

Monumental Brass Society

JUNE 2023



BULLETIN 153

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Hon. Treasurer's notice

On 1st January all subscriptions for 2023 became due. Please send £25.00 (associate/student £12.50, family £35.00) to the Hon. Treasurer, Robert Kinsey, 4 Pictor Close, Corsham, Wiltshire SN13 9XH. Payment can be made using the *PayPal* system via mbs_brasses@yahoo.com or 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. 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 for U.S. \$45.00 to Shirley Mattox at 1313 Jackson Street, Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901, U.S.A.

Editorial

Welcome to my third *Bulletin* as guest editor. Once again I have enjoyed hearing from the Society's many knowledgeable and loyal members about new work on brasses. This issue contains several pieces of new research, among which one of my favourites is the discovery of an indent at the church of Mundon in Essex. Mundon church is now beautifully looked after by the Friends of Friendless Churches, but in 1971 when I visited it as a young teenager, from the vicarage of a parish nearby, it was derelict and vandalised, a stark demonstration of what could happen when things went wrong. I have never forgotten how sad it looked, and how not just fixtures, fittings and monuments but whole churches are at risk if the parish community loses heart.

Turning to other matters, the M.B.S. is guided by its elected Council. At present there are unfilled vacancies on the Council, and I urge any members with time to spare and an interest in brasses to volunteer to be elected to Council for a three-year term. It is an excellent way to learn about the inner workings of the Society, quite apart from which, any society such as ours needs a supply of 'new blood' if it is to develop and prosper in the future. Council meets three times a year, in February, May and October, and most meetings (but not all) now take place virtually. This makes attendance easier as well as avoiding the cost of room hire. Anyone who is interested in being elected should contact Penny Williams, the Hon. Secretary, in the first instance.

Finally, the supply of articles for the 2024 *Transactions* is still somewhat thin. David Lepine would welcome new material.

Stephen Freeth

Personalialia

It is with deep regret that we report the death of **Paul Custerson** who had been member of the Society since 1975.

Cover: Royal Arms (France quartering England) from the brass to Richard Burton, chief cook to the king, 1443, and w. Agnes, at Twickenham, Middlesex, to commemorate the Coronation of Charles III and Camilla that took place on 6th May 2023 at Westminster Abbey. Only eleven surviving medieval brasses worldwide contain representations of the Royal Arms. Can any member challenge this statement?

(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

Diary of events

Saturday, 8th July 2023

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ARDINGLY, WEST SUSSEX

The formal business of the Annual General Meeting will be held in St. Peter's church, Ardingly at 11.00a.m. The afternoon meeting, which is free, with no booking required, will commence at 2.00p.m. **Heather Warne** will speak on *Landscape, manors and families in early Ardingly*, followed by **Robert Hutchinson** on *The Wakehurst and Culpeper brasses*. We will then have tea, and an opportunity to view the brasses and the church. A third lecture by **Challe Hudson** on *The softer materials of the memorials: Imagining the colours and textures remembered in brass and stone* will conclude the meeting. We very much hope that we will be joined that day by members of Ardingly Historical Society.

The postcode for satellite navigation is RH17 6UR. Car parking should be available a few hundred yards from the church on land belonging to the South of England Showground, opposite the old village school, St. Peter's Centre. Takeaway snacks can be bought at Fellows Bakery, and there is a café on the corner next to the Ardingly Inn. The Gardeners Arms serves food.

The nearest station is Haywards Heath (served from London: Victoria in approximately 48 minutes) which is 4 miles distant representing an approximate journey of 10 minutes by taxi. Please contact Penny Williams, Hon. Secretary (email: penny7441@hotmail.com) if you wish to share a taxi or are travelling by car and are prepared to pick someone up.

Tuesday, 12th September 2023

GENERAL MEETING

BRITISH MUSEUM

Our September meeting will be a new venture, a weekday meeting. We will go behind the scenes at the British Museum (Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG) to view its collection of brasses, something we last did in June 1997, with the papers published in the 2000-2001 *Transactions*. There will be two duplicate sessions, one from 11.00a.m.-1.00p.m., and the other from 2.00-4.00p.m. Members are requested to choose one session or the other, but not both.

Numbers for each session are strictly limited to fifteen, because of the size of the room. Members

are therefore required to book in advance (one booking per member, please). You should book your place by emailing our member Matthew Sillence, admin@matthewsillence.org, who will also maintain a waiting list. First come, first served. Please book your place no later than 5th August 2023.

Refreshments will not be provided. These should be obtained before or after your chosen session. **Please only book a place if you are sure of attending**, so as not to disappoint others.

Saturday, 28th October 2023 (provisional date)

GENERAL MEETING

VIRTUAL

This will be a virtual General Meeting. The date is still to be finalised, but we already have two speakers. Nigel Saul has offered to reprise his recent talk at St. Mary's Warwick on the tombs and brasses of the Beauchamps and their friends and allies. His provisional title is *Family and Retinue: the medieval tombs and brasses of St. Mary's, Warwick*. Nicholas Rogers will reprise his recent talk at the Haverstock Hill meeting on *Rosaries on Brasses*.

Further details will be announced in due course.

April 2024

GENERAL MEETING

HEREFORD CATHEDRAL?

We hope to visit Hereford Cathedral on a date to be agreed with the cathedral authorities. This visit could include the Chained Library and Mappa Mundi. The Cathedral contains a great many brasses or remains of brasses, which were described in detail in the Society's booklet published in 2005 (Peter Heseltine and H. Martin Stuchfield, *The Monumental Brasses of Hereford Cathedral* (M.B.S., 2005)).

July 2024

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Venue and date to be decided.

Saturday, 14th September 2024

STUDY DAY

ST. ALBANS CATHEDRAL

The Society has booked a meeting room at the Cathedral and facilities for 50 members from 9.00a.m.-4.30p.m. More details will follow in due course.



*Fig 1. The priory church of Our Lady of the Rosary and St. Dominic, Southampton Road, Haverstock Hill, looking east.
(photo: © Challe Hudson)*

General Meeting

Haverstock Hill, London NW5 – 29th April 2023

On 29th April 2023 twenty-two members and friends assembled at the Dominican priory church of Our Lady of the Rosary and St. Dominic, Southampton Road, London NW5 4LB, also known as St. Dominic's Priory, Haverstock Hill.

We first assembled in Blackfriars Hall, next to the church, where our President, Ven. David Meara, gave a brief history of the church and its brasses. An important aspect of Roman Catholic expansion during the 19th century was the revival of monasticism. The English Congregation of Dominicans re-established themselves in 1850 at Woodchester in Gloucestershire. This became their mother house, and in 1861 Cardinal Wiseman invited them to establish a church in the London suburbs. They purchased the site on Haverstock Hill.

