

Monumental Brass Society

JANUARY 2010



BULLETIN 113

The Bulletin is published three times a year, in January, May and September. Articles for inclusion in the next issue should be sent to the **Hon. Bulletin Editor**, William Lack, 2 The Radleth, Plealey, Pontesbury, Shrewsbury SY5 0XF by **1st April 2010**. Contributions to **Notes on Books and Articles** should be sent to Richard Busby, 'Treetops', Beech Hill, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 3AG by **1st March 2010**. Contributors may send articles either as typed double-spaced copy or digitally, on disk or as an e-mail attachment, to either mbsbulletin@btinternet.com or richard.busby@tiscali.co.uk.

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Hon. Treasurer's Notice

On 1st January all subscriptions for 2010 became due. If you have not yet paid, please send £25.00 (associate/student £12.50, family £35.00) to Rosalind Willatts (contact details above). Make cheques payable to the 'Monumental Brass Society'. 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. Complete and send in the form that can be downloaded directly from www.mbs-brasses.co.uk. U.S. members preferring to pay in dollars can send a check for U.S. \$45.00 to Shirley Mattox, 1313 Jackson Street, Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901. For \$4.00 extra payable with subscription the *Bulletins* can be airmailed. Correspondence on all other financial matters should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Hugh Guilford, 14 Green Park, Prestwood, Bucks. HP16 0PZ.

Editorial

The Society owes an enormous debt to Les Smith who recently stepped down as Hon. Bulletin Editor. He produced, with unfailing good humour, 66 issues over the last 22 years. In his last editorial Les described how technology changed during his tenure. His first copies were produced with a typewriter and old-fashioned cut and paste. Today the copy is computer-originated and delivered to the printers electronically.

As you can see we have now moved a step further, with the introduction of colour and a new professionally-designed layout. The *Bulletin* is being produced digitally and will also be accessible on the Society's website. It's our newsletter and, together with the website, the most immediate means of communication with the membership. With this new start we would like to encourage as many as possible to contribute. A glance through this issue will show the wide variety of member's interests. So get writing, photographing and rubbing!

Cover illustration

Early in 2009 our member Jonathan Ali from Hawkshaw, near Bury, visited a near neighbour, formerly the village butcher. On walking through the drawing room an object on the heavily-congested sideboard caught his attention. Jonathan was convinced that the piece was a Trinity from a monumental brass. Apparently it had been purchased by a tinker called Frank Harrison from a market stall at Bury or Clitheroe in c.1949. Subsequently Harrison parted with the brass in lieu of rent for parking his caravan on a small-holding at Hawkshaw belonging to Herbert Tyldesley and his wife Marjorie. In 1991 the Trinity was bequeathed to their son, Herbert Frederick.

The brass is obviously genuine and bears a close resemblance to the Trinity on the memorial to Sir John Broke, Baron Cobham, and wife Margaret, 1506, at Cobham, Kent (M.S.XVIII). Examination reveals that it once formed part of a canopy arrangement because of the bevelling on the edges and not being of uniform width (123-130 mm). Intriguingly, the plate is also slightly convex consistent with bomb or blast damage. Does it originate from Lancashire, a county not renowned for a plethora of brass memorials let alone high-status ones, or was it plundered from a war-damaged church elsewhere in the country? Answers please on a postcard to the Hon. Secretary!

Diary of Events

Saturday, 6th February 2010 at 2.15p.m.

GENERAL MEETING

BRASSES IN PRIVATE POSSESSION

This General Meeting will be held at the **Royal Foundation of St. Katharine**, 2 Butcher Row, London E14 8DS. Our member, **Stephen Freeth**, has retained a lifelong interest recording and keeping track of Brasses in Private Possession. Stephen will share his unrivalled knowledge of this somewhat neglected field of study. In contrast, **Martin Stuchfield**, will provide a fascinating insight into the recent recovery of privately-owned brasses from salerooms and elsewhere. **Members will also have a rare opportunity to see original brasses** some of which have been out of circulation for a considerable period of time - in one instance for more than 350 years!



Symbol of St. Matthew formerly in the possession of W.H. Fenton

St. Katharine's is located less than five minutes walk from Limehouse D.L.R. and B.R. station with easy access by tube (Central, Circle, District or Northern line to Bank/Monument. Change to Docklands Light Railway (D.L.R.). Limehouse is second stop from Bank or Tower Gateway) or by bus (routes 15, 115, 135, 277, D3, D6 and D7 to Limehouse). See map on right.

Saturday, 20th March 2010 at 2.00p.m.

GENERAL MEETING

HAREFIELD CHURCH, MIDDLESEX

With the coverage of the City churches all but exhausted the emphasis for the foreseeable future will be placed on attractive locations containing brasses and monuments which are accessible via the London transport system. **Harefield** church, which has been described as 'the Westminster Abbey of West Middlesex', contains an abundance of brasses and a fine array of monuments. See enclosed leaflet.

Saturday, 15th May 2010

SOCIETY EXCURSION — *KENT*

This Excursion led by Graham Wood will commence from Ashford Station at 10.30a.m. and visit churches at Ashford, Great Chart, Cranbrook and Biddenden. See enclosed booking form.

Saturday, 10th July 2010

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING *PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL*

Further details in next issue.

Saturday, 25th September 2010

STUDY DAY

LONG MELFORD, SUFFOLK

Further details in next issue.

C.M.S. EVENT

Saturday, 31st July 2010

WEST YORKSHIRE EXCURSION

Commences from Wakefield West Station at 10.30a.m. Visits to Methley, Wragby, Darton and Thornhill – churches which are usually kept locked. Cost £20.00 to C.M.S./M.B.S.; £25.00 to non-members, including morning coffee and afternoon tea (lunch not included). Cheques payable to the 'Church Monuments Society' should be sent to Patrick Farman at 4 Hollins Crescent, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 2JG.



Personalia

We congratulate two members on the award of PhDs: **Claire Daunton** by the University of East Anglia on 'The Patronage and Iconography of Stained Glass in Late Medieval Norfolk: An Historical Analysis', and **Rob Kinsey** by the University of York on 'Legal Service, Careerism and Social Advancement in Late Medieval England: The Thorpes of Northamptonshire, c. 1200-1391'.

We welcome as new members:

Dr Julia Boorman, B.A., Ph.D., 57 Windmill Avenue, Wokingham, Berkshire RG41 3XA.

Dr Clive Burgess, c/o Department of History, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX.

Geoffrey Burgess, 9 Lindley Court, Glamorgan Road, Hampton Wick, Surrey KT1 4HU.

Dr Martin Heale, c/o School of History, University of Liverpool, 9 Abercromby Square, Liverpool L69 7WZ.

David King, 31 Burnt Hills, Cromer, Norfolk NR27 9LW.

Tim Tatton-Brown, Fisherton Mill House, Mill Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP2 7RZ.

