

Monumental Brass Society

JUNE 2025



BULLETIN 159

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Hon. Treasurer's notice

On 1st January all subscriptions for 2025 became due. Our volunteer bookkeeper, Judy Hodgett (accts.mbs2024@gmail.com), will be very grateful if members can in future pay their subscriptions online and not by cheque. Many members already pay by Standing Order. Online payments of £25.00 (associate/student £12.50, family £35.00) should be made to: Monumental Brass Society, Barclays Bank PLC, sort code 20-41-41, Account no. 10660957. When doing so, please give your surname as a reference. Payment can also be made using the *PayPal* system via mbs_brasses@yahoo.com. Many thanks to all those members who have completed Gift Aid forms. Any U.K. tax-paying member can enable the Society to reclaim tax on their subscription. The appropriate form can be downloaded directly from www.mbs-brasses.co.uk. U.S. members preferring to pay in dollars can send a cheque, payable to 'Monumental Brass Society', for U.S. \$45.00 to Shirley Mattox at 1313 Jackson Street, Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901, U.S.A.

Editorial

In February this year, one of our members noticed that Timeline Auctions in Harwich were selling a brass shield. The auction was on 7th March, and the shield (lot 2107) was described as 19th century, 'from a private collection in Nottingham'.

Our member identified that the shield belonged to the brass at Gunby, Lincolnshire, for William de Lodyngton, justice of the common pleas, d.1419 (M.S.II).

Various members then rallied round to help. In particular Derrick Chivers researched the rubbings at the Society of Antiquaries, and Martin Stuchfield visited Harwich to examine the shield in person. They were convinced that the shield was authentic, and reckoned it had disappeared from the slab at Gunby between 1960 and 1973. The Council therefore authorised a substantial three-figure bid, in the hope of securing the shield and returning it to Gunby. The bid was many times the pre-sale estimate of £30-40, but sadly was unsuccessful. A message was left afterwards for the successful bidder, explaining that we had hoped to return the shield to Gunby.

Stephen Freeth

Personalia

We welcome as new members:

Angela Collins, 44 Ridley Street, Leicester LE3 0QT.

Kathleen Klingenberg, 4007 Barker Ct., Apt. 113, Fairfax, Virginia 22032, U.S.A.

Tina Rowe, Flat 1, The Manor, Almshouse Lane, Ilchester, Somerset BA22 8NJ.

Alison Whitaker, 158 Grosvenor Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 3EJ.

It is with deep regret that we report the death of **Mike Chaddock**, who had been a member of the Society since 1982. The Society also mourns the passing of **Chloe Cockerill** (2021), **Bernard Gilhespy** (1969), **John Hopkins** (1996), **Mike Martin** (1963) and **John Surridge** (1973).

Cover: Upper part of the figure of Elizabeth Death, holding an infant in swaddling clothes, at Dartford, Kent (M.S.IX). She had nine sons and six daughters and died in 1582, aged 40. (photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

Diary of events

Saturday, 19th July 2025

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NORTH MYMMS, HERTFORDSHIRE

The Annual General Meeting will take place in the morning at 11.00a.m. The General Meeting, which is free and open to all, will take place in the afternoon at 2.00p.m. Local historian **Michael Allen** will speak about the church building; **David Lepine** will speak on *William Kesteven (d.1361), Squarson of North Mymms and his brass*; **Richard Asquith** will speak on *Between London and North Mymms: the commemorative strategies of the Knolles family in the later Middle Ages*; and our Vice-President **Stephen Freeth** will speak on *Brasses lost from the church*. Tea, coffee and cake will be provided.

As well as several brasses, this 14th-century church has a large alabaster incised slab for Elizabeth or maybe Mary Beresforde, d.1584. This is described by Greenhill as one of the best pieces of work by the Royleys of Burton-on-Trent in this period. John Beresforde, the father, was from Derbyshire, but could have ordered something just as good from the Southwark tombmakers, who were much closer, and avoided heavy transport costs.

Please email Caroline Metcalfe if you plan to attend the meeting, events@mbs-brasses.co.uk. She needs to know how much cake to bake! Please also say if you will need a lift from the nearest station, Brookmans Park (40 minutes from Moorgate).

The postcode for satellite navigation is AL9 7TN. What 3 words: maps.sport.moment. There is local car parking, some outside the church and some in the lane leading to the church. As there are no nearby shops, members are advised to bring their own lunch with them.

Saturday, 13th September 2025

GENERAL MEETING

GEDDINGTON, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

John Bennet will provide a brief outline of the history of the church. **Edward Coulson** will speak on the local manors, and **Challe Hudson** on costume on the brasses. There will be light refreshments at teatime.

The church has Saxon origins. It served Norman and Plantagenet kings and queens who stayed nearby at a hunting lodge. There is a shrine to Hagus, a late Saxon or early Norman priest, a medieval rood screen with Victorian depictions of the twelve apostles, and stained glass by Sir Ninian Comper. Painted panels by Comper have recently been restored. There are three brasses. In the village is an Eleanor Cross, marking where Queen Eleanor's funeral bier rested overnight in 1290.

The postcode for satellite navigation is NN14 1AH. Some parking may be available outside the church. A free car park is available at the village hall, five minutes' walk away, postcode NN14 1AA. There is a toilet in the church.

Saturday, 11th April 2026

GENERAL MEETING

AMERSHAM, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

To include a tour of the private chapel and a talk about the family with **Barney Tyrwhitt-Drake**, and talks by **Hugh Guilford** about the brasses and the conservation work. There will be Medieval Music whilst we have refreshments and the chance to view the brasses.

Saturday, 11th July 2026

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

STOKE D'ABERNON, SURREY

The Annual General Meeting will take place in the Hall room in the morning at 11.00a.m. The General Meeting will start at 2.00p.m. It will include talks in the church by **Nigel Saul** and church guide **Stephen Chater**.

Saturday, 12th September 2026

GENERAL MEETING

ST. OLAVE HART STREET, LONDON

This meeting will include talks by our Vice-President **Nicholas Rogers**, '*But the plates of memory are gone*': visualising the church of St. Olave Hart Street on the eve of the Reformation, and **Mike Harris**.

There are many other interesting churches and brasses to explore or even revisit. If you live near or know of a church that would be suitable for the M.B.S. to visit, please let Caroline Metcalfe know about it.