Because of shortage of funds, the buildings were only completed between 1874 and 1883 to the designs of Charles Alban Buckler (1824-1905), son of the antiquarian artist John Chessell Buckler (1793-1894). C.A. Buckler was a writer, architect, and Surrey Herald Extraordinary. In 1844 he converted to Catholicism, and went on to design a number of Catholic churches as well as the rebuilding of Arundel Castle. At Haverstock Hill he created one of the largest and most imposing Catholic churches in London, 299 feet long, with an unbroken roofline and no tower (Fig.1). The nave has eight bays, and an outer ring of fourteen gabled chapels which contain many of the tombs and monuments. Each chapel altar includes a sculptural altarpiece with scenes from the life of Christ, the first, the Annunciation, given by Buckler himself.

The church has three fine brasses by Hardman & Co. A chapel on the south side with a huge stone monument to the Perry and Reddin families includes two mural brasses to Emma Perry (d.1903) and her husband Joseph (d.1917). Emma Perry's brass (Fig.2) consists of a figure of St. Emma in flowing robes with wimple, holding a pastoral staff, with attendant angels holding a crown above her head, and with two shields with coloured enamel. Joseph Perry's brass (Fig.3) is of exactly the same

design, with St. Joseph in flowing robes, holding a staff and a set square, representing his profession as a carpenter.

The third fine brass in the church is for Fr. Austin Mary Rooke, O.P. (d.1901) at the west end.



Fig.2. Emma Perry, d.1903, Haverstock Hill, London.
(photo: © Challe Hudson)

This was illustrated in the last *Bulletin*. Seton Paterson (Austin Mary) Rooke, a collateral descendant of Admiral Sir George Rooke who captured Gibraltar, graduated from Oxford in 1847. He first entered the ministry of the Church of England, serving as a curate at St. Saviour's Leeds. His ritualistic tendencies were already so pronounced that at first the Bishop of Ripon refused to license him. Following the reception of John Henry Newman into the Roman Catholic Church in 1845, Rooke was received into the Catholic Church in April 1851 by Newman himself. After Woodchester and a spell among the secular clergy, he was on 5th September 1863 appointed parish priest of the Dominican mission at Kentish Town, from where he superintended the



Fig.3. Joseph Perry, d.1917, Haverstock Hill, London.
(photo: © Challe Hudson)

building of the new priory in Southampton Road, and the foundations for the new church. He was made first prior of the new house on 28th December 1868. His fine brass shows him in Dominican habit, holding his rosary beads, under a single canopy with buttresses, St. Dominic (with star and lily) and St. Augustine, two shields, and representations of rooks in the super-canopy. A guide book of c.1970 states that the brass was 'an excellent portrait likeness'.

Fr. Lawrence Lew, O.P., Prior of St. Dominic's, then conducted us around the church building. This was huge and impressive. As well as the brasses, and the fine stone monument with brass inscription to Charles Alban Buckler and his wife, it contains elaborate carving, fine stained glass in medieval style, and a huge stone altar surround, recently restored at great cost. At the west end is a medieval pillar from the Blackfriars in the City of London.

Our final speaker was our Vice-President Nicholas Rogers, on *Rosaries on Brasses*. He outlined the history of the rosary, known in the 13th and 14th centuries as a paternoster, and by the 16th century as a pair of beads. The earliest known representation of the rosary on an English monument is the effigy at Much Marcle, Herefordshire, of Blanche Mortimer (d.1347). The earliest occurrence on an English brass is at St. Stephen's, Norwich, of c.1405-10. Here the crippled bedesmen at the feet of a lady carry rosaries, but the brass was recycled in 1546 for a new owner, Eel Buttry, and whom the brass commemorated originally is unknown. Rosaries could be made of all sorts of materials from the humblest to the richest. An especially fine survival is the Langdale Rosary of c.1490 at the V&A, made of gold and enamelled in black.

Nicholas' talk was detailed, authoritative and comprehensive, and I hope it may be published in our *Transactions* in due course.

The meeting was accompanied by an excellent tea, provided by Caroline Metcalfe and other helpers. We owe them all our thanks, along with Nicholas Rogers for organising this most interesting meeting in a church which I for one had never even heard of, let alone visited.

Stephen Freeth

The brass to Philippa de Beauchamp, d.1383, at Necton, Norfolk

Laura Richmond's ground-breaking survey of brasses to late medieval vowesses in the 2022 *Transactions* observed that, 'it is not possible to identify vowesses from their brasses without additional evidence unless the inscription on the brass alludes to a vow.'¹ This paper addresses one such brass, that to Philippa de Beauchamp at Necton, Norfolk. She has mostly hitherto been described as a widow, but documentary evidence shows that she was a vowess. Her brass is some fifty years before the earliest example cited by Richmond, who concentrated on examples dating from the 15th and 16th centuries in southern England.

All Saints' church, Necton, has a total of six brasses, mostly effigial, ranging in date from 1372 to 1596. They have been unavailable for viewing for many years, being covered by permanently fitted carpet. Fortunately Martin Stuchfield rubbed Philippa's brass in 1973 when it was still exposed to view (Fig.1). This London B brass set in Purbeck marble is in the north chapel dedicated to St. Katherine, now used as a meeting room. This was not its original location. In 1926 Mill Stephenson recorded it as being in the nave, and it was in the chancel according to Haines's list of 1860.

Philippa's figure is 1090 mm tall, with a pair of dogs at her feet. She is garbed in what is usually described as widow's weeds. Only the figure and two shields now survive, but more is known from antiquarian evidence. The earliest known rubbings are in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, amongst the papers of Richard Gough (1735-1809).² He did not illustrate this brass in his *Sepulchral Monuments of Great Britain* but described it in detail, providing some biographical information regarding Philippa, including that on the death of her husband she took the vow of chastity.³

According to Rev. C.G.R. Birch, Necton's brasses were for many years stored at Necton Hall, the seat of R. Harvey Mason, Esq., but were relaid by Hardmans of Birmingham in 1894 in their original positions. At that time all that remained of

Philippa's brass was the effigy and two shields, but an organ platform meant that the latter could not be placed in their original indents.⁴ The etching by John Sell Cotman dated 1815 shows the brass in a more complete form (Fig.2).⁵ There were originally three shields. Over Philippa's head were the arms of Beauchamp, *Gules a fess between 6 cross-crosslets or, with a label of three points argent* impaling *Gules, seven mascles or* (Lord Ferrers of Groby). To the right side was a shield with Beauchamp, and to the left another of Ferrers. A marginal inscription completed the composition.