Cindy Wood, 2 Lions Court, Wimborne Road, Lytchett Matravers, Poole, Dorset BH16 6HQ.

We are sorry to report the passing of Esmond Hawes of Frodsham, Cheshire on 3rd January 2010. Esmond joined the Society on its "revival" in 1934 and was a member for 75 years. He was an extremely keen and valued supporter who was appointed an Honorary Member in 1984 and held the distinction of being our oldest member. We also record the death of Peter Lambert of Bishop's Castle, Shropshire who joined the Society in 1968. We send our condolences to family and friends.

Notes and Queries

In his article 'The Final Frontier' (*M.B.S. Bulletin*, 110, pp.194-6) and in his talk on German brasses a little while ago, Father Jerome Bertram referred to low-relief figure brasses; a characteristic one (Henricus von Schmuckmurg, 1520, Zeitz R.C. Cathedral) is illustrated by chance on page 186 of the same issue of the *Bulletin* and more in the previous number (*M.B.S. Bulletin*, 109, pp.168-9), for which this illustration provides a correction. I have myself seen many such monuments in churches of Saxony and Bavaria, and no doubt they are much more widely distributed. They do not, of course, lend themselves to rubbing, like the flat engraved plates with which members are so familiar; but they have many elements in common with those, and are readily photographed, so they must surely provide material that members of our Society could very usefully study.

So my query is: Does any 'Mill Stephenson-equivalent' exist (in German, presumably) which purports to locate all these memorials?

Hubert Allen

Brasses and incised slabs in St. Botolph's church, Boston, Lincolnshire: an appeal

Following the highly successful M.B.S. Study Day held at Boston in May 2009, Sally Badham and Paul Cockerham are editing a volume to be published by Archaeopress which will contain all the papers given. Those who attended will recall Derrick Chivers's paper outlining *inter alia* the losses of indents and Flemish incised slabs which occurred in the 1970s and 1980s. Some of the floor monuments lost can be reconstructed from rubbings in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries, but not all. Does any member have any rubbings or photos of the brasses and slabs in St. Botolph's taken before 1980, particularly any indents in the Tower, or the Flemish slab which used to be at the east end of the nave at the entrance to the chancel? If you can help, Paul or Sally would love to hear from you. Contact Paul at Sharwood, Lezerea, Wendron, Cornwall TR13 0ED. Telephone 01209 832929 / 07875034780.

Paul Cockerham

MEETING REPORTS

London Church Visit St. Andrew Undershaft

As always there was a good attendance for this London meeting on 25th July 2009. Members were able to examine the monuments and brasses and heard two stimulating speakers.

Before describing the brasses, **Stephen Freeth** outlined the history of the church. It was fortunate to escape The Great Fire in 1666 and later the Blitz of 1940-1. However it suffered considerable damage in the I.R.A. bomb attack of 1992, losing the 17th century stained glass-window at the west end. The Swiss R.E. building (the *gherkin*) now towers over the church.

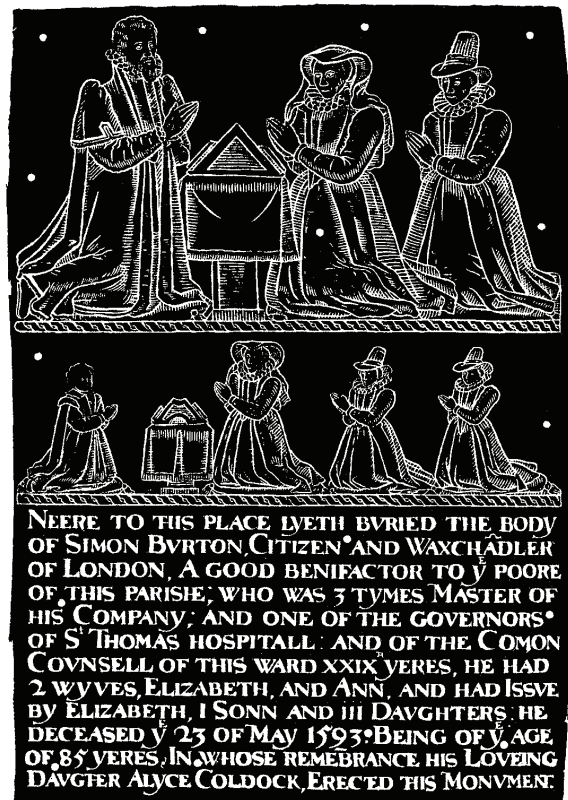


Damage to the west window in 1992 (photo: Stephen Freeth)

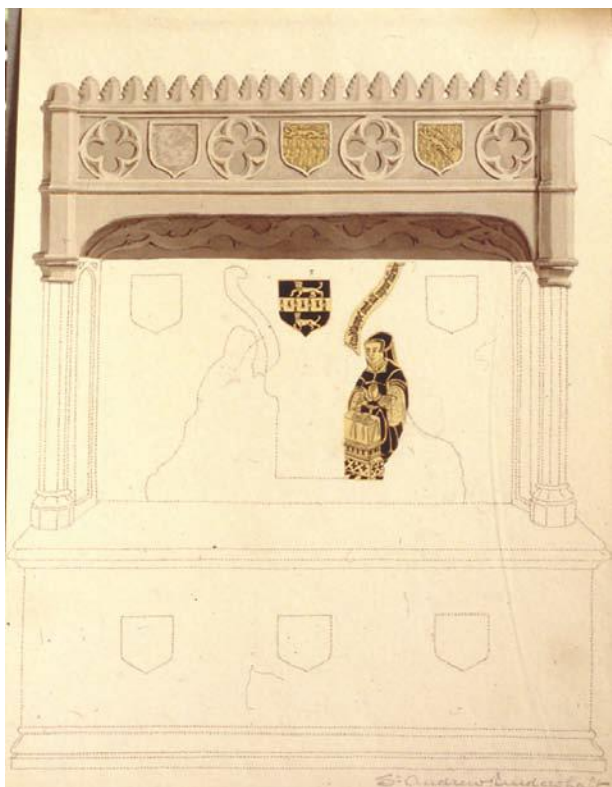
There are two surviving braases, both set in stone frames. The first is a Lytkott-style brass commemorating Nicholas Leveson, 1539, and wife Denys, 1560. A small plate at the top of the composition records that it was repaired at the cost of the Parish in 1764. The second is a Johnson-style rectangular plate engraved with the kneeling effigies of Simon Burton and two wives, 1593. Stephen also noted several lost brasses, notably that of David Woodroffe, 1563, and wife Elizabeth. A Fisher drawing of *c.*1810 in the Guildhall Library shows that the mutilated female effigy, a scroll and one shield then survived and were set in an altar



The Leveson brass (photo: Martin Stuchfield)



The Burton brass (rubbing: Martin Stuchfield)



*Fisher drawing of the Woodroffe brass
(copyright: Guildhall Library)*

tomb. In 1995 Philip Whittemore had identified the mutilated female effigy in the Society of Antiquaries (M.S.XI) as that of Elizabeth



The Otley monument (photo: Martin Stuchfield)

Woodroffe (*M.B.S. Bulletin*, 70, p.204). As always, Stephen's talk was supported by excellent photographs and illustrations of archive material.