General Meeting

Coggeshall, Essex – 12th April 2025

On a beautiful spring day, members of the Society travelled to Coggeshall, the home of the Paycockes, a family of prominent clothiers commemorated by a series of brasses in St. Peter ad Vincula church. The family are also remembered for a surviving half-timbered house. Several members of the Society arrived in the late morning and enjoyed guided tours of Paycocke's House and Gardens, and some of the House guides joined our talks.

The afternoon programme began with a talk by **Christopher Thornton**, former County Editor for the Victoria County History of Essex, on *The Paycocke Family: Background and Role in the Cloth Industry* (Fig.1). Coggeshall was an important centre for the region's wool trade in the later medieval period, and the wealth of this 'industrialised village' rose considerably from the 14th to the early 16th century thanks to a wool-based cottage industry. The Paycocke family were not, however, originally involved in the cloth trade, nor were they anciently local to Coggeshall, instead first appearing recorded in the late 13th century around Clare, Suffolk.

By the middle 15th century, Thomas Paycocke I, d.1461, was living in Coggeshall as a prosperous butcher who was involved with inspecting locally-produced cloths. His son or grandson, John, d.1505, was also a butcher, but he (as well as his mother/grandmother) had begun producing cloths on a small scale as well: they each appear in records having produced three cloths in one year. This micro-industry was common within Coggeshall, and is how most local cloth was produced. In the following generation, John's sons Thomas II, d.1518, and Robert, d.1520, would expand their cloth production considerably: Thomas employed weavers, fullers, shearmen, combers, carders, and spinners, built Paycocke's House, and at his death left more than £1,500 in cash bequests. Thomas II's wealth passed to a widow and an heiress, Anne, who married the son of Sir William Butler, a gentleman grocer and Lord Mayor of London.

Thomas's estate in Coggeshall, including Paycocke's House, was entailed in the male line and passed to his eldest brother John II, d.1533,



Fig 1. Chris Thornton addressing the meeting at Coggeshall, Essex.
(photo: © Challe Hudson)

and his descendants. The House, which was built in 1509 on the site of an earlier hall, was the subject of our second talk, from buildings archaeologist **David Andrews**. Technical innovations – including the reintroduction of brick-making technology to England – meant that larger houses could be built from wood from the 15th century. Paycocke's features densely-packed studding and richly-carved beams supporting the jettied first floor and inside the hall. These feature dragons, intricate foliage, and the merchant's mark favoured by Thomas and his brother, Robert – an ermine's tail. The house was built to impress, but nevertheless with cost in mind: its grand fireplaces in hall and parlour lacked chimneys and were therefore only meant for show.

This same merchant's mark, surrounded by the men's initials, appears on the slabs that formerly held lost Flemish brasses to Thomas and Robert (LSW.17 & 18; Figs.2 & 3). These memorials, and others related to the family, were the subject of our third talk by our member **John Lee**: *'I have not seen such rich monuments, for so mean persons': the Paycocke family brasses*. The two lost Flemish brasses inspired the comment by the 17th-century antiquary John Weever about the unexpected richness of monuments to 'clothmakers'. Probably the brasses were procured by Thomas Pierpoint, Thomas II's



Fig.2. The incised merchant's mark on the slab with the indent of the lost Flemish brass for Thomas Paycocke, d.1518, Coggeshall, Essex (LSW.17). (photo: © Kelcey Wilson-Lee)

executor and a Master Draper with connections in the Low Countries. If the missing plates conformed to the similarly-scaled Flemish brass commemorating Thomas Pownder from St. Mary Quay in Ipswich, d.1525 (Fig.4), or the



Fig.3. Three Paycocke slabs in the north chapel, Coggeshall, Essex (LSW.III, 17 & 18). (photo: © Stephen Freeth)



Fig.4. Thomas Pownder, merchant, d.1525, and wife Emme, [d.1564],
formerly St. Mary Quay, Ipswich (M.S.I), now Ipswich Museum, Suffolk.
(rubbing: © Martin Stuchfield)



*Fig.5. Thomas Paycocke III, d.1580,
Coggeshall, Essex (LSW.IV).
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)*

slightly smaller brass to Andrew Evyngar, d.1533, at All Hallows-by-the-Tower (M.S.IX), they would have been very fine indeed and underlined the cosmopolitan connections of the Paycocke cloth men. The merchants' brother, John II, who was not involved in the cloth trade, and his wife Joan were instead commemorated by a Suffolk series 4 brass which has lost heraldic shields, prayer scrolls, a devotional figure of (?) Christ crowned, and conventional inscriptions that were recorded before they were lost (LSW.III); Joan's effigy wears a less conventional cap. The final Paycocke brass at Coggeshall commemorates Robert's grandson, Thomas III, d.1580, whose London G series brass rests nearby (LSW.IV) (Fig.5).

John II's son and grandson remained at Paycocke's House until 1584 when the male line failed and the house was sold to the Buxton family. The house suffered a slow decline through the 18th and 19th centuries, and was threatened with demolition. However it was saved in 1904 when Lord Noel Buxton (a descendant of the 16th-century buyers) purchased it and funded a programme of restoration. In 1924, he gifted Paycocke's House to the National Trust, which cares for it today.

Coggeshall was a most interesting church, with fragmentary remains of other brasses besides those mentioned (all of them conserved most expertly in 1986 by William Lack). It also contains the mural monument in the south chapel of the formidable Mary Honeywood, a kneeling figure beneath a pediment, now largely hidden behind a reredos. This monument was brought to Coggeshall in 1933 from the demolished church of Markshall nearby. Mrs Honeywood died in 1620 at the age of 93, leaving 'at her decease lawfully descended from her 367 children, 16 of her owne body, 114 grandchildren, 228 in ye 3rd generation and 9 in ye 4th'.

The day was wonderfully organised, and thanks go to the speakers for offering their time and expertise; to Caroline Metcalfe and Rosemary Fitchett for all the arrangements with the church, the speakers, and the audio-visual equipment, as well as for the spread of delicious cakes; and to the church at Coggeshall for making the space available.

