassel University Press, 2014); 318 pp., 5 colour plates, 150 text illustrations; €50,00 (hardback); ISBN 978-3-86219-758-3.

The study of brasses in isolation from other forms of church monuments has hitherto been almost an English monopoly, driven by the popularity of brass-rubbing. In Germany, flat engraved brasses are more naturally seen in the context of low relief slabs in similar designs, and there is therefore a certain amount of catching up on the literature to be done. Dr Wolkewitz has consulted works by Malcolm Norris, Keith Cameron and others, but does not seem quite to have grasped the extent to which they had settled the old question of the origin of brasses. Those chosen for this study are nearly all from Cameron's Great Flemish School, engraved in Tournai, and exported by the Hanse merchants. From England we see St Albans, Newark, Topcliffe, and one of the King's Lynn pair, all studied second-hand from rubbings. And the Horsmonden brass appears later for no apparent reason, captioned "London" (p. 181). Far more attention is paid to the great brasses at Ringsted, Schwerin, Stralsund, Toruń (she never gets the accent right), Brugge, Brussels, and of course Lübeck, along with examples of quite different origin from Paderborn, Braunschweig, Nordhausen, and the important early ones at Verden and Hildesheim. As parallels, a few later brasses are introduced, but the significant fact that the Jesse Tree on the Lüneborch brass in Lübeck (p. 96) is an exact copy of that on the destroyed Klingenberg brass (p. 58) has not been noticed: Klingenberg was Tournai work, Lüneborch a Lübisches imitation.

There is some discussion of the source of the metal, and the alloy composition, though that does not in any sense reveal where the metal was actually worked. A few analyses of the alloy are given (p. 163), though the distinction between 'bronze' (copper and tin), 'brass' (copper and zinc) and 'latten' (copper, zinc, tin and lead) is not explored. The series of 'brasses' at Hildesheim, all of the same style, include all three variations (*Kirchenkunst des Mittelalters*, ed. M. Brandt, Diözesan Museum, Hildesheim, 1989); the Nürnberg school used 'brass' exclusively; and the St Albans brass is, unusually, pure 'brass' without any deliberate introduction of lead and tin (*MBS Trans*, 16, p. 325). There is, as far as I know, one and only one reference to 'cullen plate' in mediæval English records, and that refers only to the trade source, not the place of manufacture.

Tournai brasses were all set in dark Belgian limestone, and although many of the plates have been removed from their slabs and mounted on walls, the slabs are often still visible in the churches, as at Newark, St Albans, Schwerin and Toruń. The author does not seem to have noticed this, nor the significant fact that the Lüneborch, Warendorp and Bertram brasses in Lübeck, which really are of Lübeck manufacture, are set in Gottland limestone. (I have never seen the horrible brass at Braunschweig, but I hope that's in pale limestone too.) The Tournai workshops did of course produce a great many 'separate-inlay' brasses, but their fixing techniques seem to have been very inadequate, and few survive, though there are black Belgian slabs with indents all over the place, from Chichester to Gdańsk – Wensley is a rare survival.

The introductory chapter on iconography introduces interesting ideas on how the monument may illustrate the funeral liturgy. The patterned back-cloth represents the

funeral pall (pp. 24–5), the angels offer the incense used at the Mass, mitres or helmets are shown as they were displayed around the catafalque at the month's mind, and the lateral figures are the mourners. The canopy at first seems to be a doorway with flanking towers, mutating into a niche with pedestals and vaults by the later fourteenth century – when there was quite a change in the iconography of the Tournai school. The four and twenty musical Kings on the second Schwerin brass may indeed represent the four and twenty elders of the Apocalypse (p. 130), but the hand-bells rung by the child on the same brass are certainly not goldsmiths' crucibles (p. 173)! The Wild Men who appear so often represent conquered powers of evil.