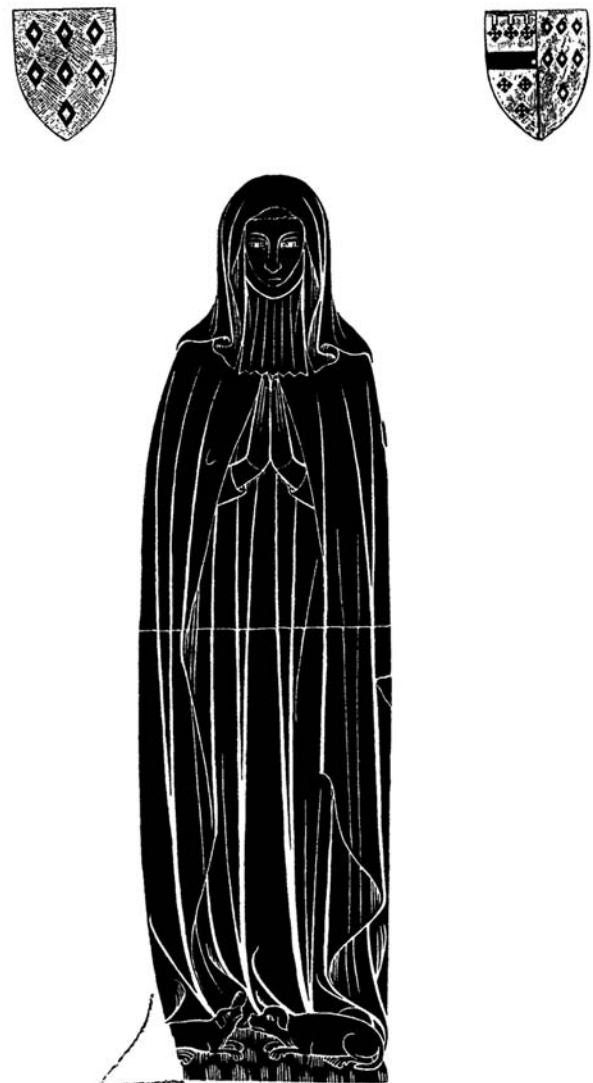


Fig.1. Philippa de Beauchamp, d.1383, Necton, Norfolk (M.S.II).
(rubbing: © Martin Stuchfield)

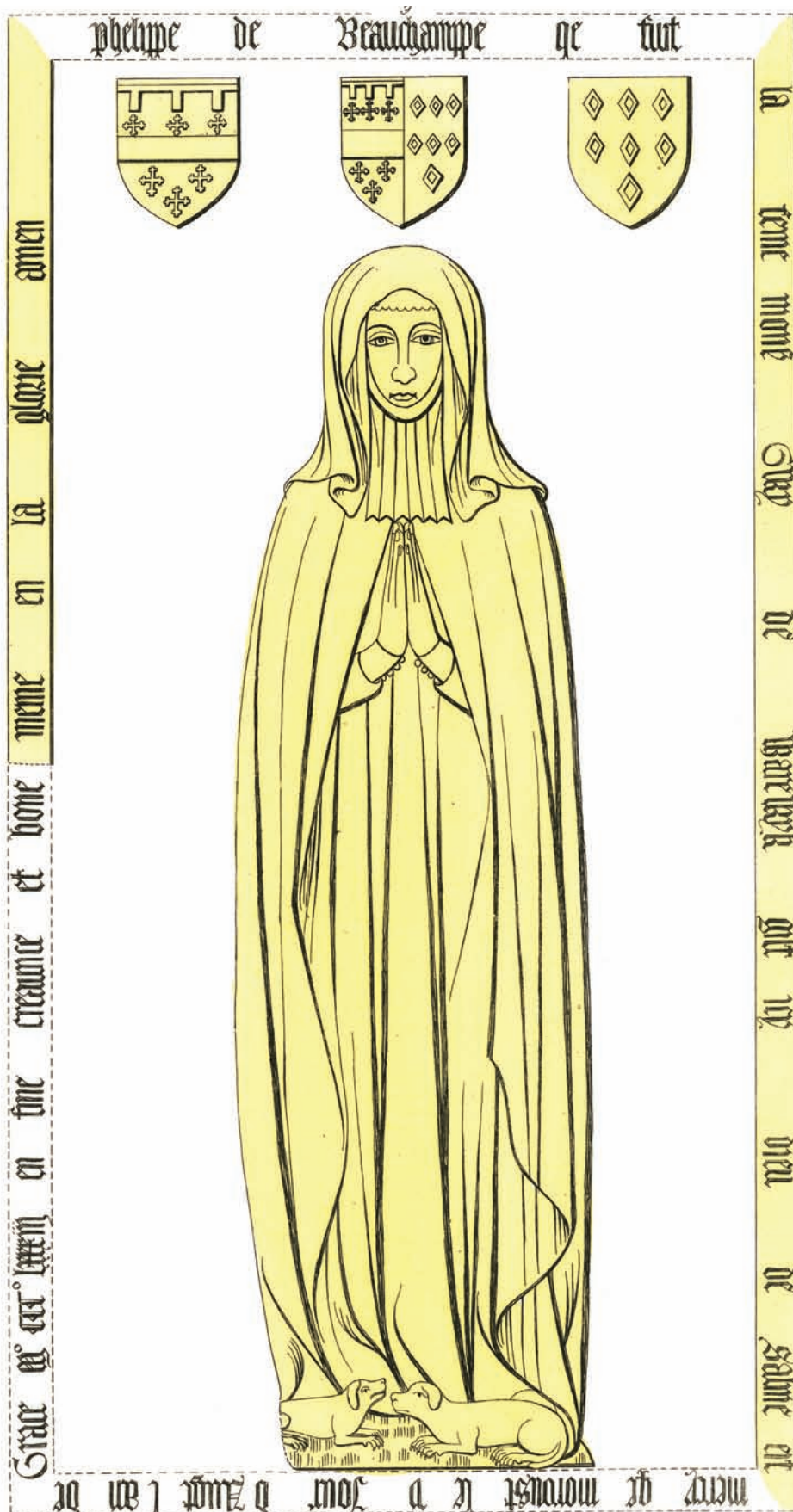


Fig.2. Philippa de Beauchamp, d.1383, Necton, Norfolk (M.S.II).
 (Engravings of the Most Remarkable of the Sepulchral Brasses of Norfolk, by John Sell Cotman (1st edn, 1819), pl.9)

Lady Philippa (born c.1337) was the daughter of Henry, 2nd Lord Ferrers of Groby. Before 1353 she married the widower Guy de Beauchamp, eldest son of Thomas de Beauchamp, 11th Earl of Warwick. From his first wife, Alice, Guy had inherited Necton and Little Cressingham, with the advowsons of the monastic houses of Shouldham and Westacre and of Necton church, all in Norfolk.⁶ He was knighted with his brother Thomas in July 1355, when Edward III was *en route* to invade France. A military commander in the king's army in France, he was mortally injured in a freak hailstorm during the siege of Chartres on 13th April 1360. He died at Vendôme, Loir-et-Cher, on 28th April and was buried there. He and Philippa had two daughters, Katharine and Elizabeth.