Derrick Chivers briefly described the conservation of the Leveson brass by Bryan Egan in 1977.

Simon Watney, the Conservation Cases Recorder of The Church Monuments Society gave a fascinating overview of the important series of monuments, dating from the late 16th to the early 18th centuries, which are set on the walls of the chancel and the north and south aisles. The best known monument commemorates John Stow, author of the *Survey of London*, buried in 1605. He is depicted seated at a desk in a recess with a book on either side; his pen is periodically renewed at a ceremony by city dignitaries. There are several monuments to Lord Mayors of London: Sir Thomas Otley, 1582, and wife; Sir Hugh Hamsterley, 1636, with his wife; and Sir Christopher Clitherow, 1642, with his two wives.



The Stow monument (photo: Martin Stuchfield)

The President, Ven. David Meara, launched the new Shire publication: *Monumental Brasses*, by Sally Badham and Martin Stuchfield (reviewed on p.237 of *M.B.S. Bulletin* 112). David described how Sally's

concise text was complemented by Martin's stunning photography. In response, Sally thanked the many people who had helped her and Martin, singling out Anne Dowden for the use of her coloured rubbings and especially Patrick Farman

and Peter Hacker for the arduous task of compiling the gazetteer of significant brasses.

We are grateful to Stephen Finch and Tony Thomas for their considerable assistance.

Monumental Brass Society 2009 Conference 'Canons, Clergy and Churchmen'

The 2009 conference, held at Salisbury from 4th to 6th September, commenced with a bracing walking tour of three city churches, St. Martin's, St. Edmund's and St. Thomas's. Each contained many items of interest, of which the 17th century brass inscription at St. Martin's and the magnificent Doom at St. Thomas's were particular standouts. After dinner David Meara treated delegates to a light-hearted but informative talk on 'The Archdeacon's Brass' followed by a delightful evening at the bar with our convenor, Christian Steer, double-taking as barman!

On Saturday morning we were guided around the cathedral by the expert hand of **Tim Tatton-Brown**, whose uniquely detailed knowledge was put entirely at our disposal and added immensely to our enjoyment and understanding of the building and its contents. The eagerly awaited afternoon session of lectures began with **Brian Kemp's** paper on the early funerary monuments in Salisbury cathedral. Professor Kemp highlighted the importance of the cathedral's collection of a number of Britain's earliest surviving monumental effigies, most notably the 11th century memorials of Bishops Roger and Jocelin, the remarkable Longspée effigy and the canopied monument of Bishop Giles of Bridport. Professor Kemp was also able to confirm the traditional attributions of the monuments to Bishops Roger and Jocelin, and to cite particular reasons why both may have warranted expensive effigial memorials.

Nigel Saul's overview of Salisbury cathedral's sculptured monuments and brasses confirmed its importance to the history of medieval monuments and emphasised, among other things, just how many brasses have been lost. Such losses skew our picture of the groups who chose effigial

commemoration; canons, in particular, opted for brasses, but the majority of these have now gone. **Cindy Wood's** paper on the cage chantries of Salisbury cathedral similarly picked up on the number of chantries that have been lost nationally, with only surviving piscinas testifying to their former existence. This paper traced the history of the Hungerford chapel from its foundation and endowment through its post-Reformation 'afterlife'. **Julia Boorman's** detailed examination of the unusual imagery of the Wyville brass was a tour-de-force of historical detective work. Each element of the brass was explained in the context of the bishop's achievements and legal triumphs –



*Champion before the gate, from the Wyville brass
(photo: courtesy of the late Malcolm Norris)*

a feat made possible by the fortunate survival of the relevant documentation. Each paper prompted more questions than time allowed for, ensuring the discussions carried on through tea and dinner. An added treat to the day was a concert given by 'Le Basile' prior to the reception and which provided delegates with a rich collection of medieval music in the Sarum College Chapel.

In differing ways each speaker on Sunday emphasised the importance of setting brasses in context, whether of other forms of monument, or of commemoration in its wider sense. **David Griffith's** study of inscriptions mapped language use across time and status groups and revealed the overwhelming preference of the Lincolnshire clergy for Latin, even towards the end of the Middle Ages, when their colleagues in counties such as Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire were turning to the vernacular. **Clive Burgess** reminded us that brasses and sculptured effigies were only one option in the range of commemorative choices open to medieval men and women, and that the remembrance of the dead was intricately interwoven into the liturgy, church furnishings and fittings and parish life.

Another variation on the day's theme, covered by **David King**, was the relationship between brass and glass. Both forms of commemoration can sometimes be found as part of the same memorial scheme, but a less well-known facet of this relationship is the existence of multi-media workshops like the Hayward workshop in Norwich, which produced glass, brass and panel-painting. **Martin Heale's** paper explored the monuments of the regulars. A self-confessed newcomer to the study of monuments, Dr Heale looked at the

abbatial brass from the perspective of the monastic community. Abbatial monuments were expressions of the continuity and longevity of office, adopting standardised imagery and often clustering around the burials of illustrious predecessors.

Elizabeth New's comparison of the design of episcopal monuments and bishops' seals made a convincing case that the formulation of the imagery of the episcopal tomb owed much to the embodiment of the office as expressed in the designs of their seals. This is an avenue which few have explored and on which much more research deserves to be done.

Jerome Bertram's copiously illustrated talk on the common life of the collegiate church provided a valuable guide to the identification of the canon's brass/incised slab via their distinctive vestments – a feature which is particularly marked in Scotland and on the continent. The final paper of the day – a far from enviable task – was given by **Christian Steer**, who demonstrated the crucial role of antiquarian evidence in rescuing so many destroyed brasses from total oblivion. Thanks to the likes of Dugdale, Stow and Weever we know of the existence of at least 133 monuments in old St. Paul's, many of which, Christian suggested, were probably brasses and incised slabs.

After a well-received members' forum and tea, delegates departed with much food for thought and it is to be hoped that the weekend's discussions will result in some fruitful new avenues of enquiry. Peter Heseltine, Christian Steer and Rupert Webber are to be congratulated on gathering such a programme of speakers and making it an enjoyable, as well as an informative, few days.

Rhianydd Biebrach

Annual General Meeting - 3rd October 2009

The 2009 Annual General Meeting was held at the Royal Foundation of St. Katharine. The President, Ven. David Meara, was in the Chair and paid tribute to the contribution made by Nancy Briggs, a Vice-President of the Society, who tragically passed away on 23rd January 2009. The President explained that Miss Briggs, who joined the Society in 1950, had been General

Editor of the Mill Stephenson Revision and was largely responsible for seeing the first volume devoted to Warwickshire through the press in 1977. Members observed a period of silence in her memory.