For the inscriptions, Dr Wolkewitz relies on published sources, including those by Reinhard Lampe, and she does not venture her own translations. The Ringsted brass is most unusual in that the King and Queen speak in their own person, '*Ego*'; the Newark brass is the first to incorporate the responsory from Job 19; some have inscriptions in Flemish, some in Latin – in other words the wording of inscriptions was something specified by those who commissioned the brasses, not left to the workshop. Later Flemish brasses have inscriptions in French, Spanish, Portuguese and even Scots. There is some discussion of wills, and the probable identities of those who commissioned the brasses, though no reference to the one documented case of Abbot de la Mare at St Albans who bought two together. It is noted that several of the brasses were laid before the date of death, which was added at Schwerin (p. 243), but never filled in at St Albans or Toruń.

There is much interesting discussion in this book, but its greatest flaw is the quality of the illustrations, which must have annoyed the

author considerably. A good and wide-ranging selection is ruined by muddy printing on text paper, and even the colour plates are really sub-standard. There is no excuse for such work these days, especially from a country which has recently produced the stunning photographs in Hauschke's study of the Nürnberg school, or the continuing series of the Deutschen Inschriften. The scale also is absurd – to reproduce the Newark brass only 12 cm high, and the first King's Lynn one at 11 cm, badly cropped, is inexcusable. Nevertheless, it is refreshing to learn of others with an interest in monumental brasses – long may this continue!

Jerome Bertram

Revisiting the Monument: Fifty Years Since Panofsky's 'Tomb Sculpture', ed. by Ann Adams and Jessica Barker (Courtauld Books Online, 2016); 256 pp., 91 colour and black and white illustrations; bibliography; Open Access, <http://courtauld.ac.uk/research/courtauld-books-online/revisiting-the-monument>.

This e-book is based on a conference held at the Courtauld Institute of Art, London, in June 2014. Several members of this Society will remember the excellence of the occasion which was admirably organised by the editors of this volume. Their objective was to assess the legacy and impact of Erwin Panofsky's seminal *Tomb Sculpture: Four Lectures on its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini* (London, 1964). Neither Panofsky, nor this collection of essays, is particularly concerned with brasses or incised slabs and any who expect a detailed discussion on such monuments should stop reading now. The twelve contributors instead provide a welcome re-evaluation of all forms of funerary commemoration during the Middle Ages and early Renaissance by drawing on case-studies from across Western Europe.

In *Tomb Sculpture*, Panofsky categorised monuments as either ‘prospective’ – that is looking forward towards salvation and the afterlife – or as ‘retrospective’, marking the life of the deceased and their good deeds. These concepts, albeit perhaps not in such direct terms, will be familiar to students of commemoration. Several of the articles in this volume consider their subject matter within this context which in turn reveals that monuments were not exclusively all about liturgy and prayer. Politics was a key influence when it came to consider a memorial both in terms of form, location and epitaph. The need to break from an earlier monumental tradition – and to distance oneself in death (and presumably in life) from dynastic rivals – while at the same time be appropriately remembered is neatly brought to the fore.

The interplay between text and tomb is a familiar discussion and here it is considered in new ways, particularly in terms of audience and space. There is a hint that not all funerary inscriptions were meant to be permanent and it is refreshing to read a common-sense approach on the durability of floor monuments. Epitaphs carved into slabs set within processional routes and in open, cloistered spaces, could be nothing but temporary. Thus, commemorative memory was restricted and other mnemonic devices came into play within the celebration of the dead. We read conversely that the liturgical fabric was not safe from the grand designs of prestigious benefactors whose tombs monopolised and took over church space. The loss of the church fabric, liturgical and commemorative, was inevitable during rebuilding schemes. Demands on the ever-changing nature of the medieval church-scape is a theme we are well advised to remember.

Studies on tomb monuments have often focused on surviving examples. It is unwise to forget

(and ignore) the treasures of the archive and it was refreshing to read how the written record has been applied within this volume to reveal new perspectives on commemorative culture. The antiquarian descriptions and illustrations considered here alongside executors’ accounts on the furnishings of the tomb reveal something of the magnificence *par excellence* that medieval monuments once enjoyed. These were richly decorated but displayed selectively and not, as we might assume, as open access. Consideration of the surviving, alongside a forensic analysis of the lost, has revealed new ideas on questions of monumentality.