Philippa was then about twenty-three and still of childbearing age, but chose not to remarry, instead making her solemn vow of chastity on 9th August 1360 in the college church of Warwick before the Bishop of Worcester, Reginald Bryan.⁷ She subsequently took up residence at Shouldham Priory, a Gilbertine house close to Necton. She maintained an active interest in Necton church, appointing clergy to the benefice in 1368 and 1371.

In 1386 the priory paid 100s. for a licence in mortmain to hold lands in Shouldham 'for celebrating yearly in their priory church the obits of Guy de Beauchamp, knight, and Philippa his wife, deceased, and of Katharine their daughter, also resident at Shouldham, when she departed this life.'⁸ In his will dated 26th September 1359 Sir Guy had requested that Necton church should be appropriated to Shouldham Priory for the maintenance of his two daughters during their lives; and from and after their decease that the house of Shouldham should be obliged to find a priest to celebrate divine service daily for the souls of his father and mother, of himself and his wife, of his said two daughters, and of all the faithful departed. For some reason the church was never appropriated to the priory, but Philippa was nonetheless buried at Necton.

Although Philippa spent 23 years as a vowess, she is normally described in the literature about her brass as a widow.⁹ There is no ring, as shown on most known vowesses' brasses. The inscription also makes no mention of her being a vowess, merely

referring to her as Sir Guy's wife. Cotman shows it as reading *Phelippe de Beauchampe qe fuit / la feme mons' Gwy de Warewyk gist icy dieu de salme eit / mercy qe moroust le v Jour d Augt l an de / Grace M^o CCC^o lxxxij en fine creaunce et bone meme en la glorie amen.* ('Philippa de Beauchamp who was the wife of Sir Guy de Warwick lies here, God have mercy on her soul, who died the 5th day of August the year of grace 1383 in sincere faith and good remembrance (abiding) in glory. Amen.').¹⁰

Philippa bore no sons, so presumably a more distant male Beauchamp relative commissioned the brass. Perhaps he was more concerned to record her marital status and Beauchamp connections than her religious status. The decision might have been prompted by earlier members of the family having been buried here. In the east window of the south aisle were the arms of Beauchamp, *Gules a fess between six cross crosslets or*, a simpler version of the arms shown on the brass.

For help and advice I am grateful to Simon Cotton, Theresa Palfrey, Laura Richmond, Nicholas Rogers, Martin Stuchfield and Frank Wheaton.

Sally Badham

- 1 Laura M. Richmond, 'A Survey of Monumental Brasses of Late Medieval Vowesses', *M.B.S. Trans.*, XXIII (2002), pp.45-68, at p.46.
- 2 Sally Badham, 'Richard Gough's papers relating to Monumental Brasses in the Bodleian Library, Oxford', *M.B.S. Trans.*, XIV (1991), pp.467-513. There are two partial rubbings of the brass in Gough Maps 225: of the lady and a shield (at f.316); and of the lady and two strips of the marginal inscription, now lost (at f.324).
- 3 Richard Gough, *Sepulchral Monuments of Great Britain* (3 vols., London, 1786-96), I, p.147.
- 4 Rev. C.G.R. Birch, 'On certain brasses at Necton and Great Cressingham', *Norfolk Arch.*, XII (3) (1895), pp.298-303, at p.298. Birch's illustration swaps the positions of the two surviving shields and brings them closer to the figure.
- 5 John Sell Cotman, *Engravings of the Most Remarkable of the Sepulchral Brasses of Norfolk* (1st edn., 1819, London and Norwich), pl.9.
- 6 Francis Blomefield, 'Necton', in *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, VI (London, 1807), pp.45-56.
- 7 Sir William Dugdale, *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (London, 1656), pp.319-20.
- 8 *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Ric. II*, pt.i, m.23.
- 9 There are two exceptions. Edmund Farrer, *A List of Monumental Brasses Remaining in the County of Norfolk* (Norwich, 1890), pp.57-8, recorded that she was in a nun's mantle and widow's barbe and that she took a vow of chastity. (Regrettably subsequent writers overlooked this, including the most influential, Mill Stephenson.) She is also described as 'in the dress of a widow vowed to a religious life' in Arthur Mee, *The King's England: Norfolk* (2nd edn, 1972), p.175.
- 10 Nicholas Rogers provided the translation. He observed that the unshaded sections of the fillet shown in the etching were presumably gone by Cotman's time, and reconstructed in the engraving from earlier transcriptions.



*Fig.1. Newly discovered indent at Mundon showing lady, inscription, four sons, three daughters and shield, c.1525.
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)*

The discovery of a brass indent at Mundon, Essex

The former parish church dedicated to St. Mary at Mundon, Essex, a few miles south-east of Maldon, stands in an isolated position near the farm called Mundon Hall. The farmhouse is c.1760, with later extensions, but there are fragmentary remains of a large medieval moated site encompassing both the Hall and the church.¹ The church was damaged by a V2 rocket in 1943, during World War II, and thereafter gradually became derelict. Stephen Freeth visited it in 1971 and Martin Stuchfield in 1975 when it was in a terrible state, overgrown, full of pigeons and badly vandalised. In 1975 the church was vested with the Friends of Friendless Churches.

The church is essentially 14th-century and Tudor, with fragmentary medieval wall paintings and some fine Tudor structural timber. There is also a complete set of late-Georgian box pews. When William Holman visited the church in c.1710 he saw three slabs which had contained brasses, but sadly he gave no details of either the slabs or their location in the church.² One slab is still visible in the north porch (LSW.1). This is early 16th century, for a man in civil dress and two wives, with foot inscription and two groups of children below.³ It may be in its original position and may commemorate a porch burial (the feet of the figures are pointing to the east), but this is unlikely for two reasons. First, Holman is probably more likely to have noticed slabs which were lying close together (such as in a line along the nave aisle) than scattered about; second, the date of the north porch is unclear. The Royal Commission dated it to the early 16th century, but the Friends of Friendless Churches claim it was only built c.1600.⁴

The chancel was rebuilt in the 18th century, and the box pews were installed in the early 19th century. The present tiled floor of the nave and chancel was probably installed at the same time as the box pews. This was probably when this indent was moved from the interior to the north porch.