Apologies for absence were duly received with the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held

on 11th October 2008 subsequently approved by the meeting and signed. The Annual Report for 2008/09 was also approved, having been previously circulated.

The Hon. Treasurer presented the Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2008 and thanked numerous members for their contribution to the affairs of the Society. In connection with the Conservation Fund attention was drawn to grants, totalling £750.00, which had been approved by the Executive Council during the financial year. Robert Oakley was re-elected as Independent Examiner following the approval of the Accounts.

The meeting proceeded to elect the Hon. Officers en-bloc: Ven. David Meara as President; Claude Blair, Jerome Bertram, Paul Cockerham, Nigel Saul and Martin Stuchfield as Vice-Presidents; Martin Stuchfield as Hon. Secretary; Hugh Guilford as Hon. Treasurer and Nicholas Rogers as Hon. Editor.

The President thanked Jon Bayliss, David Lillistone and Christian Steer as the retiring members of the Executive Council. Peter Heseltine and Matthew Ward, as duly nominated members, were elected to fill the vacancies created.

The President paid fulsome tribute to Les Smith for his work as Hon. Bulletin Editor having been responsible for sixty-five issues during a twenty-one year period in office. This had resulted in the decision, by the Executive Council, to accord official recognition by proposing Honorary Membership which was unanimously approved by the meeting.

The Hon. Secretary introduced the proposals to amend Rule 4 explaining that the current size of the Executive Council, together with the travelling costs claimed (£818.40), was disproportionate to the current size of membership (394). It was further explained that the present arrangement, whereby the Executive Council consisted of nine ordinary members, was introduced during the 1970s at a period when the membership exceeded 1,200. The meeting voted in favour of the rule change whereby the Society 'shall be managed by an Executive Council of

which the officers shall be members and which shall consist in addition of six ordinary members and two such members shall retire by rotation each year. Any person retiring shall not be eligible for re-election to the Council at same meeting'.

The Hon. Secretary also explained that an amendment to Rule 9 was also being sought to enable the Annual General Meeting to be held at any time before 24th October in order to assist with complying with the stipulation that the Annual Report and Accounts must be approved by the membership and submitted to the Charity Commission within ten months of an accounting reference period. This Rule change was also approved.

Following the conclusion of the formal business, David Lillistone and Janet Whitham, spoke on *The Elephant in Medieval Art: a tribute to Nancy Briggs*. A summary of their paper follows this report.

The meeting room was adorned with brass rubbings displayed by our members, Derrick Chivers, Jane Houghton, Roger Joy and Janet Whitham. Back issues of the *Bulletin*, *Portfolio* and *Transactions* were available from the Society's bookstall managed by Jane Houghton.

At the Executive Council meeting held on 31st October 2009 the following appointments were agreed:

Hon. Archivist: Jane Houghton

Hon. Bulletin Editor: William Lack

Hon. Conservation Officer: Martin Stuchfield

Hon. Heraldic Adviser: Thomas Woodcock,
Norroy and Ulster King of Arms

Hon. Internet Publicity Officer: Jon Bayliss

Hon. Meetings Secretary: Peter Heseltine

Hon. Membership Secretary: Rosalind Willatts

H Martin Stuchfield
Hon. Secretary

The Elephant in Medieval Art

As a tribute to Nancy Briggs, our Vice-President who was tragically killed on 23 January 2009, this paper was presented at the recent A.G.M.

Nancy loved elephants in every shape and form, especially on brasses. Members will remember her wearing her T-shirt with the elephants from the brass at Wivenhoe, in her beloved Essex.

The things we assume about elephants is that they never forget and are afraid of mice – ideas which come from the medieval bestiaries, those written compilations of moralising natural history that were popular for hundreds of years. Elephants appear on several brasses. On the well-known brass to Sir Henry Vernon and his widow Margaret at Tong, Shropshire, where the lady's feet rest on a recumbent elephant. The elephant is depicted with a castle held on by two belly bands. It has the usual foliate ears, a ringed trunk, upstanding tusks, horses' legs and feet. Peter Heseltine in his book *A Bestiary of Brass* suggests this may be because Lady Vernon's name saint Margaret, was swallowed by a dragon but escaped. Elephants had a particular problem with dragons.



Elephant at the feet of Margaret Vernon at Tong, Shropshire

Another interesting brass (and Nancy's favourite) is that to William, Viscount Beaumont and Lord Bardolph, 1507, at Wivenhoe, Essex. His broad-toed sabbatons rest on a standing elephant which bears a castle set on a saddle-cloth. The whole resting on the seed pod of the broom. Three members of his retinue appear above the battlements. The beast has large foliated ears, ringed trunk and tusks more accurately drawn than most. Its legs are too short and end in podgy feet. The device appears as his lordship's badge in the

canopy twice above the effigy and is repeated in the marginal inscription.



Elephants on the Beaumont brass at Wivenhoe, Essex

Another heraldic elephant appears on a brass to John Onley, Mayor of Coventry, 1512, at Withington, Shropshire. Onley is depicted in plate armour with his wife Joan in pedimental head-dress and a close-fitting over gown cut square at the neck. One shield bears the

arms of Coventry (*per pale gules and vert, an elephant, on his back a tower, tripled tower or*). The designer of this brass, probably engraved in Coventry, appears to have had some problems with drawing this elephant which resembles a cart horse with large ears and a cramped nose. The three-towered fighting castle on its back rests on a scalloped saddle-cloth.



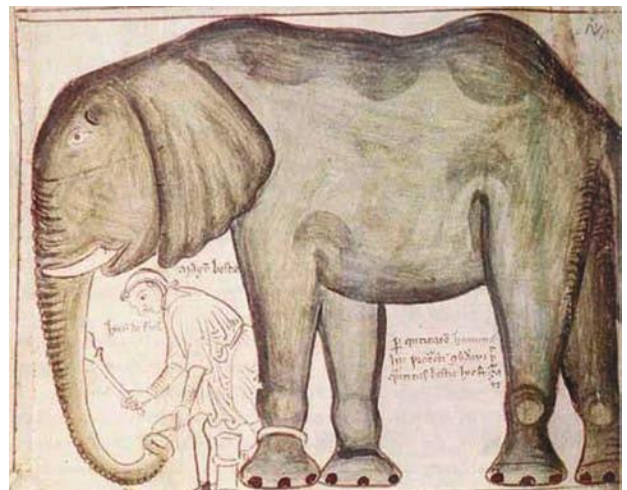
Elephant on the Onley brass at Withington, Shropshire

A fine representation of an elephant appears on a misericord from Exeter Cathedral. The unusual thing about this elephant is the naturalistic accuracy. Normally medieval elephants are depicted as being fanciful. There is an elephant being strangled in the coils of a marvelous elongated purple dragon with red wings on the so-called 'Aberdeen Bestiary' which was actually written and illustrated in England around 1280. It is beautifully drawn - the elephant being pinkish and the two beasts standing against a brilliant background of gold leaf. The elephant has a trunk, but no tusks, not what you would expect to see in the flesh. The Exeter wood carving has African elephantine ears and knees low down on its legs. This is important because, according to the sources on which the bestiaries drew, the elephant had no leg joints and sleeps leaning against a tree. Hunters were said to partly saw through a tree so that when the elephant leant against it, the beast would fall and be unable to get up. When a fallen elephant trumpeted in alarm, and its fellows gathered around, then neither twelve elephants together, nor one great elephant could raise it from the ground, but only a

small elephant using its trunk could lift it. This characteristic was moralized by the explanation that neither the old law nor the twelve prophets could raise a fallen sinner, but only the power of Christ.