Tombs were part of a performance, real and imagined, and this new volume provides a helpful narrative on memorialisation which can be accessed wherever the internet has spread its electronic wings. Online production has allowed the authors a liberal use of colour illustrations and this is most welcome. Diehard bibliophiles will lament the rise of the e-book and grumble that this one is not in print. No doubt many reams of paper will be used to print out chapters of interest and perhaps the entire book. Whether we like the e-book or not it is here to stay as it fulfils a tick-box for the next generation of tomb-scholars with increasing institutional demands on their research as ‘Open Access’. But the benefits are great: wherever you are in the world, from Aberdeen to Zanzibar, you can read *Revisiting the Monument: Fifty Years Since Panofsky’s ‘Tomb Sculpture’* and be richly informed.

Christian Steer

Rhianydd Biebrach, *Church Monuments in South Wales, c. 1200–1547* (Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2017), x + 192 pp., 4 colour plates, 48 b/w images; bibliography and index; £60 (hardback); ISBN 978-1-78327-264-8.

Rhianydd Biebrach's *Church Monuments in South Wales c. 1200–1547* sets out to survey the medieval funerary monuments of south Wales, a region which has been hitherto too little studied by historians. In that sense this book is a success. Biebrach has recorded 370 monuments from across south Wales. These include surviving pieces as well as those lost. This material is analysed in an often thoughtful and thought-provoking manner. Biebrach shows that the overall number of south Welsh monuments is relatively small. In fact, just two English counties (Somerset and Gloucestershire) have more extant monuments (374) than all known church monuments from south Wales. She demonstrates, too, that while there may be some dispute as to what exactly should be considered an 'urban' monument in an overwhelmingly rural society, it is, however, clear that commemoration was a disproportionately urban phenomenon in south Wales. She convincingly shows that this was less due to the ethnicity of patrons, and more a consequence of their greater wealth, 'access to an adequate source of supply', and 'broader cultural horizons' (p. 33). Moreover, she also reveals the extent to which monumental production was disrupted between 1350 and 1500. This is in stark contrast to contemporary patterns in England, where production increased and became open to a greater social range of people. Biebrach suggests that in addition to the damage wrought by the Black Death, Owain Glyn Dwr's revolt, allied with a wider decline in architectural patronage during the period which may have led to a skills shortage in late medieval Wales, dislocated the industry in Wales more than England (pp. 80–5).

The book recognises the many factors which shaped monumental production. The second chapter analyses the role played by both patrons and subjects in commissioning monuments. The third chapter discusses the use of materials, methods of production and means of supply, rightly taking account of geographic factors, patterns of ethnic settlement, and transport connections. The fourth chapter examines spiritual concerns and contemporaries' desire for salvation. It is surely correct to compare the material evidence from tombs with evidence from wills and poetry; perhaps, however, this could have been done to a greater extent than was done here. The fifth chapter considers the more secular concerns of patrons, the use of monuments to express status and social identity. Of particular interest in this chapter was the analysis which showed just how little-favoured the monumental brass was as a commemorative medium in Wales. Indeed, fewer than twenty pre-Reformation brasses are known in Wales, of which only nine survive in any form (p. 148).¹ By comparison with the relatively widespread adoption of alabaster, Biebrach persuasively shows that the traditional explanations for the relative unpopularity of brass – that the Welsh had their own local markets in stone, that they were too poor and too far away from the London producers – do not suffice to account for this phenomenon (p. 149). However, her own explanation, which sees it as a consequence of a 'national resistance to brass as a commemorative medium' is too speculative and needs fuller analysis to make it stand up (p. 150). The sixth chapter, which explores the adventures and afterlives of the monuments following the Reformation was especially

1. See also the author's article 'Conspicuous by their absence: rethinking explanations for the lack of brasses in medieval Wales', *MBS Trans*, 18 pt 1 (2009), pp. 36–42.

enjoyable and informative. This was very interesting material and provided a welcome overview of the various factors which have affected the survival rates of commemorative pieces.