Kelcey Wilson-Lee

The lost image on the brass of John Paycocke, d.1533, at Coggeshall, Essex

Like so many brasses in East Anglia, the brass of John Paycocke, d.1533, and his wife Joan (LSW.III) at Coggeshall, Essex, is devoid of inscriptions.¹ Its identity is provided by John Weever, who gives details of the Coggeshall monuments.² He recorded the Latin foot inscription naming those commemorated and also noted that 'The Creede in Latine is all curiously inlaid with

brasse, round about the Tombestone'. It can be deduced from the *incipit* he gives that it was the Apostles' Creed on the fillet.³ Both elements of the inscription were also recorded by Richard Symonds in 1637. It is likely that John Paycocke's brass and the Flemish plates commemorating his brothers Thomas and Robert were purged as a result of the Parliamentary Ordinance of 28th August 1643 against 'all Monuments of Superstition and Idolatry'.⁴

Another feature of the brass which would have been removed in the 1640s, if not before, is the image and foot scroll at the top of the composition, formerly addressed by prayer scrolls from John and Joan (Fig.1). In *The Monumental Brasses of Essex* it is described as a 'device', but examination of the indent enables one to be more precise. The image is a figure in a robe with a straight unbroken outline flaring out at the feet, indicative of a female. Her head is tilted slightly to the right, and she wears a crown (Fig.2).

To the best of my knowledge there is no surviving will for John Paycocke, but the will made by his brother Thomas, d.1518, includes a clue to the likely identity of the figure.⁵ He requested burial 'afore the Aulter of Saint katryne', where he established a chantry for his family. This, as the surviving grave-slabs bear witness, was the family aisle. John Paycocke's father John, d.1505/6, also willed to be buried in the north aisle before the image of St. Catherine.⁶ St. Catherine of Alexandria is normally depicted crowned, holding a sword and a spiked wheel, the instruments of her martyrdom. As one of the most popular saints in late medieval Europe she can be found on several brasses, often paired with St. Margaret. In her role as a patron of scholars she is invoked by Edmund Croston, d.1507, on his brass at St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford.⁷ It might be objected that the sword and wheel would affect the outline of the indent, but the early 16th-century depiction of St. Catherine on the south side of the rood screen at Wiggshall St. Mary, Norfolk shows how she might have been represented (Fig.3).



Fig.1. John Paycocke, d.1533, and wife Joan, Coggeshall, Essex (LSW.III).
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)



Fig2. Indent of the 'device' on the slab to John Paycocke, d.1533, and wife Joan, Coggeshall, Essex (LSW.III).
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

But Wiggenhall St. Mary also serves as a warning against assuming the figure at Coggeshall was St. Catherine. Next to Catherine on the rood screen is St. Barbara, who is also crowned, as is St. Margaret on the north side. The crown could also be that of the Blessed Virgin Mary, shown holding the Christ Child in such a way that His presence is not indicated by the indent.

I am grateful to Simon Knott for his help in the preparation of this note.

Nicholas Rogers

- 1 W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Essex*, 2 vols. (London, 2003), p.173, p.175.
- 2 J. Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments* (London, 1631), pp.617-18.
- 3 It is possible that the Creed on the Paycocke brass was meant to be read in conjunction with the Pater and Ave recorded by Weever on the brass of John Keble and wives, the remnants of which survive as LSW.I.
- 4 *The Journal of William Dowsing*, ed. T. Cooper (Woodbridge, 2001), pp.12-13.
- 5 TNA: PRO, PROB 11/19/207.
- 6 TNA: PRO, PROB 11/15/107.
- 7 M. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Craft* (London, 1978), fig.59.



Fig3. South side of rood screen showing St. Catherine, St. Barbara, the Virgin and Child and St. John the Baptist, Wiggenhall St. Mary, Norfolk.
(photo: © Simon Knott)

The Wade/Lucy brass at Standon, Hertfordshire – further comments

In *Bulletin* 158 (February 2025), Stephen Freeth drew our attention to a brass that, in the mid 16th century, was reworked as a palimpsest to commemorate Guy Wade, d.1557, a merchant taylor of London.¹ This was discovered in 1951, when two of the heraldic shields of Guy Wade's brass at Standon, Hertfordshire, were found to depict on their reverse the arms of the Goldsmiths' Company and of Empson; in 1991, the reverse of the third shield was shown to depict the arms of Lucy impaling Empson. As Freeth suggested, these latter two elements, at least, had probably come from the tomb in the London Grey Friars of Sir Thomas Lucy, d.1525. He had married Elizabeth Empson, widow of George Catesby.

This attribution is almost certainly correct, and can be underpinned by documentary evidence. The National Archives contain two remarkable sets of accounts, differing in scope and content, relating to the execution of Lucy's will by his widow and her co-executor.² The first set of accounts (TNA, SP 1/55, ff.61r-67v) represent a miscellany of bills, receipts, and lists that Lucy's executors kept in the course of implementing his will. These are the type of documents that would normally – save for some quirk of survival – be discarded once executors had been officially relieved of their duties by the probate court. Few similar examples exist for the pre-Reformation period.³ This survival is explained by the second set of accounts (TNA, E 135/7/43), which comprise a formal roll drawn up by the Prerogative Court of Canterbury in response to litigation between Elizabeth Lucy (by now remarried once more) and her son and Lucy's heir, William. Used as evidence in court, and filed away by some diligent clerk, these rare documents were miraculously preserved.

Sir Thomas Lucy wrote his final will on 31st July 1525, requesting burial in the Greyfriars church in London and requiring that:

within the yere next afir my decease there be
A graue stone leyed vppon my graue and
ouer the same Stone my pickture and my
wifes and my children with myn Armes at the

iiij Corners of the same stone with suche
scripture as myn Executours shall devise to
thentent that good people shall haue
remembraunce to praye for my soule and all
xpen soules.⁴

It seems that this was exactly what he got. Among Lucy's accounts in TNA, a list of payments headed 'M^d ffor legaces payd Accordyng to the Wyll of the sayd Thomas Lucy' records: 'Item ffor a grave stone to be leyd vpon his grave wyth his Armz & Scogynez [escutcheons]'. Another list, entitled 'legaces And thynges ordeined ffor sir Thomas Lucy', includes: 'Item for a grave ston to laye vpon hym'. Neither of these documents is dated, but they deal with the early stages of the will's execution, and almost certainly took place within the year Lucy expected for the commissioning of his monument.