Misericord in Exeter Cathedral



Drawing by Matthew Paris

The Exeter carving was based not on the usual bestiary illustrations but inspired by the drawing made by Matthew Paris (1200-59), a monk of St. Alban's Abbey. Paris had seen the elephant sent by King Louis IX of France as a gift to King Henry III. It was kept in the King's menagerie at the Tower of London. The drawing shows the elephant tinted grey, with its keeper 'Henricus de Flor' drawn in outline. In a study for this drawing Paris drew the trunk twice, articulated in different positions. It is likely that the carver of the Exeter misericord had seen this illustration and the elephant on the brass at Tong was copied from this pattern.

We are grateful to Martin Stuchfield for the use of his photographs from Withington and Wivenhoe.

David Lillistone and Janet Whitham

AROUND THE COUNTIES

Lancashire

On a recent trip to Lancashire, I took some 'holiday snaps' of a few brasses which I believe are additions to Mill Stephenson List. These include a new palimpsest discovery.

Some of the brasses in **Lancaster Priory** have recently been re-sited as part of 'improvements' to the gift shop. The brass to Thomas Covell, esq., J.P., 1639, (M.S.I.), has been remounted on a painted board on the south wall of the Tower. Also in the Tower, on panelling, is a palimpsest brass re-fixed with a hinge mechanism, so both sides may be viewed. The obverse is a brass inscription to Margaret, daughter of James and Dorothy Smethurst, 1705-6. The reverse is another inscription, in fine script, to Dorothy Foster who died on 27th June 1700 at the age of 34.



Lancaster R.C. Cathedral contains several fine Victorian brasses. The first commemorates Thomas Coulston, a benefactor to the church who died in 1856, aged 46. Coulston is depicted kneeling at the foot of a cross in an attitude of prayer with his arms embracing the cross. The composition includes six additional inscriptions to various members of the Coulston family about the stem and an enamelled shield suspended from a cross head.

The second brass comprises a rectangular plate to Rev. Richard Brown, died 1868, aged 62. He is represented as a priest in mass vestments under a simple canopy adorned by winged angles holding scrolls. His right hand is raised

in the Act of Blessing with a model of the Cathedral in his left hand. A marginal text with Evangelists' symbols, in roundels at the corners, completes the composition.

An unrecorded 17th century inscription was noted in the church at **Prescot** dedicated to Our Lady. The inscription, framed by a twisted rope border reads: 'Here lyeth expecting the second coming of our lord and sauour Jesus Christ the Body of JOHN PARR late of prescott who was Borne att Rainford in the yeare 1620 and Exchanged this temporall life for a life Eternal the tenth day of Novemb[er] in the yeare of our lord god 1669 Role fecit'. There is also a fine Victorian brass representing George Case, 1836, in



Clockwise, from top left: brasses to Thomas Coulston, 1856, and Rev. Richard Brown, 1868 (both from Lancaster R.C. Cathedral): George Case, 1836, and John Parr, 1620 (both from Prescott)

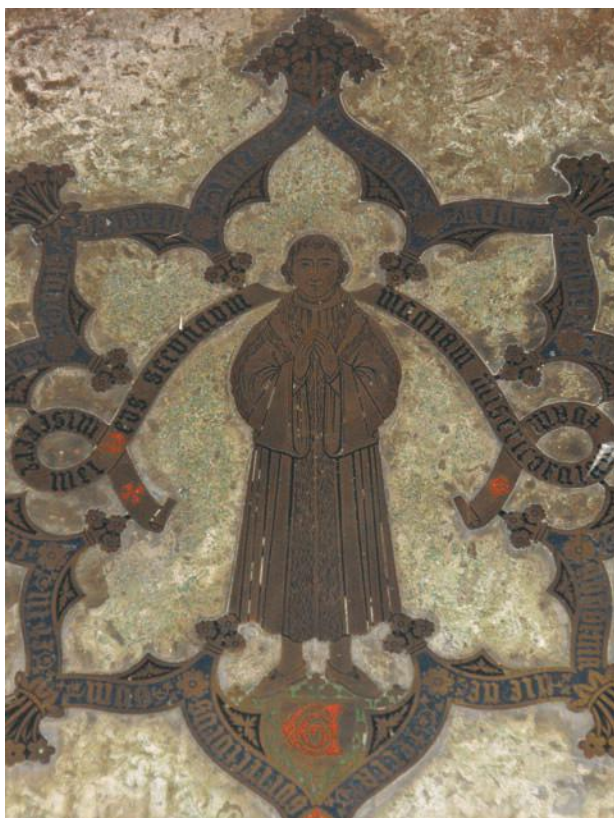


civilian attire with prayer scrolls issuing within an octofoil cross with an inscribed cross head, floriated stem and stepped base. On the dexter side of the stem is an encircled enamelled quartered shield, 1836, whilst on the sinister is an enamelled shield set on a lozenge.

At **Halsall**, a mutilated crest and inscription to Henry Halsall, dated 1559, was discovered to be in urgent need of conservation.

Janet Whitham





Detail from the Case brass at Prescott



Brass to Henry Halsall at Halsall

Yorkshire

The Yorkshire Ridings (especially the old West Riding) do not seem to have been well served by antiquarian sources. In our wanderings around Yorkshire for *The County Series*, Peter Hacker and I have discovered numerous unrecorded brasses, usually inscriptions – sometimes heraldic – and one 17th century effigial plate at **Bugthorpe** (see *M.B.S. Trans.*, XV, p.212). Recently we noted three 17th century inscriptions at **Nun Monkton** (*M.B.S. Bulletin* 111, pp.209-10) and

we have also found three unrecorded 15th century effigial incised slabs at **Tickhill** which will be described and illustrated in the forthcoming *Transactions*.

This report is to record two 16th century inscriptions not recorded by Mill Stephenson. The first, from **Wath-upon-Dearne** (see below), is a small, rather battered two-line inscription for Alexander Mountenay, 1502.