The ratio of black and white images to full-colour plates, twelve to one, feels unbalanced. Of course, full-colour plates push up the cost of printing and it is understandable why publishers seek to limit them. Throughout the book, Biebrach compares commemorative culture in south Wales with that of England, especially the neighbouring counties of south-west England. Comparative work such as this is clearly to be welcomed. However, for a book which seeks to add to the 'growing corpus of literature on the monumental culture of late-medieval Europe', it is noticeable that comparison is only ever really drawn with England, and seldom with the rest of Europe. Integrating her findings from south Wales into an even larger and more considered context would have been welcome. Nevertheless, Biebrach is to be congratulated on a pleasing book which undoubtedly succeeds in contributing to our knowledge of medieval commemoration.

Ian Stone

Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women and the Fabric of Piety 1450–1550* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018); 266 pp., 11 b/w images; 9 appendices, glossary, select bibliography and index; €84.99 (hardback); ISBN 9789048537228

Gender studies, almost always concerning women, represent a flourishing aspect of publications on medieval history, including the patronage of religious art. Barbara Harris asserts that her volume, which concentrates on *memoria* during the Yorkist and early Tudor periods, 'fills a gap in the historical

record' (p.18). This is to overlook a number of important books, including, among others, those by Jennifer Ward and Kathleen French, but Harris's volume is nonetheless a worthwhile addition to the literature.

Despite the title of her book, Harris deliberately extends the scope of her book beyond her chosen social group, the nobility, to include the lesser aristocracy, the daughters and wives of knights (pp. 22–3). She includes, for example, the upwardly-mobile Joan Barre, the daughter of a gentleman and wife successively of an esquire and a knight; her first husband was commemorated by a brass at Newland, Gloucestershire, presumably commissioned by her before she became the wife of a knight. Although this extension of Harris's stated scope beyond the nobility is confusing, it enables her to draw on many more examples of patronage, including many not previously discussed in print. The date range for her study is also treated flexibly, albeit sometimes with unfortunate consequences. While discussing the establishment of almshouses, she includes one at Watford, Hertfordshire, in 1561 after the death of Mary and the final triumph of the Reformation; the motivation would have been philanthropic rather than the desire to attract prayers for the donor's soul in Purgatory.

The chapters cover: 1. Tombs: honoring the dead; 2. Chantries: the quest for perpetual prayers; 3. Building for the congregation: roofs, aisles, and stained glass; 4. adorning the liturgy: luxury fabrics and chapel plate; 5. Almshouses and schools: prayers and service to the community; 6. Defining themselves; 7. Epilogue: destruction and survival; Conclusion. The main text is essentially analytical and packed with supporting detail but accounts for a mere 132 pages. Over 80 pages are devoted to appendices, which largely repeat information in the main text. They are of limited additional

value but have obviously added considerably to the cost of this expensive book.

The first chapter will be of greatest interest to MBS members. There are many examples of memorialisation by brasses, extant and lost. As with the rest of the book, Harris's main sources are wills (principally, but not exclusively PCC wills) and a wide variety of other contemporary documents, thus enabling her to include examples not previously mentioned in print. I have a keen interest in cadaver monuments and was delighted to add two lost examples in brass to my lists. Other brasses cited are well-known, like the Fitzlewes brass at Ingrave, Essex, which was the final resting place of Jane Norton (d. 1535). She had originally planned to make a tomb at Faversham, Kent, with her second husband, Sir John Norton, but after he chose to be buried with his first wife at Middleton, Kent, she changed her plans and was buried with her first (Fitzlewes) husband and his three previous wives under a brass commissioned following his death and originally located at West Horndon. It is an interesting story, but whether Jane commissioned the brass herself is far from certain. The Tame brasses at Fairford, Gloucestershire, and the Tendring brass at Yoxford, Suffolk, also receive detailed attention. Women's testamentary intentions referring to monuments are often cited in the text, but to discover their location reference must be made to appendices A and B, which impedes the smooth reading of the text. As well as the monuments themselves, Harris is interested in location of burial within the church, full details of which are in Appendix C. Throughout the text, explanatory background (not always reflecting the current state of knowledge

on monuments) is provided and there is a pronounced statistical approach.