In June 2022 damp-proofing work on the south side of the chancel, either side of the Victorian altar rails, uncovered the remains of a second indent, also of early 16th century date but badly broken, lying alongside the wall (Figs.1 & 2).

It shows the figure of a lady, full face, c.1525 (605 x c.260 mm), a foot inscription (130 x 550 mm), 4 sons (125-150 x c.150 mm), 3 daughters (c.135-c.140 x 110 mm) and a shield (c.160 x c.130 mm), and appears to be from the London G workshop. It presumably commemorated a wealthy widow. The foot of the slab is pointing east, but we cannot know if this is its original position. The slab has since been reburied, but beneath a protective layer. It is hoped that it will be possible for the slab to be exhumed, conserved and affixed to the south chancel wall.

The outline of the lady's figure, especially the wide head-dress, has similarities with later brasses of the 'Suffolk' series, but the slab (1505-1655 x 685 mm; thickness 90 mm) appears to be Purbeck marble. Suffolk series brasses more commonly have slabs of other stone.⁵

This newly-discovered slab is most likely to have been used as a convenient base for the 18th-century flooring in this part of the chancel. In other words, it was moved from its original location and recycled as hardcore. If so, the third and last indent seen by Holman may also have been recycled in the same way. It may still be hidden nearby, perhaps alongside the opposite (north) wall of the chancel.

Why did a small and out-of-the-way church in a rural backwater have three brasses? No research has yet been attempted in wills and other documents at the Essex Record Office, but it is clear that Mundon in the early 16th century contained wealthy parishioners. The PCC series of wills on The National Archives' website includes two for Mundon between 1475 and 1550, for John Garington, 1518, and Thomas Koker, 1524/5, both of whom wished to be buried in the churchyard.⁶ Garington lived at Mundon Hall, and though it was leasehold, he lived there in some style. His will mentions painted cloths in the house; the solar at the west end of the hall where he and his wife used to lie, with the 'maiden's chamber' belonging to it; the brewhouse and bakehouse; the mill; and a silver salt, parcel gilt, which his wife had made herself. Koker lived elsewhere in the parish, but both he and Garington left livestock (sheep) to the church, and endowed temporary



Fig.2. Location of newly discovered indent in the south-east corner of the chancel of Mundon church.
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

chantries for their souls. Interestingly, at about the same time Mundon church had two vicars with the same surnames: James Garrington from 1493, and Roger Coker from 1529/30.⁷ Were these younger brothers, and were the Garringtons and Cokers all from the same wider family?

Neither of the wills directly identifies those commemorated by the three indents, but they do reveal how the landscape in this somewhat empty corner of Essex has changed. Mundon was prosperous in the late Middle Ages, with a fine Hall and inhabitants who could afford brass memorials.

This Grade I-listed church reopened in September 2022 following eight months of structural works involving underpinning and piling. A new drainage system including rainwater goods, localised repointing, and conservation of the wall-paintings was also completed at a cost of almost £345,000. The Friends of Friendless

Churches were awarded a grant of £275,551 towards the work from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund that was administered by Historic England. The Friends website contains a full description of the church building together with an excellent online 3-D tour of the exterior and interior.

Stephen Freeth and Martin Stuchfield

- 1 *Inventory of Historical Monuments in Essex*, IV (South East) (1923), pp.95-6.
- 2 E.R.O., T/P 195/6.
- 3 William Lack, H. Martin Stuchfield and Philip Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Essex* (2003), p.505.
- 4 *Inventory of Historical Monuments in Essex*, IV (South East) (1923), p.95; Friends of Friendless Churches website.
- 5 Sally Badham, 'The Suffolk School of Brasses', *M.B.S. Trans.*, XIII, pt.1 (1980), pp.41-67. See for example the wife of John Bladwell, d.1534, at Great Thurlow (pl.Vb at p.56). For the stone used for Suffolk series brasses, see *M.B.S. Trans.*, XIII, pt.6 (1985), pp.481-2; *M.B.S. Bulletin*, 141 (June 2019), pp.808-9.
- 6 TNA, PROB 11/19/171; PROB 11/21/277.
- 7 R. Newcourt, *Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense*, II (1710), p.428.

The Courtenay-Huddesfeld brass at Shillingford, Devonshire

The church of St. George at Shillingford, three miles south of Exeter, comprises a nave, chancel, north and south transepts and tower. Compared with many other Devon churches it is small. In a sculptured panel on the tower are the arms of Huddesfeld impaling Courtenay, with supporters a boar and dolphin. Above on the sinister spandrel are three sickles interlaced for Hungerford above an unreadable inscription. Another shield (possibly a modern replacement) bears the arms of Huddesfeld and Courtenay, and a third shield bears Huddesfeld and the words *Spes mea in deo*.¹ The font also bears the Huddesfeld arms.

The church was partly rebuilt in 1856.

In the chancel under a shallow recess within an arch of local red sandstone is a plain Purbeck marble tomb chest that forms the monument for Sir William Huddesfeld, d.1499. Around the lid, including at the back and sides, is the indent for a marginal inscription. In the centre of the cover slab is a shield, 198 x 147 mm, bearing the arms of Huddesfeld, *Argent, a fess between three boars passant sable, on the fess a crescent for difference impaling Courtenay, Or, three torteaux, a label of three* (Fig.1). The historian Richard Polwhele noted that

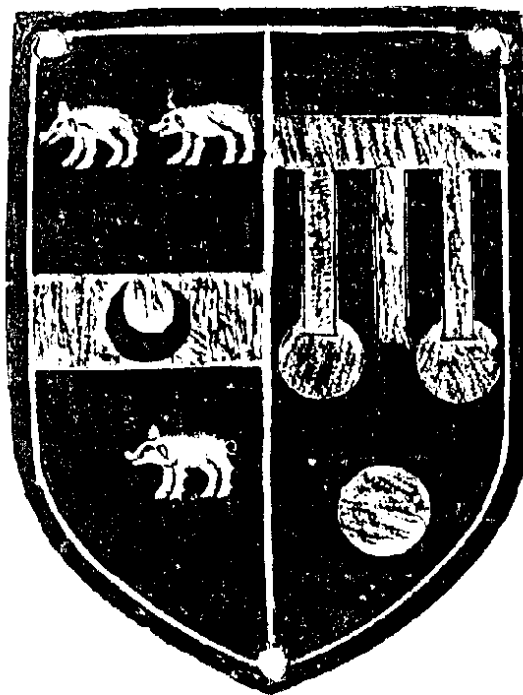


Fig.1. Shield and fragment of marginal inscription, the remains of the brass to Sir William Huddesfeld, d.1499, Shillingford, Devonshire (LSWI(a)).
(rubbing: © Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, Devonshire)

there were four shields on the sides, all lost. This implies that the chest has been rebuilt, since it now has a single shield indent at the western end.²

On the wall of the recess is an engraved brass plate (Fig.2) measuring approximately 364 x 301 mm, with a depressed ogee arch over the figure of a man

in armour wearing a tabard with the arms of Huddesfeld. He kneels before a prie-dieu with his gauntlets and helm, on which is a boar's head crest.³ Behind him is his wife Katherine (née Courtenay) wearing a long gown, over which is a mantle with the arms of Courtenay. Kneeling behind is her son George (by Thomas Rogers), with



Fig.2. Sir William Huddesfeld, and wife Katherine, d.1515, Shillingford, Devonshire (LSWI(b)).
 (rubbing: © Lack, Stuchfield and Whittemore, Devonshire)

long hair and gown, and two daughters, Elizabeth and Katherine (by Huddesfeld), also wearing long dresses.