No details are recorded about the inscription that Lucy charged his executors to devise, but it might have reflected the information noted in the Grey Friars' register, an invaluable document composed c.1526-30 that offers a record of the burials in the convent church. Lucy's monument is noted thus: '... jacet dominus Thomas Lucy, valens miles cum Henrico 8, de comitatu ...: qui obiit 3 die mensis Septembris A^o 1525' ([Here] lies Sir Thomas Lucy, a strong/able knight with Henry VIII, of the county of [Warwickshire]: who died the third day of September 1525). Lucy in fact died on 4th September, but the register does reveal that he was buried in a prestigious location before the altar of Our Lady in an enclosed chapel at the east end of the north aisle of the nave.⁵

It is clear that Lucy envisioned a flat marble stone with engraved two-dimensional brass inlays showing him, Elizabeth, and their children, with heraldic escutcheons occupying each corner. This is clearly where the palimpsest shields now at Standon originate; each piece of evidence mutually confirms the other. Recalling to onlookers – 'good people'; friars and laity alike – the visages and status of Thomas and Elizabeth, and jostling with the other monuments crowded in the chapel,

the role of the tomb in Lucy's salvation was augmented by his request for the performance of a trental (a series of thirty masses) at both the Grey Friars and the White Friars in London, the former almost certainly taking place at the altar close by his tomb; among the accounts, bills survive to evince both. Other obsequies were spread among Lucy's Warwickshire estates and at the Grey Friars at Bridgnorth, Shropshire, to which his family claimed an ancestral association.

The London Grey Friars was dissolved in 1538 (Fig.1), and (as is well known, thanks to John Stow) the majority of its monuments were sold to, and then sold by, Sir Martin Bowes, a goldsmith and alderman of London.⁶ William Dugdale, whose interest in the Lucy family stemmed from their Warwickshire connections, railed against this destruction with some vitriol: 'if you look there for his Tombe stone, it is not to be found: For of *Cxiv.* persons buried there ... and in particular the name of this Sir *T. Lucy*, there is not now one to be seen'.⁷ Bowes evidently sold at least some of the friary's brasses to a marbler for re-use, and Lucy's was

employed soon thereafter in the commemoration of Guy Wade.

Altogether, this is compelling evidence for the appearance of Lucy's tomb in the Grey Friars. It does however also complicate matters, for an extant tomb is claimed to commemorate Sir Thomas Lucy. In the church of All Saints, Clifton, Bedfordshire, is a monument comprising a chest decorated with heraldry with two alabaster effigies of a knight and a lady. Traditionally, this tomb has been identified as commemorating a local couple, Sir Michael Fisher, d.1549, and his wife, Margaret, d.c.1552 (Fig.2).⁸ In the late 1980s and early 1990s, however, prompted by the enquiries of Canon Peter Pavey, rector of Clifton 1984-93, the tomb was reassigned to Sir Thomas Lucy and Elizabeth.⁹ The argument rested on the incongruence between the date of Fisher's death and the style of the tomb and the dress of the effigies, a doubt expressed by Brian Kemp.¹⁰ Pavey approached the College of Arms in an attempt to disentangle the much-worn heraldry on the chest, and Peter Gwynn-Jones, then



Fig.1. Engraving of the London Grey Friars that existed from 1225 to 1538.
(photo: © Alamy)

Lancaster Herald, identified arms associated with the Lucy family. He concluded: 'It would therefore seem that the monument to Sir Thomas Lucy was sited at Grey Friars for a comparatively short time period ... [and] then transferred to your own church'.¹¹

Questions remained about how and why Lucy's tomb would have ended up in Bedfordshire, a place with little connection to the family. But the combined evidence of Lucy's executors' accounts, the precise language used to describe the commission in both Lucy's will and the accounts, and the existence of the Wade/Lucy palimpsest dismantle this narrative of survival entirely. The Clifton tomb and its heraldry require a fresh examination, shorn of assumptions; but that is outside the scope of this short offering.

Richard Asquith

- 1 S. Freeth, 'The brass of Guy Wade, merchant taylor, d.1557, at Standon, Hertfordshire', *M.B.S. Bulletin* 158 (February 2025), pp.1144-8; see also W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Hertfordshire* (London, 2009), pp.593-4; *M.B.S. Trans.*, VIII, pt.8 (February 1951), p.380.
- 2 See R. Asquith, 'Death and its Documentation: Executing the Will of Sir Thomas Lucy (d.1525)', in *Death and Dying in the Middle Ages: Proceedings of the 2022 Harlaxton Medieval Symposium*, eds. C. Steer and J. Stratford, Harlaxton Medieval Studies 33 (Donington, 2024), pp.172-87.
- 3 See R. Asquith, 'Piety and Trust: Testators and Executors in Pre-Reformation London', unpub. PhD thesis, Royal Holloway, University of London (2022).
- 4 TNA, PROB 11/23/4.
- 5 For the date of death, see Asquith, 'Death and its Documentation', p.174, and for the topography of burial at the Grey Friars, C. Steer, 'Bones and Benefactors: Burying the Dead in Grey Friars Church London', in *Loci Sepulcrales: Places of Memory and Burial in the Middle Ages*, eds. C.V. Fernandes *et al.*, Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévales, Textes et Études du Moyen Âge, 102 (Basel, 2023), pp.371-401, esp. pp.394-5.
- 6 J. Stow, *Survey of London*, ed. C.L. Kingsford, 2 vols. (London, 1908), I, p.321.
- 7 W. Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* (London, 1656), p.399.
- 8 'Parishes: Clifton', in *A History of the County of Bedford: Volume II*, ed. William Page (London, 1908), British History Online <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/beds/vol2/pp.276-80> [accessed 20th May 2025]. Margaret's will requests burial 'in the Church of Clifton next unto the seyd Sir Mighell flisser my husband' (TNA, PROB 11/35/373).
- 9 See the church guide, <https://clifton-beds.co.uk/ChurchHistory/ChurchGuide2020.pdf> [accessed 20th May 2025], and feature on the Bedfordshire Archives website, <https://bedsarchives.bedsford.gov.uk/CommunityHistories/Clifton/CliftonChurchArchitecture.aspx> [accessed 20th May 2025]. Correspondence on the reattribution is preserved in the Bedfordshire Archives, P7/2/2/62.
- 10 As he explained in the correspondence, cited above (B. Kemp to P. Pavey, 11th July 1989). Following Gardner and Pevsner, Kemp did not commit to identifying the subjects in print: A. Gardner, *Alabaster Tombs of the Pre-Reformation Period in England* (Cambridge, 1940), p.13, pp.71-2, p.76; N. Pevsner, *Bedfordshire and the County of Huntingdon and Peterborough* (London, 1968), p.70; B. Kemp, *English Church Monuments* (London, 1980), p.26.
- 11 P. Gwynn-Jones to P. Pavey, 20th March 1990. Kemp, in a letter to Pavey dated 17th April 1990, remarked that 'the monument's identity would seem to have been satisfactorily solved'.