The second, at **Swillington**, is a more elaborate composition with a lead lozenge of arms for Dame Mary Maltby, 1585 (see above). It was recorded by Dodsworth in his *Church Notes* (1620) but was omitted from Stephenson's *List*. Although the brass has not been illustrated before, it was recorded by W.J.K[aye, an M.B.S. Vice-President] in *M.B.S. Trans.*, VII, p.38, together with two 17th century brasses. These inscriptions (to Henry Robinson, vicar of Leeds, ejected 1646, rector of Swillington

1649-63; and Katherine, daughter of Sir John Lowther, 1679, 'being a yeare and two days old') were recorded as loose in 1972 by Fred Fowler (a deceased member), but were stolen in about 1978. In the vestry are two other loose inscriptions, to Gilbert, son of John and Mary Gray, 1768; and Rev. John Gray, 1768. We are grateful to Martin Stuchfield for the use of his photographs from Swillington.

Patrick Farman

Inscription to Gilbert Gray, 1768



Inscription by Rev. John Gray, 1768



Dead Men Do Tell Tales

Enlisting support for Richard III from beyond the grave: Geoffrey Kidwelly of Little Wittenham

Transferred for administrative purposes from the county of Berkshire to the county of Oxfordshire in 1974, the beautiful village of Little Wittenham lies on the south bank of the River Thames a few miles north east of Didcot. With the exception of its 14th century tower, the parish church of St. Peter was mostly rebuilt in 1862.¹ Nevertheless, it still contains a very fine set of monumental figure brasses dating from the 15th and 16th centuries; a collection which deserves to be better known than seems to be the case at present. By a quirk of history, the earlier brasses – mostly to members of the Kidwelly family² – are all now to be found in the chancel; the later ones (principally commemorating scions of the Dunch family) are grouped together murally at the west end of the nave and in the base of the tower.³

Of all the brasses the very best, indeed one of the finest brasses surviving in the old county of Berkshire, is that commemorating Geoffrey Kidwelly esquire, a Welshman by birth, who had enjoyed an administrative career in the service of the House of York based principally in the West Country; but who eventually moved to the middle Thames Valley in 1461 when he was appointed as receiver of the Honours of Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire and Wallingford, Oxfordshire.⁴

Shortly before his death, which according to the inscription occurred on 13th March 1483, Geoffrey Kidwelly left very precise instructions in his will (made on 21st February of that same year) as to the form his memorial was to take: ‘...And a stone tumber Wyse be ordeynaid for me W(i)t(h) my pyct(u)re and my Armes And that by the discrecion of myn executors and this scriptur Miserer(e) mei deus sett upon(e) the tumber’.⁵

Regrettably the cost of the memorial is not specified, but in due course Geoffrey’s executors followed his wishes to the letter; and commissioned the splendid tomb and brass which still mark his resting place to this day. Monies were also left for: ‘a p(re)ste syngyng for my soule at litle Whitnam as long as £40 will endure’.

And Anne my wiff to fynd mete and drink to hym during all that tyme’.⁶ If she had any sense, presumably Anne duly sought out a priest who only pecked at his food!

Flanked by embattled pinnacles surmounted by iron prickets, the brass lies on the north side of the chancel and is set into a Purbeck marble slab placed on top of an altar tomb lying beneath a low depressed and cusped stone canopy, the soffit of which has a sloping vault. The iron prickets constitute a rare survival and were to enable candles to be placed above the tomb during liturgical observances, probably on the anniversary of Geoffrey’s death, although given its situation, it is likely that the tomb also served as an Easter Sepulchre.⁷

Above the arch of the canopy is a long stone scroll which once bore a painted inscription, although no record of its wording seems to have survived. At the rear of the tomb chest are quatrefoil panels containing shields now similarly void of any decoration; and which were also probably once painted with heraldic devices. On the front of the tomb are four panels each containing a stone shield bearing upon it the carved figure of a leaping wolf.

The brass itself is the product of a London workshop. Along with the contemporary memorial commemorating members of the Feld family at Standon in Hertfordshire, it ranks as an exceptionally high quality example of the products of the ‘F’ Series of brasses. Depicted in civilian dress, Master Kidwelly wears a chaperon and scarf. As Malcolm Norris observed, ‘his hair is neatly shaped to curve round behind his neck, a characteristic of this pattern’ which is repeated on similar examples found elsewhere.⁸ Shown fastened to his belt are a beautifully engraved large purse and rosary, the latter attached to a ‘tenner’ tucked into his belt and carried over his right hip.

As requested in Geoffrey’s will there is a prayer scroll bearing the words ‘Misere mei deus’ engraved in raised Black Letter script. Somewhat surprisingly, there is no religious imagery in the



*The Kidwelly brass at Little Wittenham
(from Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, Berkshire)*

form of a Trinity as perhaps might have been expected. It will be remembered that Geoffrey had also asked that his coat-of-arms be included in the composition. Two shields, now much defaced, flank the scroll each bearing *party pale wise the figure of a leaping wolf*.

Beneath the figure is a foot inscription rendered in Latin and beautifully executed, again in raised Black Letter script. Given the confined nature of its situation, the inscription is reversed so as to make it easily readable. Whilst most of the wording is what one would expect to find, there are a couple of surprises, so that it is worth setting it down in full:

Hic iacet Galfr(id)us Kidwelly armig(er) qui
obiit t(er)ciodecimo die mense(s) marcii A(nno)
d(o)m(ini) mill(esi)mo CCCC lxxxiii & Anno Regnii
Regis Ric (ard)i tercii post conquestii Anglie
p(ri)mo Cui(us) a(n)i(m)e p(ro)picietur deus Amen

The reference to the Norman Conquest is unusual, but what is more curious is the fact that Geoffrey is said to have died during the first year of the reign of Richard III. However Geoffrey died on 13th March 1483 while Edward IV was still very much king of England. Edward IV died on 9th April following, to be succeeded in turn by his young son Edward V subsequently deposed and imprisoned in the Tower along with his younger brother Richard, Duke of York. The boys' uncle Richard, Duke of Gloucester did not become king until 25th June of that same year, more than three months AFTER Geoffrey Kidwelly exited this transitory world. So why is reference made to Richard III as King of England?

The answer to this particular conundrum lies in the identity of two men: one appointed as supervisor of Geoffrey's will, Sir John Dwn (Donne) and the other as his principal executor, Morgan Kidwelly, the individual charged with commissioning the brass. In February 1476 Geoffrey and Morgan Kidwelly had been joint recipients of an annual rent of 100s. and a white robe of gentleman's livery granted them by the abbot and convent of St. Mary at Evesham.⁹

So just who was Morgan Kidwelly? A kinsman obviously; and the reasonable assumption would be that he was Geoffrey's son, but Geoffrey himself had no children by either of his two marriages. In fact Morgan was his nephew, the second son of his brother Morris.