Below is an inscription in four lines of raised black letter: *Conditor & Rede(m)ptor corporis & anime / Sit michi medicus et custo(s) utriusq(ue)* (May the Maker and Redeemer of my body and soul be to me physician and guardian of both) / *Dame Kateryn ye wife of S(ir) Willia(m) hud / desfeld & dought(er) of S(ir) Phil(ip) Courtnay kny(g)ht.*

The tomb chest has always been at Shillingford, but the brass plate has only been there since the late 1530s, having first been erected as part of a separate monument in the Greyfriars, Exeter. At Greyfriars the plate is likely to have been mural with an additional inscription asking for prayers for the deceased. One or more shields would almost certainly have been included, as the Courtenays were not only an important local family but related to the Plantagenets.

The brass plate commemorates Katherine, but her effigy is placed behind that of her husband. The composition is also unusual in including George Rogers, her son by her previous husband. Some evidence of gilding is visible both on the plate and on the shield on the tomb chest.

In his *View of Devonshire in 1630*, Thomas Westcote recorded the inscription on the tomb chest: *Here lieth Sir William Huddisfeild, knight, Attorney-general to king Edward IV, and of the Council to King Henry VII, and Justice of Oyer and Determiner, the which died y^e xx day of March in the year of our Lord 1499. On whose soul Jesus have mercy. Amen. Honor Deo et Gloria.*⁴ One fragment of the inscription, shown in bold above, survives as a rubbing in the collections of the Society of Antiquaries (Fig.1). The lettering looks like London work.⁵

Westcote recorded some stained glass remaining, but this had been lost by Rev. Jeremiah Milles' notes of the 1750s.⁶ There was a Crucifixion scene in the east window, with a 'picture' of Huddesfeld and Katherine with Latin texts above. Under both effigies was *Orate pro bono statu Willihemi Huddesfeld militis et Katharine uxoris ejus.*⁷

George Oliver, writing in 1840, suggested that the church was originally the domestic chapel

of the Shillingfords, before the manor was sold to the Huddesfelds.⁸ This may have been the case, but the arms of Huddesfeld and Courtenay on the tower and font are evidence that Huddesfeld at least restored the church late in the 15th century.

The plate commemorating Katherine shows no similarities with contemporary London examples, so may have been produced locally. Many of the lines are lightly engraved; the rings of the mail skirt on Huddesfeld's effigy are shown abutting, not interlinked as was more often the case; while the lettering of the inscription, especially in the third line, has a distinctive slant upwards. Malcolm Norris suggested that the plate was engraved by an Exeter goldsmith. While the names of a number of contemporary goldsmiths are known, their work is not.⁹

[Another brass which has been attributed to a goldsmith is for Sir Thomas Sellynger and his wife Anne, Duchess of Exeter, in St. George's Chapel, Windsor (LSW.II). She died in 1475 but the brass is believed to have been engraved c.1495. Like the brass at Shillingford this brass is really for the wife, not the husband, and is mural; rectangular (though a little larger at 575 x 420 mm); and very lightly engraved. Its current gilding is believed to be a restoration of the original gilding. However although the design is broadly similar, with kneeling figures of a man in armour in heraldic tabard and his wife in a gown, above an inscription plate, the rendering is entirely different.¹⁰ – Editor]

Huddesfeld died in 1499 and was commemorated at Shillingford; Katherine survived him, dying in 1515. In her will she requested burial in the Greyfriars, Exeter, 'before [the image of] Seynt ffraunces beside the highe Aulter'. Following her death a trental was to be said followed by a daily mass at the altar for seven years. Her black velvet gown was left to the warden of the Greyfriars. She also asked that a stone be placed over the grave of her former husband Thomas Rogers in the church at Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire, with the wardens receiving her mass book and an instruction to pray for her and Thomas.¹¹ Her will gives no details regarding her own brass, which was probably erected c.1515 on the order of her son, George Rogers. When the friary was dissolved

in 1538, the brass must have been moved to Shillingford, perhaps by her son.¹²

Katherine's first husband was Sir St. Clare Pomeroy, killed at the battle of Tewkesbury in 1471. Her second husband was Thomas Rogers. Born in 1434, he trained as a lawyer and was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1454. He was a J.P. for Wiltshire and a Serjeant-at-Law in 1478. His first wife was Cecily, heiress of William Besill of Bradford-on-Avon. They had a son, William. Rogers then married Katherine in 1483 and they had a son, George, shown on the brass. Rogers died on 5th October 1478 at his manor house in Bradford.¹³

Katherine's third husband was Sir William Huddesfeld. He was the son of William Huddesfeld of Shillingford and his wife Alice. He married firstly Jennet (Elizabeth), daughter and heiress of Sir Baldwin Fulford, executed for treason in 1461. According to William Pole they had a daughter whose name is unknown.¹⁴

Huddesfeld's will makes no mention of any monument, and he asked to be buried where he died. He left 6s 8d to the parson at Bridport, and 13s 4d to the church there, with the same amount to Dittisham church; and 1,000 marks to his daughter Elizabeth for her marriage, but should she die before marrying then 300 marks were to be divided between the children of his daughter Katherine Carew. His will also tells us that his first wife Elizabeth was buried in the priory and convent of St. Mary, Clerkenwell, where she had a monument before the high altar. Masses were to be said there for William and Elizabeth and also for his parents.¹⁵

Huddesfeld too trained as a lawyer, being admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1456. He was M.P. for the county on a number of occasions before being appointed attorney-general in May 1481 for two years under kings Edward IV and V. He was also Recorder of Exeter in 1479 and a J.P. for Devon on a number of occasions. He was knighted in 1486-7. He and Katherine had two children, Elizabeth and Katherine.