Fig.2. Tomb traditionally identified as for Sir Michael Fisher, d.1549, and wife Margaret, Clifton, Bedfordshire.

(photo: © Challe Hudson)

High Halden, Kent:

an external brass and an inscription indent

Andy Linklater, an archaeologist with the Canterbury Archaeological Trust, has recently been working in some Kent churchyards, and has kindly supplied the following information.

The damaged external brass at High Halden to Stephen Scott, d.1601 (M.S.I) lies on a stone table tomb in the churchyard. It consists of part of the brass figure of a man in a gown, full face, and the indent of a small separate rectangular plate for a shield. There is no indent for any inscription plate. The north side of the tomb bears an inscription ANNO 1601 incised in stone, surrounded by a plain moulding. This brass was published by R.H. D'Elboux in 1949 in our *Transactions*,¹ from a rubbing of the brass and indents, but is worth illustrating again (Figs.1 & 2). Malcolm Norris also included it in his discussion of external brasses in his *Monumental Brasses: The Craft*, along with a photograph of the tomb.² D'Elboux was able to identify the brass from Sir Edward Dering's 'Book of Church Monuments' at the Society of Antiquaries, folio 66: 'In ye churchyard is an altar tombe with a figure of Brasse in a gowne and this escocheon [*a crosslet quartering a chevron between*

3 fleurs de lys]; ye inscription is "Stephanus Scott generosus hic sepultus est Anno Xti 1601".'

D'Elboux suggested that the rest of the inscription given by Dering might have been on the south side of the tomb, to balance the stone panel showing the date. However this is unlikely. Andy Linklater cleared away 'extensive ivy growth and debris from the overshadowing yew' to reveal the brass in much the same condition as it was in 1949. (The yew must have grown since the photograph published by Malcolm Norris!) Despite a detailed search, he could find no trace of any inscription panel or other inscription anywhere else on the tomb. Perhaps the inscription seen by Dering was included on one of the brass plates.

The parish burial register records that Stephen Scott, 'gentleman', was buried on '7th March 1600', i.e. 7th March 1601.



Fig 1. Tomb and brass of Stephen Scott, d.1601, High Halden, Kent (M.S.I).
(photo: © Andy Linklater)



Fig 2. Remains of brass of Stephen Scott, d.1601, High Halden, Kent (M.S.I).
(photo: © Andy Linklater)

Andy Linklater also noticed a different slab, with the indent of an inscription, being used as the threshold to the lychgate (Fig.3). This slab does not seem to have been recorded by Sadler. Unlike the Scott brass, which has always been in the churchyard, this slab will have been ejected from the church at some point.

Mike Harris and Stephen Freeth

Postscript:

Continuing the topic of external brasses in Kent, R.H. D'Elboux, in a separate article of 1949,³ mentions a will which requested a churchyard brass very clearly: John Grenehill of St. Clement, Old Romney, asked in 1536 for burial in the churchyard with a stone costing 33s. 4d., a pair of stone crosses costing 10s., and 'my stone engravyed with brasse, that is to saye the Pyctour of my selff and my wyff and my chyldren'. In the same article D'Elboux illustrates an indent for an external brass at Bredgar, Kent, of a single figure and foot inscription, early 16th century, 'opposite the south door in the churchyard', from a drawing made by Thomas Fisher c.1800. This was on a table tomb with stone sides and a low plinth, with a small stone cross on the vertical face at one end.

I don't know if this tomb still exists. Photographs on the internet of Bredgar church and churchyard show nothing obvious.

As a schoolboy in Canterbury in the 1960s I cycled around many churches, rubbing brasses and making notes. I found an indent for an external brass at Chislet, on a table tomb in the south-west corner of the churchyard. The tomb was low, only about a foot high, with brick sides, and its top slab contained weathered indents of a man and two wives with foot inscription, and with prayer scrolls rising from the wives. The date? Probably early 16th century. The top slab was broken in two along a diagonal line rising from left to right, and two iron clamps held it together. These obscured some details of the two wives. I have never been back to Chislet, and it would be good to know if this tomb still exists, and to record it properly.

Stephen Freeth

- 1 R.H. D'Elboux, 'External Brasses, II', *M.B.S. Trans.*, VIII, pt.6 (March 1949), p.209, p.211.
- 2 M. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Craft* (1978), p.66 and pl.45.
- 3 R.H. D'Elboux, 'Testamentary Brasses', *Antiquaries Journal*, XXIX (1949), pp.183-90.



Fig.3. Slab with rivets and plug holes for nearly-effaced inscription indent highlighted with white box, High Halden, Kent.
(photo: © Andy Linklater)

A lost brass from a lost Ghent church

In Onderbergenstraat, Ghent, a fragment of medieval masonry is all that is left of the church of the Dominican friary, founded in 1228 by Joanna of Constantinople, countess of Flanders. This survived the Calvinist *Beeldenstorm* of 1566 and the French Revolution, only to be demolished by the city council in 1860.¹ Some idea of its appearance can be obtained from photographs (Fig.1) and engravings, and also from Sint-Hendrikskerk in Sint-Lambrechts-Woluwe, built 1908-11. This is effectively a replica of the lost Ghent church.