The chapter on 'defining themselves' is perhaps most crucial to readers primarily interested in gender. It relates to women's 'ongoing struggle to shape their identities *and* exercise some measure of autonomy within an intensely patriarchal society. ... A woman's understanding of identity changed with her changing positions, as she married and remarried' (p. 119). This is a crucial point, but it does not mean that a widow necessarily designed monuments commissioned after her husband's death. Many will have been trusted to fulfil their husband's wishes. A case in point is Sir Thomas Danvers (d. 1502) who made provision for his widow to complete building works at Waterstock, Oxfordshire, 'according as I have begun and as my wife knoweth my mind'. Harris assumes that the 1470 brass at Morley, Derbyshire, was similarly the agency of his widow Elizabeth, but a detailed description was set out in Sir Thomas's own will. These are instances of male patronage, not female. Evidence of a widow's independence of mind and a desire to create her own self-image is not always clear, but sadly few gender studies emphasise this. Their conclusions, including those reached by Harris, are consequently skewed. Hopefully studies of women's patronage will move further to address the question: 'how did their commissions compare with that of their husband'? Harris is to be commended for addressing this in her conclusion, although far more remains to be done.

Sally Badham

Monumental Brass Society

(Founded in 1887 as the Cambridge University Association of Brass Collectors)

President

H.M. Stuchfield, M.B.E., J.P., D.L., F.S.A., F.R. Hist.S.

Vice-Presidents

Rev. Fr. J.F.A. Bertram, M.A., F.S.A.

P.D. Cockerham, M.A., Ph.D., Vet.M.B., F.S.A., M.R.C.V.S.

Prof. N.E. Saul, M.A., D.Phil., F.S.A.

N.J. Rogers, M.A., M.Litt., F.S.A.

Ven. D.G. Meara, M.A., F.S.A.

S.G.H. Freeth, B.A., Dip.Arch.Admin., F.S.A.

Hon. Secretary

Dr. J.E. McQueen, B.Sc., B.A., M.B., B.S.

Hon. Treasurer

R.C. Kinsey, M.A., Ph.D.

Hon. Editor

D.N. Lepine, B.A., Ph.D., F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S.

Hon. Bulletin Editor

W.G. Lack, B.Sc.

Additional members of Executive Council

H. Guilford, B.Sc., D.Phil.

Miss J.E.M. Houghton

M.J. Sillence, M.A., Ph.D.

J.S. Lee, B.A.(Hons.), M.A., Ph.D.

Ms L.S. Voice

All communications regarding membership, the general conditions of the Society, etc., to be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Janet McQueen, B.Sc., B.A., M.B., B.S., 55 Manor Road, Enfield, Middlesex EN2 0AN (jntmcqn@gmail.com); editorial matter to the Hon. Editor, David Lepine, B.A., Ph.D., F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S., 38 Priory Close, Dartford, Kent DA1 2JE (davidnl1455@gmail.com), who will be pleased to supply Notes for Contributors and to discuss proposed articles.

Cover: Detail from the brass to John Borrell, serjeant-at-arms to Henry VIII, 1531, holding mace of office, Broxbourne, Hertfordshire (LSW.V). (*photo:© Martin Stuchfield*)

Monumental Brass Society

Volume XX, 2019, ISSN 0143-1250

Insignia and Status: Banners on Brasses in England in the Late Middle Ages Nigel Saul	1
The Brass of Thomas Stapel (d. 1372), Sergeant-at-Arms to Edward III: A Monument to a Career in Household Service Matthew Hefferan	32
Bishop Hallum's Brass in Konstanz Minster Nicholas Rogers	46
<i>Ex Terra Vis</i> : The Cadaver Brass of Richard and Cecily Howard at Aylesham, Norfolk Julian Luxford	64
Conservation of Brasses, 2017–18 William Lack and Simon Nadin	80
Reviews	91

Contributors are solely responsible for all the views and opinions contained in the *Transactions*, which do not necessarily represent those of the Society.

© Monumental Brass Society and the authors, 2019
Registered Charity No. 214336
www.mbs-brasses.co.uk