But Morgan was not only Geoffrey's nephew; he was also a very important member of the affinity of Richard, Duke of Gloucester and had acted as the Duke's attorney since the 1470s. And when in 1483 Richard became King, Morgan Kidwelly would become his Attorney-General, a position he would

retain until September 1485.¹⁰ Given his close affinity to the new King, along with his social standing and wealth, Morgan Kidwelly was therefore well placed to ensure that his uncle was duly commemorated by one of the finest brasses money could then buy.

Had it not been for Morgan Kidwelly's close connection with Richard, Duke of Gloucester, there would have been no mention on the foot inscription of the man crowned King of England several months after his uncle's death. A King who then, at least, was thought deserving enough to merit mention upon the magnificent memorial brass laid down to commemorate Master Geoffrey Kidwelly of Little Wittenham.¹¹

Jonathan Moor

- 1 Prior to its re-building the church was dedicated to St. Faith and All Saints.
- 2 These commemorate respectively Geoffrey's father David Kidwelly who died in 1454 and who had served as a minor administrative official in the employ of the House of Lancaster as porter of the palace to Henry VI; and Cecily Kidwelly (who died in 1472) and was Geoffrey's first wife. Despite his father having served the House of Lancaster (which probably arose through some connection with Edmund and Jasper Tudor) his son Geoffrey would, in turn, serve the House of York with equal loyalty.
- 3 When the old church was demolished, some of the brasses and memorials from the former south chapel were put into store

pending the erection of the new church. However, it is said that some of the brass inscriptions were thrown into a nearby pond from which they were later recovered!

- 4 *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 1461-67, Edward IV, p.9.
- 5 PRO, PROB 11/7, ff.68-9.
- 6 *ibid.*
- 7 There is a good illustration of Geoffrey Kidwelly's tomb in fig.61 on p.262 of Nigel Saul's new book *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages: History and Representation* (Oxford University Press), 2009). The brass itself is admirably illustrated in William Lack, H. Martin Stuchfield and Philip Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Berkshire* (London, 1993), p.173.
- 8 Malcolm Norris, *Monumental Brasses, The Memorials I* (London, 1977), p.141.
- 9 *Calendar of Close Rolls 1476-85*, Edward IV, Edward V and Richard III, p.36.
- 10 It is possible that Morgan Kidwelly came to the notice of Richard, Duke of Gloucester whilst the Duke had tenure of the lands of the Herbert family during the 1470s. See Rosemary Horrox, *Richard III: a Study of Service* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp.86-7. Morris Kidwelly, Morgan's father, had served as receiver of Kidwelly (the town from whence the family originated) for Edward IV, *ibid.*, p.210. The Donnes of Kidwelly were a distinguished Welsh family and Sir John a notable figure in the Yorkist party. It was he who commissioned the famous Donne Triptych, painted by Hans Memling, now in the National Gallery.
- 11 The appointment of Geoffrey to serve as collector of customs' duties in the town of Southampton (an office which he had held several times before) and made on 24th May 1483 must obviously refer to his nephew (the eldest son of his brother Morris) who shared the same name as his uncle. *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1476-1485*, Edward IV, Edward V and Richard III, p.352. Even so, it was apparently not until 16th July 1484 that a writ of *diem clausit extremum* was issued to the Escheator of Oxfordshire and Berkshire to enquire into the death of Geoffrey Kidwelly. *Calendar of Fine Rolls 1471-85*.

Review

A Series of Monumental Brasses, Indents and Incised Slabs from the 13th to the 20th Century. Editors **William Lack and Philip Whittemore.** Vol 2, Part 5, September 2009. (Lynton Pubns, Lynton House, 16 Colne Road, Winchmore Hill, London N21 2JD. £11.50 (incl. postage). ISBN 978-0-9536217-9-8). vi, 8 pages of notes (numbered 39-46); 10 pages of plates (numbered XLI-L); refs. Page size 420 x 279 mm. Stiff paper covers.

This is the fifth and last part of Volume 2 (comprising 50 numbered plates in all) of this well-established series. It includes in the prelims a title pages; list of subscribers to the volume; contents list to each part of Vol. 2; Chronological Index and Topographical Index to Vol.2. As in previous parts, some of the accompanying notes are by the Editors and others by M.B.S. members. Several in this issue have been illustrated before, but never at this scale.

Plate XLI is of the fine but mutilated London A brass of wealthy merchant and privateer John Hauley II (d.1408) and his two wives (LSW.I, St. Saviour, Dartmouth, Devon). John is shown in armour and holds the hand of his first wife Joan; little or nothing is known about his second wife Alice. Despite having shields (now lost), it is doubtful if the Hauleys were officially armigerous. The notes by David Cook are specifically 'confined to amendment and re-emphasis' to avoid repetition of his own and other publications.

Plate XLII has a small inset with a modern rubbing of the slab and indent of the brass of Henry Lesyngham, d.1458, and his wife Emme at Crostwight, Norfolk. This accompanies a larger outline rubbing of the indents, with an early 19th century graphite rubbing, by Rev. Thomas Talbot, of the female figure and sinister side of the foot inscription inserted. Despite two such rubbings

being in the Society of Antiquaries of London, the brass is not mentioned by Mill Stephenson. The brass is of Norwich I style and in the 1730s the male effigy and all the foot inscription remained, but Anthony Norris did not mention the female effigy. No record survives of the arms on the shield or the small inscription above the figures. Notes and rubbings by Derrick Chivers.

An unusual composition is illustrated in Plate XLIII, showing two identical London B style male civilians, with individual foot inscriptions, on the same slab. Below them are three separate small figures of one male and two females, but with the (?name) labels below them missing. One of two shields is also missing. The brass, of Thomas Harcourt (d.1460) and a close relative Nicholas Atherton (d.1454), lies in the normally locked Harcourt Chapel at Stanton Harcourt, Oxfordshire (M.S.I). Notes and rubbing by Jerome Bertram.

Plates XLIV – XLVI are all later examples, two with effigies in armour (c.1570 and 1589), one civilian (1618), all with their respective spouses and family. Plate XLIV is the brass of Sir William Molineaux and his two wives (M.S.II, Sefton, Lancashire, 1548), showing him in somewhat mixed armour (dating from c.35 years earlier). His figure and the foot inscription are palimpsest, the reverses of which are shown in the notes (figs.33-4, p.41). Relaid incorrectly in the 19th century, the above Plate shows the original layout with missing pieces ‘restored’ from old rubbings in the Society of Antiquaries. One group of children from this brass is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (illus from a ‘reverse’ rubbing, fig.32, p.41). Notes by the Editors.

Another Lancashire brass is illustrated in Plate XLVI, with notes by John Roberts. M.S.III, 1618, at Middleton shows Richard Assheton in civilian clothes and holding a skull in his right hand, his wife Mary (née Venables) in hat, their six sons (one in swaddling clothes) and two daughters, plus two shields and a Latin inscription. All are on separate plates, three with rounded tops. There is also a very small illustration in the notes of Mary’s parents’ brass at Middlewich, Cheshire (LSW.I, 1591). Plate XLV is the Southwark style brass of John Pettie (M.S.II, Stoke Talmage, Oxfordshire, 1589), showing him in armour, turning towards his wife Elizabeth, with Latin foot inscription and four shields. Now mural, it is a good example of this workshop’s output, also suggestive of this family’s rise from ‘yeoman’s cottage to a coronet’ in three generations. Notes by Jerome Bertram.