In August 1566 there was an outbreak of iconoclastic destruction in the Low Countries, fomented by Protestant hedge-preachers. On 20th August churches in Antwerp were ransacked. Nicholas Sander, in his contemporary account of the damage done in the church

of Our Lady there, specifically mentions that the iconoclasts 'pulled up the brasse of the gravestones'.² Two days later the wave of destruction reached Ghent. The Van Eyck Ghent Altarpiece narrowly escaped destruction by being hidden in the tower of St. Bavo. A particularly vivid eye-witness account of events during the Ghent *Beeldenstorm* is provided by the historian Marcus van Vaernewijck.³ In the Dominican church 'nothing was left intact'.⁴ Van Vaernewijck particularly lamented the destruction of all the books in the convent library. There was further destruction of imagery during the Calvinist regime which controlled Ghent from 1577 until its surrender to the Duke of Parma on 17th September 1584.⁵

Fortunately, shortly before the iconoclasm the lawyer and antiquary Dionysius Hardwijn (1530-1604) recorded the inscriptions in the Dominican church, and his account was incorporated into the history of the Ghent convent in Bernardus De Jonghe, *Belgium Dominicanum sive historia provinciae Germaniae inferioris sacri ordinis FF. Praedicatorum* (Bruxellis, 1719), pp.35-50. One of these is explicitly stated to have been a brass:

'In the choir, on the right, before the high altar, under a great blue stone, in which before the time of iconoclasm was engraved the following brass inscription, is the tomb of the Utenhove family.

Hier licht Claey's Utenhove Riddere in syn leven Raed ende Camerlinck myns gheduchts here van Bourgoignen, van Brabant, van Vlaenderen: die overleet int jaer 1462. den 18. van Sporcle.

Hier licht meester Claey's Utenhove filius mer Claey's s'voorseyts ghelientieert in den loyen: die starf int jaer 1439 den eersten dach van Hoymaent.

Hier licht vrouw Anna van Messem gheselnede was van meester Claey's die overleedt int jaer 1450. 13. dach van Wedemaent.'⁶



Fig.1. West front of the Dominican church, Ghent, Belgium.
Photograph, c.1860.
(photo: © Collection Archives Gent, SCMS/FO/1264)



Fig 2. Gillis van der Biest, lord of Beveren, d.1392.

Drawing by Arent van Wijnendale.

(photo: © Collection Archives Gent, IC/AG/AVW/27)

Nicolaas ('Claeys') Utenhove, knight, councillor and chamberlain of the Duke of Burgundy, who died on 18th February 1462, was a member of a long-established Ghent patrician family first recorded in the city in 1198.⁷ With him were buried his son, also called Nicolaas, who was a licentiate in law and died on 1st July 1439, and his wife Anna van Messem, who died on 13th June 1450. The University of Ghent database 'State reform and royal officials in the county of Flanders (1419-1477)' gives the date of death of the elder Nicolaas Utenhove as either 1457 or 1458.⁸ It is likely that Hardwijn misread 'LVII' for 'LXII'. Anna was his second wife, by whom he had at least ten children.

Immediately below this inscription Hardwijn recorded Latin inscriptions commemorating two early-16th-century members of the Utenhove family, Nicolaas Utenhove (d. 11th February 1527) and his wife Agnes van der Varent (d. 23rd April 1530):

'Sepultura nobilis Consularisque viri Nicolai Utenhove Equitis aurati domini de Maerekeghem Imperatoris Romanorum Caroli Quinti Flandrensis Concilii Præsidis qui obiit anno 1527. undecima die mensis Februarii.

Sepultura generosæ ac venerabilis Dominae D. Agnetis van der Varent quondam Conjugis præfati D. Nicolai quæ obit anno 1530. 23. Aprilis.'

What form these inscriptions took is unclear. They were either subsequent additions to the great blue stone or, more probably, on adjacent tomb-slabs.

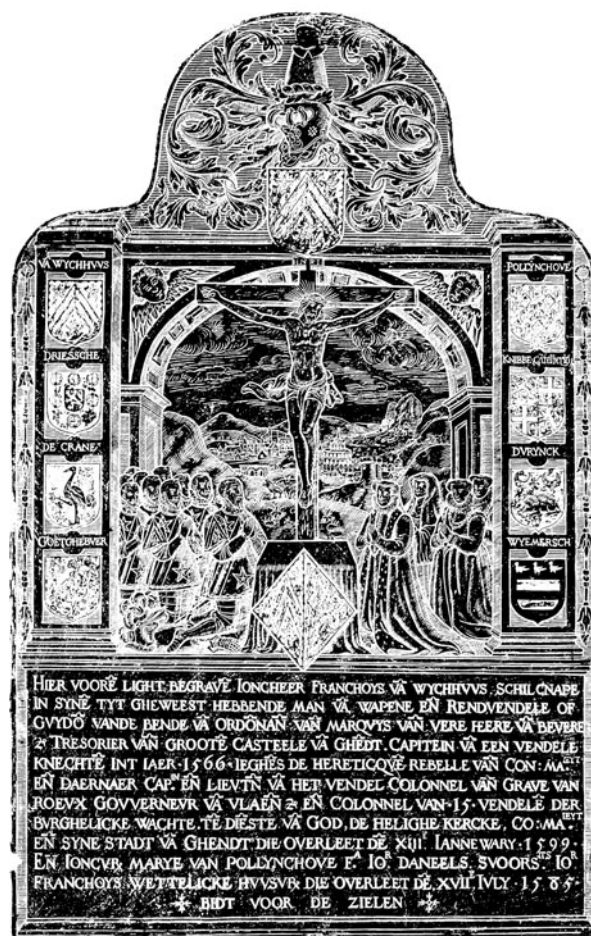
Hardwijn records other monuments in the choir which, from their position, were most probably brasses or incised slabs. Of Gillis van der Biest, whose Flemish inscription recorded that he died at his house at Beveren on 20th August 1392, we are told that he was depicted (*delineatus*) in armour, wearing leg and foot armour, with two little lions beneath his feet.⁹ That this was an incised slab is confirmed by a drawing, somewhat anachronistic in its details, by Arent van Wijnendale in an album now in

the Ghent Archives (Fig.2). Van Wijnendale provides illustrations of several other monuments listed by Hardwijn, which are worthy of further research.

I am grateful to Karel Van Herreweghe of Archief Gent for his assistance in obtaining illustrations.

Nicholas Rogers

- 1 The conventual buildings survive as the cultural centre Het Pand.
- 2 N. Sander, *A Treatise of the Images of Christ* (Lovanii, 1567), f.4.
- 3 For an edition in modernised Dutch see *Te triest om 't al te vertellen: Beeldenstorm in Gent. Het ooggetuigenverslag van Marcus van Vaernewijck*, ed. J. De Zutter (Gent, 2016).
- 4 *Ibid.*, pp.91-4.
- 5 On the links between these outbreaks of iconoclasm and the re-use of Flemish brasses in England see J. Page-Phillips, *Palimpsests: The Backs of Monumental Brasses*, 2 vols. (London, 1980), I, pp.19-21.
- 6 B. De Jonghe, *Belgium Dominicanum* (Bruxellis, 1719), p.40.
- 7 The surname is sometimes Latinised as 'de Curia'.
- 8 <https://www.bourgondische-ambtenaren.ugent.be/persoon/clais-utenhove.html>.
- 9 De Jonghe, *Belgium Dominicanum*, p. 37.