The careers of Rogers and Huddesfeld were remarkably similar. Katherine and William may well have known each other before they were

married, as their then husbands sat on a number of commissions together.

On the south side of the chancel at Shillingford is a window with four shields recording William Huddesfeld's and Katherine Courtenay's marriages and alliances. In the head of the light is a small shield bearing the arms of Huddesfeld while in the lobe to the left is a single boar and in the lobe to the right the Bohun swan. These three devices, together with six others all very similar in the heads of the main lights of the north transept's north window, are all that remains of the medieval glazing.¹⁶ Another shield bearing the Huddesfeld arms is in private possession, possibly removed in 1856 because it was broken. Other shields are of 1856 and show further Huddesfeld heraldry; they may have replaced original shields.

The Huddesfelds restored the church, perhaps with the idea of it becoming the family mausoleum. In the event they had daughters. It was a short-lived dream, but we can see the intention in William Huddesfeld's monument and the remains of the glazing scheme.

I am grateful to Chris Byrom and David Cook for their help.

Philip Whittemore

- 1 For an earlier account see W.H.H. Rogers, 'Rogers-Courtenay-Huddesfeld, of Bradford-on-Avon, Wilts.; Cannington, Somerset; and Shillingford, Devon,' *Wilts. Notes and Queries*, III (December 1900), p.337.
- 2 R. Polwhele, *History of Devonshire* (London, 1793), II, pp.111-12.
- 3 The engraver has shown the boars on Huddesfeld's surcoat incorrectly, as they face to the sinister. Heraldic beasts normally face dexter.
- 4 (Exeter, 1845), p.213.
- 5 The fragment survived until at least 1856 when W.R. Crabbe recorded it. See *Exeter Diocesan Arch. Soc. Trans.*, V (1856), p.213.
- 6 Bodleian Library, MS. Top. Devon c.11.
- 7 The centre light of the new glass in the east window mirrors in part the original design.
- 8 *Ecclesiastical Antiquities in Devon* (Exeter, 1840), II, p.57.
- 9 C.J. Jackson, *English Goldsmiths and their Marks* (London, 1921), p.343.
- 10 For a direct photograph see M.W. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Craft* (London, 1978), fig.66.
- 11 TNA, PROB 11/18/20.
- 12 Milles records that in the 1750s the plate was on the wall to the east of the tomb.
- 13 E.W. Ives, *The Common Lawyers of Pre-Reformation England: Thomas Kebell: A Case Study* (Cambridge, 1983), p.475; J.C. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament (1439-1509)* (London, 1936-8), I, pp.723-4.
- 14 W. Pole, *Collections towards a description of the County of Devon* (London, 1791), p.254.
- 15 TNA, PROB 11/11/671; her burial place suggests that Clerkenwell was Huddesfeld's base when on legal business in the capital.
- 16 A detailed examination of the roundels in the windows has not been carried out, due to their position.

The brass to George Estye, d.1601, at St. Mary's, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk

Informed visitors ('intelligent travellers' in the words of one American guidebook to Britain in the less politically correct 1980s) to the church of St. Mary, Bury St. Edmunds will immediately lift up their eyes unto the hills, to view what Pevsner and Bettley call the 'rightly famous' ten-bay roof of hammerbeams and arch braces, with its busily-carved spandrels and wall-plates. The most detailed account of what he deems 'one of the finest 15th-century roofs in England', with its procession of angels in mass vestments, is to be found in Mortlock's *Guide to Suffolk Churches* (2009). He emphasises its royal connections to Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou (the figures include angelic kings and queens): the king held a parliament in the abbey refectory in February 1447. Rimmer's *Angel Roofs of East Anglia* (2015) has some fine colour close-ups which do justice to the high quality of the carving.

The roof was funded by a bequest of John Baret, d.1467, a wealthy Bury cloth merchant; and once the crick in the visitor's neck has demanded some relief, the gaze may well alight on Baret's own cadaver tomb at the east end of the south aisle ('from erthe I kam and on to erthe I am browht', Genesis 3: 19B). The monument lies within a chantry with a piscina and a panelled and painted roof, inset remarkably with small mirrors to catch the light. But the subject of this article is the much more humble memorial to George Estye, d.1601, a brass plate now framed and affixed to a pillar on the south side of the chancel (Fig.1). As far as I (and Martin Stuchfield) can ascertain, this inscription has been transcribed several times but not translated, which in view of its high literary quality is surely an oversight, even allowing for Latin literacy in early antiquarians. As well as a few brief notes in Wikipedia, Estye merits a longer entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Born in 1560 or 1561, he was educated at Gonville & Caius College Cambridge, where he was elected Fellow in 1584. He was appointed University Greek Lecturer in 1592, and Hebrew Lecturer 1594-7, and in 1598 was made a University scrutator (overseer of elections). But in 1600 he resigned his fellowship, probably because of his marriage

to the biblically-named Triphosa (Romans 16: 12); she survived him, had his brass monument put up, and later married Matthew Clarke; mayor and M.P. for King's Lynn. Estye's posthumous publications included *A most Sweete and Comfortable Exposition upon the Tenne Commaundements* (1602) and *Certaine Godly and Learned Expositions* (1603), the latter edited by John Stoneham, Estye's favourite ex-pupil.

Estye's ecclesiastical career was centred on Bury St. Edmunds: he was town preacher in the 1590s, delivering sermons on Monday market-days for the edification of zealous townsmen; these became the posthumous *Expositions*. In 1598 he was appointed vicar of St. Mary's, where he remained until his death on 2nd August 1601. Unfortunately his gravestone with the initials G.E., though mentioned in an earlier transcription, could not be located in 2022. He left money in trust for the establishment of weekly instruction for the inmates of Bury town gaol, and for the welfare of the town's poor, though these bequests included careful provision for his own vulnerable family: his wife and one, possibly two, male infants.

What is particularly noteworthy about Estye's epitaph is not its indifferent engraving but its author: Dr. Joseph Hall, Fellow of Emmanuel College Cambridge from 1595, rector of All Saints, Hawstead 1601-8 (immediately south of Bury, and well-known for its many monuments to Cullums, Drurys and Metcalfes), and finally Bishop of Norwich 1641-56, during the troubled and troubling years of the Commonwealth. His cypher JH may be seen at the foot of the brass. Thomas Fuller wrote of Hall, 'He was commonly called our English Seneca, for the purenesse, plainnesse, and fulnesse of his style.' Perhaps he had attended lectures by Estye when an undergraduate at Cambridge; it is also possible that the paths of the two men crossed briefly before Estye's death, as priests in their almost-neighbouring parishes of St. Mary's, Bury and All Saints, Hawstead.