The remaining four plates illustrate Victorian and modern brasses and include Plate XLVII which is thought to be one of A.W.N. Pugin’s earliest brasses. The John Hardman archives show it was made about nine months before that of Bishop Milner’s at Oscott, Warwickshire. Whilst having no figures, the brass of Rev. Samuel Hopkinson (d.1841) and his wife Elizabeth (d.1838) at Hacconby, Lincolnshire is based on a medieval design so favoured by Pugin, and also used in at least three other churches. Notes by David Cook and Philip Whittemore.

At Llandeilo, Carmarthanshire, Wales is a mural figure brass of Rev. John Griffiths (d.1878 posuit). It was not recorded in *Welsh Monumental Brasses* (Lewis, 1974), but is in the recently published volume on the county in the *Buildings of Wales* series (2006). Illustrated as Plate XLVIII, this fine brass, with figure in clerical robes, holding a book whilst in the act of blessing, standing on a tiled step under a canopy and with marginal inscription around, is unsigned. [According to notes about the church on the internet, the memorial was made by Hardman’s and erected in 1883. Ed.]. Illustrated from a rubbing, with mainly biographical notes, by Patrick Farman and Peter Hacker.

Another fine, but better known clerical brass is illustrated in Plate L in memory of Rev. B.D.D. Shaw (d.1922) in the Church of the Annunciation, Bryanston Street, London. With notes by Ven. David Meara and rubbing by Derrick Chivers, the engraver/firm that made the brass remains unknown. From a surviving faculty in the Guildhall Library, London it is known that the designer was the architect of the rebuilt church, Walter Tapper, and the brass was laid down in 1926.

Finally, Plate XLIX consists of three unconnected brasses, all of them now lost. Plate (a) is that of Robert Braybrooke, Bishop of London (d.1404), formerly in Old St. Paul’s Cathedral. Illustrated from Hollar’s engraving, it was not recorded by Stow, only by Weever and Dugdale. In his notes (pp.44-5), Christian Steer highlights the fact that, inexplicably, the brasses of several canons of the cathedral were generally much more elaborate than those of their bishops. Plate (b) shows a curious rectangular brass plate of 19th century date, with a $\frac{3}{4}$ length figure in armour of mixed styles, under a rounded arch, scroll over his head and short foot inscription. Whether the blazons on the two shields are real or imaginary is not clear. Details are given of the plate’s sale in 1913 (twice) and again in 1927, since when

its whereabouts is unknown. One is tempted to conclude this was one of a number of 'counterfeit brasses', of which the final plate (c) appears to be another example. This shows a well-engraved, bareheaded man in early 16th century armour, turned sideways and wearing a sword and spurs. In 1982 it was in the possession of Sir George Wade of Brand Hall, Shropshire, but its present whereabouts is unknown. Perhaps not surprisingly, it has no rivet holes so seems

unlikely to be a genuine memorial brass. It is almost identical to that of Sir Richard Assheton, d.1507 (M.S.I, Middleton, Lancashire) [and I note, to the fake 'brass' of Oliver Duerden, in St. Chad's, Rochdale, illustrated in *M.B.S. Trans.*, X, pt.4 (Dec. 1966), p.291 – I rest my case!]. Only the ground area beneath the feet is different on the present example.

Richard Busby

Notes on Books & Articles

Pernille Richards. *'Medieval Brasses in St. Mary Magdalene Church in Cobham'*, *Kent Archaeological Society Newsletter*, No. 82 (Autumn 2009), p.10. The Cobham brasses and the Brooke tomb received various restorations during the 19th century, mainly at the cost of the Brooke family. During the 1830s and early 1840s the work was overseen by Charles Spence (1779-1869, an Admiralty Pay Office Clerk, who in 1844 gave a talk on brasses, including Cobham, at the Devonport Mechanics Institute) and publisher and antiquary John Gough Nichols (1806-73). In the 1860s J.G. Waller helped with the second phase of restoration, and credited Spence with being the first to gather the fragments of Brooke tomb. As well as taking an active interest in the restoration, Spence also acted as intermediary between Nichols, Waller, architect George Hammerton and F.C. Brooke. The details of the restoration is chronicled in a series of 31 letters (mainly) from Spence to Nichols between 1840 and 1866 and have been found in archive Box 31 at Cobham church. In the early letters Spence urges Nichols to publish his researches on the Cobham brasses, but it never materialised, possibly due to 'scholarly disagreements between J.G. Waller and F.C. Brooke on one side and John Gough Nichols on the other (as indicated by letters in Cobham Box 17). The author of this short and interesting article, believes these letters will be of interest to the on-going Nichols Archive Project at the University of Leicester. There is one illustration of a 'Memorandum' from Hammerton, dated 13th February 1841, acknowledging receipt of 'The Sum of Five Pounds, on account, for the repairs of the tomb and brasses in the Chancel of Cobham Church Kent.' (L.S.)

From Belgian publisher Brepols comes news of a forthcoming book by **Vincent Debais** *Lessages*

de Pierre: La lecture des Inscriptions dans la Communication Médiévale (XIIIe-XIVe Siècles). Approximately 450 pages long, it has 149 b/w illustrations, and is Volume 17 in the 'Culture et Société Médiévales' series. The author is at the University of Poitiers and is associated with the major project 'Corpus des inscriptions de la France médiévale'. The book appears to be an overview of inscriptional material, and an illustration accompanying the publisher's blurb is of an unidentified incised slab. (D.G.)

Another earlier book from the same publisher, which may be of interest to M.B.S. members, is **Catherine Oakes.** *Ora Pro Nobis: the Virgin Mary as Intercessor in Medieval Art and Devotion*. (Brepols. £80.00. 2008). This will be reviewed in the next *Bulletin*. (H.A.)

A. Pollard & D. Newton (Eds.). *Newcastle and Gateshead before 1700*. (Phillimore & Co. £25.00. Oct 2009. ISBN 9781860775796). 386 pages; many illus; refs; hdbk. A wide-ranging collection of essays by specialist contributors who bring together recent archaeological and historical research. The essays on the medieval period include many references to the very difficult enefactions, life and work of the Thornton family, including the merchant Roger Thornton (d.1429), whose fine Flemish-style brass can be seen in All Saints church, Newcastle upon Tyne (M.S.I. 1411), showing him and his wife under a double canopy and with their fourteen children below (see illus., Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Craft* (1978), fig.143).

I am grateful to Hubert Allen, David Griffith and Les Smith for information or copy received.

Richard Busby