*Jonkheer Franchois van Wycheus, d.1599,
and wife Marye van Pollynchove, d.1585,
Cathédrale St. Bavon, Ghent, Belgium.
(rubbing: © M.B.S. Trans., X, pt.3 (1965))*

The arms and seal of William de Kestevene at North Mymms, Hertfordshire

Heraldry is a significant feature of many monumental brasses, and can often be vital in the identification of the person commemorated. It is unfortunate that the colour has disappeared from most of those which formerly had colour.

The brass of William de Kestevene or Kesteven, at North Mymms, Hertfordshire (LSWI), on which David Lepine gave a talk¹ and has written² depicts a shield with *A saltire between four crosses crosslet fitchy*. The field of the shield has been scored to assist the adhesion of colour, but all colour is now lost. Patricia Cook, a former churchwarden, on the church website (*Know Your Church*) states that ‘There was originally some doubt as to whether the figure was that of another early incumbent, Thomas de Horton, but in 1949 the shield of arms below the figure was confirmed to be that of William de Kesteven.’³

In 1949 Lawrence Tanner, Keeper of the Muniments at Westminster Abbey, wrote: ‘In fact the brass is not that of Thomas de Horton at all, but of William de Kestevene, who was Vicar of North Mymms from June 1344 until his death in October 1361. William de Kestevene was a man of good family, entitled to bear arms, and in addition to holding the living he possessed a fourth part of the Manor of North Mymms. Among the Muniments of Westminster Abbey are sixteen documents connected with him and this property and they show that he came into possession of it in 1337 before he became Vicar. Four of these documents have his seal appended to them.’⁴

Tanner gave the seal’s diameter as one inch. He illustrated it with a black and white photograph, but after 75 years we can now admire the seal in full colour (Fig.1). The seal has a shield with a narrow saltire (as on the brass) between four crosses crosslet fitchy (pointed lower limbs). The other three limbs are crosslets or botony (like a trefoil). The inscription reads, SIGILLUM WILLI DE KESTEVEINE. Neither the seal nor the brass gives any indication of the tinctures of the arms, but the saltire and the crosses must (because they are raised above the surface of the shield) have been gold (or possibly

silver/white). The Editors of the *Transactions* in 1949 stated that research had failed to ascertain either the tinctures of the shield, or any pedigree of the Kestevene family. This remains the case, though David Lepine noted that one of William de Kestevene’s kinsmen and executors, Ralph de Kesteven, a London rector, used the same arms, while his other kinsman and executor, the layman John de Kesteven, used arms which were completely different.⁵

I am grateful to Martin Stuchfield for supplying scans from the *Transactions*, and to Christine Reynolds, Assistant Keeper of the Muniments at Westminster Abbey, for the photo of the seal, and permission to reproduce it.

Roger Barnes

1 *M.B.S. Bulletin* 150 (June 2022), pp.985-6.

2 D. Lepine, ‘Flemish Sophistication in Rural Hertfordshire: The Brass of William Kesteven (d.1361)’, *M.B.S. Trans.*, XXIV (2023), pp.1-18.

3 P. Cook, *Know Your Church*. <https://www.northmymmshistory.uk/2018/08/historical-treasures-of-church-of-st.html#brass>.

4 L. Tanner, ‘Brass at North Mymms Church, Hertfordshire: A Correction’, *M.B.S. Trans.*, VIII (March 1949), pp.244-5.

5 See *M.B.S. Trans.*, XXIV (2023), p.7.



*Fig 1. Seal of William de Kestevene, c.1350.
(Westminster Abbey Muniment 4308).
(photo: © Dean and Chapter of Westminster)*

Notes on books, articles and the internet

Julian Luxford. *'St. Bartholomew's Priory, West Smithfield: The Tomb of Rahere and the Book of the Foundation'*, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, CLXXVIII (2025), pp.1-17; also available online at <https://doi.org/10.1080/00681288.2025.2484897>.

In this wide-ranging article, based on his recent lecture in St. Bartholomew's, Julian Luxford suggests that the effigy of Rahere on his tomb is a later addition, placed directly upon the former top slab of Purbeck marble. This Purbeck slab still exists beneath the effigy; its edge can be traced along its whole length. In doing so, he raises the intriguing possibility that the slab, now covered, may still contain either the indent of a brass, or a surviving incised memorial. Personally, I wonder whether there might even be an actual brass in memory of Rahere which has been hidden, unseen and forgotten, for somewhere around five centuries.

A possible parallel exists in the church of All Saints, Maidstone. Here the raised tomb of John Wotton, d.1417, the first Master of the College there, lies in the south chapel. It shares its stone superstructure with the stonework of the sedilia in the chancel. (Wotton must have paid for the sedilia, in whole or in part.) Through miscalculation, probably because the tomb was erected in Wotton's lifetime and the sedilia and superstructure were an afterthought, some of this stonework had to be placed directly onto the Purbeck marble top slab of the tomb. This already contained an elaborate brass showing Wotton under a canopy with saints in the side shafts. The new stonework completely covered the sinister side of the canopy, and the figures of four saints. The edges of the brass plates can still be seen, sticking out beneath the stonework, although the rest of Wotton's brass was destroyed centuries ago. (See *Archaeologia Cantiana*, LXIV (1951), pp.120-1 and pl.3, available online from the Kent Archaeological Society website.)

Maybe, to the medieval mind, artwork did not need to be consistent; the hidden bits of Wotton's

brass were still known unto God. Could the same be true at St. Bartholomew's? Short of a major disaster to the church or to Rahere's tomb, we will never know.