Readers with Latin (see notes) may spot the stylistic traits of the 'English Seneca' in this classical text of



Fig 1. Inscription to George Estye, d.1601, St. Mary, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk (M.S.X).
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

12 lines; even casual browsers can appreciate what may be a warm tribute from former pupil to esteemed teacher. At the plate's top left-hand corner a guttering candle spouts the tag *luceo et absumor* ('I illuminate and am consumed'), the candle a standard *memento mori* symbol but also a nice image of Estye's own hard-working and brief life as preacher and pastor. The outer lines above and below the main text are centred, framing the verse. Hall signs off with an epigram adapted from Martial's *Sic me vivere, sic iuvat perire*, which may be translated as: 'That's how I like both to live and to die'. Hall's version is more florid, pious or at least fashionably melancholic for the early 17th century.

A Latin transcription follows below; it is followed by an English translation by Stephen Freeth, Mike Good and David Miller.

Famae Superstiti ac Memoriae Sempiternae
:S: [Sacrum]
Georgio Esteio, sanctissimo
Ac celeberrimo loci huiusce
Concionatori [Contionatori].

Consiste paulum, quisquis audaci gradu
Sacrata multo numini premis loca,
Cave profano saxa tangas pollice
Queis tecta forsan urna sanctorum latet.
Hoc vile marmor si quid intus occulat
Nescis viator: pietas istic iacet,
Heic alma virtus juncta musarum choro
Et gratiarum et si quid his venustius
Suadela, candor, multiplex scientia,
Interna mentis purioris sanctitas,
Externa morum suavitas: Dicam brevi
Majora, lector: iacet istic Estius.

Posuit T. coniux charissima. L.M. [Libens Merito]
Obiit anno domini 1601 aetatis suae 36 August. 2^o
sic o sic iuvat vivere sic perire

JH

Notes:

- In line 6 the colon between *viator* and *pietas* is significant: at this central point in the verse, the observer's attention is directed to the Christian piety that was central to Estye's personal and professional life.
- Lines 9-12 open with quadruple assonances: suadela-interna-externa-majora.

- Why is his age at death given as 36? Estye was born in 1560 or 1561 and was therefore 40 or 41 when he died; is this a straightforward mistake, or was the inscription perhaps drafted before his death?

To his abiding fame, and everlasting memory,
sacred.

For the most reverend George Estye,
the famous preacher of this place.

Wait awhile, whoever you are that steps
with audacious foot
on so numinous a part of this sacred building;
and take care not to touch, with sacrilegious toe,
stones under which may lie an undiscovered
urn of holy remains.

Beneath this ordinary marble there is
something concealed
of which you, traveller, may be ignorant:
piety lies there;
here too is bountiful virtue linked to a
chorus of the muses
and graces, and if anything still more attractive,
persuasiveness, sincerity, all kinds of knowledge,
more than ordinary sanctity within his mind,
and charm of character outside it.
I shall say briefly
what matters, reader: here lies Estye.

Placed here by his very dear wife T[riphosa],
in willing recognition of what he deserved.
He died in the year 1601, at the age of 36,
on August 2.

Like this, like this to love, and like this to die, is joy!

JH

- Line 4, 'undiscovered urn': it is curious that Bishop Hall was attended in his old age by the doctor Sir Thomas Browne, now better known for his meditation on death *Hydriotaphia, Urne-Buriall, or, a Discourse of the Sepulchrall Urnes lately found in Norfolk* (1658). As to the actual location of the burial, Martin Stuchfield has now completed an exhaustive search of the church and cannot find the slab originally associated with the brass.
- Lines 7-9, 'a chorus of the muses and graces... persuasiveness': Hall's touching tribute to Estye's own rhetorical skills.

Mike Good

An early enthusiast: Reginald Grove – postscript

Dear Editor,

I was very interested in David Meara's article in the February 2022 *Bulletin* on 'The revival of the religious life in Victorian Britain reflected in memorial brasses'. Two of Reginald Grove's sisters-in-law joined a convent, though neither was commemorated by a brass. [See my articles, 'An Early Enthusiast: Reginald Grove, parts 1 and 2' in the *Bulletins* for February and June 2022.]

While training at Guy's Hospital in London Reginald was invited home by one of his lecturers, Thomas Stevenson, later knighted for his services to medicine. Thomas and his wife had a large family, and their Christian faith impacted their five daughters and two sons. Ethel, the eldest, married the editor of the *Church Times*. Dorothy, the youngest, married a clergyman. Reginald thought the Stevenson girls the most wonderful ones in the world and married Hilda, the second daughter.

The other two daughters, Mabel and Alice, remained single. Mabel felt a call to become a medical missionary, and despite the contemporary controversy about women studying medicine her father gave his blessing. She trained at the Royal Free Hospital and went out to India as Medical Officer at the S.P.G. and Cambridge Mission in Delhi. She was later posted to Karnal, Punjab, a small town of 27,000 people 75 miles north of Delhi, in charge of a 19-bed hospital and dispensary for women, assisted by an English nurse. Sadly in 1905 a massive earthquake wrecked the

building, she suffered a mental breakdown and in 1906 was invalided home. After recovering she joined the Community of the Epiphany in Truro, Cornwall, one of many such Anglican orders that grew out of the Oxford Movement. She returned to India briefly as a sister at the House of the Epiphany, Barisal, East Bengal, but by 1910 she was again in Truro. She was known as 'Sister Geraldine'. She left the convent in 1923 and worked as a doctor, but later moved to a mission in Bethnal Green, East London, where she remained during the Second World War. She died in 1957, aged 83.

Alice Stevenson entered the same convent, being known as 'Sister Alison'. As a result of falling numbers, the convent closed in 1983. The building is now a hotel, and weddings are held in the old chapel. No brasses are known to have been laid there.

The House of the Epiphany has another claim to fame. The murderess Mrs. Florence Maybrick spent the last six months of her sentence there in 1906 after her conviction for poisoning her husband. Her stay at the convent was arranged by Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, a campaigner for prison reform who had visited her regularly in prison. Mrs. Maybrick was given the name 'Mrs. Graham', with only the Mother Superior and Truro's chief of police being told her true identity.

Yours
Peter Flower

Winchester Cathedral

Mounted inconspicuously low down on a pillar on the north side of the nave, near the pulpit, is a small brass inscription to Colonel Richard Boles, a Royalist infantry commander killed at the sacking of Alton by Parliamentary troops during the English Civil War (LSW.IV).

The inscription was erected in 1689 by a member of the family. Memories of the Civil War

were already hazy, and the year of his death was written prominently as 1641, whereas the sacking of Alton took place on 13th December 1643. This mistake was repeated on the copy of the brass erected in Alton church (also in Hampshire) in 1871 (LSW.XIII).

Mike Harris