Stephen Freeth

Simon Knott. *Norfolk Churches: Norfolk Battle Training Area Churches*. Online at <http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/battlezone/battlezoneintro.htm>. Also a related YouTube video, *Simon Knott and I [Cameron Self] visit the churches of the Norfolk Battle Zone*. Six parishes in Norfolk were commandeered by the Army in 1944 and are still used for infantry training. Civilians are forbidden. Four had churches: Langford, Stanford, Tottington and West Tofts. The churches still survive, cared for by the MoD, but are gradually deteriorating. All have interesting features. In particular Tottington had a brass of 1598, while West Tofts has a complete chantry chapel designed by A.W.N. Pugin. Simon Knott, granted rare access, gives a charming introduction to all four churches, inside and outside. The video has a delightful lyrical finish, including the phrase, 'The silence of an earlier age still engulfs them', juxtaposed against the trucks whizzing past on the distant main road.

Our member **Philip Whittemore** has sent this useful list of recent (and not so recent) books and articles which may be of interest:

John Saunders. *The Ricardian Century: A History of the Richard III Society* (Richard III Society, 2025); xviii, 188 pp.; illust.; ISBN 978-1-0686513-2-8.

This is a history of the Richard III Society; brasses are not mentioned. The main interest to M.B.S. members lies in an early member of the Richard III Society, Philip Nelson (1872-1953). He was a medical doctor and a collector of antiquities, and owner of a number of brasses (see Stephenson, *List*, p.585 and *Appendix* p.829). A brief biography is given on pages 3-4, while illustration 2, between pages 32-3, shows him in 1934.

Parish Church of Saint Mary the Virgin Elsing: Church Guide (Elsing P.C.C., n.d.); [16 pp.]; colour illust.; plan.

The brass to Sir Hugh Hastyngs, d.1347, is described and illustrated over three pages, together with the remaining stained glass that originally formed part of Hastyngs' glazing scheme for the church. Also illustrated is the slab to a Franciscan monk, 'Bourle', now hidden by the altar, and the brass to Rev. Richard Browne, d.1823, and his wife Frances, d.1843, within an elaborate canopied surround.

Vivienne Soddy (ed.). *A Journey through some of the History of a Norfolk Village: Elsing* (Elsing Heritage Society, revised 2011); 28 pp.; illust.

A general history of Elsing village including the Hastyngs brass. Includes a small illustration of John Carter's engraving of the brass, and a brief description of the (mostly) lost stained glass.

Andrew Ziminski. *Church Going: A Stonemason's Guide to the Churches of the British Isles* (Profile Books, 2024); 401 pp.; illust.; ISBN 978-1-80081-8682.

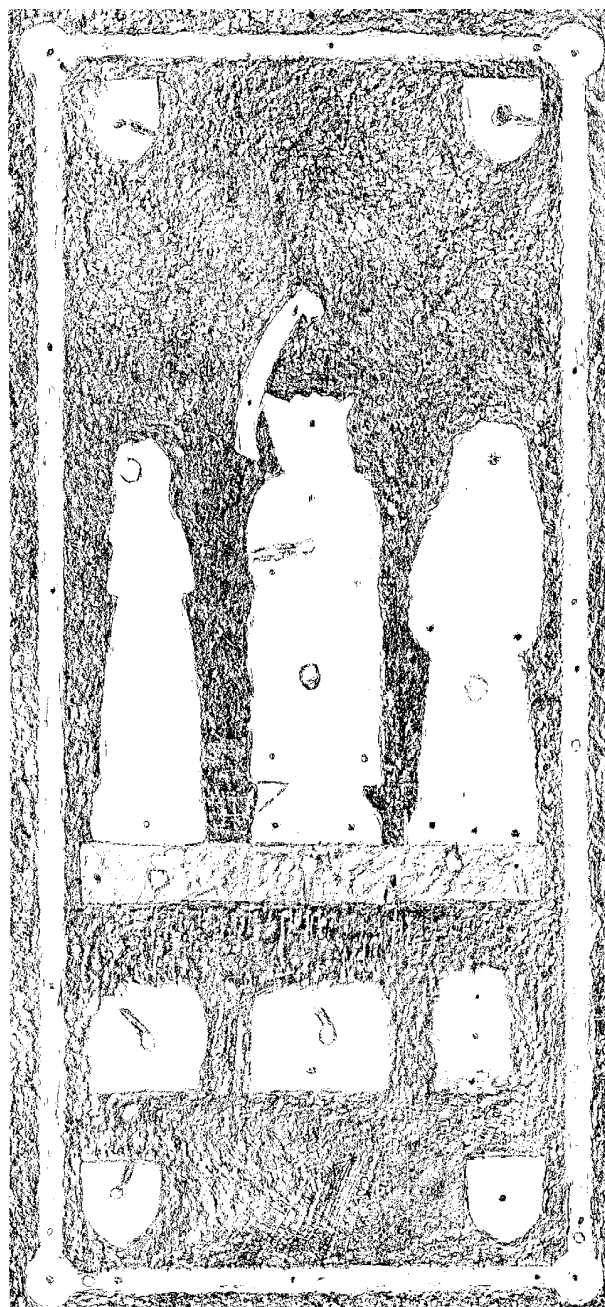
Ziminski is a stonemason and church conservator who has spent four decades working on the cathedrals and churches of Britain. His first book, *The Stonemason: A History of Building Britain* was published in 2021. His second navigates the reader through the different parts of a church from churchyard to crypt, describing each in detail. The entry for brasses occupies seven pages, two of which are full-page illustrations of Cambridgeshire brasses: Roger de Trumpington II, 1326, at Trumpington (LSW.I), and Margaret Peyton from the brass to Thomas Peyton, esq., 1484, at Isleham (LSW.III). Both reproductions are drawings, but extremely well executed.

Philip Whittemore has also published more short articles on brasses in the City of London in *Skyline: The Magazine of the Friends of the City Churches*. These continue the series listed in *Bulletin* 156 (June 2024) as follows:

October 2024, pp.10-11, **'Where there is Brass, 15: The Brass to Thomas Benolt, Clarenceux**

King of Arms, 1534, and wives Margaret and Mary, St. Helen Bishopsgate.' 1 colour photo.

February 2025, pp.10-11, **'Where there is Brass, 16: A Ragusan Merchant in London: The Brass to Nicholas de Nale, St. Andrew Undershaft.'** 1 colour photo.



Indent for Thomas Benolt, esq., Clarenceux King of Arms, d.1534, in official robes with crown and sceptre.

St. Helen, Bishopsgate, London.

(rubbing: © Lack and Whittemore,

A Series of Monumental Brasses,

Indents and Incised Slabs from the 13th to the 20th Century, II, pt.3 (May 2007)