

# Monumental Brass Society

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OCTOBER 2024



BULLETIN 157

The *Bulletin* (ISSN 0306-1612) is published three times a year, in February, June and October. Articles for inclusion in the next issue should be sent by 1st January 2025 to:

Caroline Metcalfe, Hon. Assistant Secretary  
51 Court Crescent, East Grinstead  
West Sussex RH19 3TP  
Email: cspearie@gmail.com

#### **Useful Society contacts:**

##### **General enquiries, membership and subscriptions:**

Penny Williams, Hon. Secretary  
15 St. Brides Road, Aberkenfig  
Bridgend, South Wales CF32 9PY  
Email: penny7441@hotmail.com

##### **Contributions for the *Transactions*:**

Lucia Diaz Pascual, Hon. Editor  
Email: lucia.dpascual@gmail.com

##### **Conservation of brasses (including thefts etc.):**

Martin Stuchfield, Hon. Conservation Officer  
Pentlow Hall, Cavendish, Suffolk CO10 7SP  
Email: martinstuchfield@pentlowhall.uk

##### **Hon. Treasurer's notice**

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

## **Editorial**

Our new volunteer bookkeeper, Judy Hodgett, asks all members who do not already pay their annual subscription by Standing Order to pay in future using online banking, and not by cheque. Please see the Hon. Treasurer's notice on this page.

The Jonathan Ali Essay Prize has now run successfully for two years, 2023 and 2024. The Council has agreed that this is a good time to make some improvements and reduce the burden on the judges. The Prize will therefore be in abeyance in 2025. The next Prize will be awarded in 2026, with an improved process and timetable. Further information will be available in due course.

Finally, the Society's September meeting at St. Albans earned an honourable mention in the 'Town Mouse' column of *Country Life* on 25th September 2024, 'Town Mouse' being John Goodall, *Country Life's* Architectural Editor, and one of the speakers on the day. After enthusing about the lovely September morning he wrote:

'There was a meeting of the Monumental Brass Society to attend. The bulletins and annual transactions of this society are always greeted by my children with wild hilarity when they arrive in the post. Even they, however, might have enjoyed the sunlit interior of the abbey and the extraordinary 14th-century funeral brass of Abbot Thomas de la Mare. In the background were the sounds of a wedding in the Lady Chapel – a magical day for such a happy event.'

**Stephen Freeth**

## **Personalia**

We welcome as new members:

**Jon Dawson**, 82 The Elms, Colwick, Nottingham NG4 2GW.

**Howard Holloway**, Flat 18, Loddiges House, Loddiges Road, London E9 7PJ.

**Alessio Pimpinelli**, 8 Elsanta Close, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 3YP.

Cover: Palimpsest reverse of the shield from the brass commemorating Margaret, wife of Edward Bulstrode, esq., 1540, at Hedgerley, Buckinghamshire (LSW.II). The earlier engraving depicts canopy work with a Resurrection and part of a Trinity that may link with Cheam, Surrey (M.S.VII). The M.B.S. has contributed to the costs of conservation. (photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

## Diary of events

**Saturday, 12th April 2025**

### GENERAL MEETING

#### COGGESHALL, ESSEX

Coggeshall is best known for its association with the Paycocke family and the cloth trade. Paycocke's House (National Trust), the home of Thomas Paycocke, is in West Street.

The afternoon meeting will commence at 2.00p.m. **Christopher Thornton** will speak on *The Paycocke family, its background and role in the cloth industry*, followed by **David Andrews** on *Paycocke's House, Coggeshall*. We will then have tea and an opportunity to view the brasses and the church. **John Lee** will then give the final talk entitled, *'I have not seen such rich monuments, for so mean persons': the Paycocke family brasses*. The meeting will finish at approximately 4.30p.m.

The church should be open for viewing in the morning from around 11.00a.m. It is hoped that Paycocke's House will also be open in the morning, but entry is only by guided tour, and advance booking is advised to reserve your time slot. Members are requested to make their own arrangements direct. Please note that tours are free for Trust members, but there is a charge for non-members.



*Detail of Thomas, son of Robert Paycocke, 1580, Coggeshall, Essex (LSW.IV).  
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)*

Please email Caroline Metcalfe if you plan to attend the meeting, [mbsvisit@metcas.me.uk](mailto:mbsvisit@metcas.me.uk). She needs to know how much cake to bake! Please also tell her if you plan to visit the café at Paycocke's House for coffee or a light lunch before the meeting.

This large 15th-century town church was severely damaged by a bomb in 1940. The north aisle and north arcade were destroyed, and the tower demolished. The restoration was carried out by Stephen Dykes Bower, 1953-6.

*The postcode for satellite navigation is CO6 1UD. There is a public car park in the village centre, a short walk away. The church has toilets. Paycocke's House has a café for morning coffee and light lunches, but has asked how many people to expect.*

*The nearest stations are Kelvedon or Marks Tey (served from London Liverpool Street in 50/55 minutes). These are four or five miles distant representing an approximate journey of 10 minutes by taxi. N.B. there is no taxi rank at either station; taxis should be booked in advance by telephone.*

**Saturday, 19th July 2025**

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

#### NORTH MYMMS, HERTFORDSHIRE

The Annual General Meeting will take place in the morning at 11.00a.m. The General Meeting will take place in the afternoon at 2.00p.m. **David Lepine** will speak on the Kesteven brass. Another speaker will be our member **Richard Asquith**, also a member of the Yorkist History Trust.

**Saturday, 13th September 2025**

### GENERAL MEETING

#### GEDDINGTON, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

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

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

## Annual General Meeting

### Beddington, Surrey – 20th July 2024

The formal business of the Annual General Meeting took place in the morning. Members, parishioners and members of the Surrey Archaeological Society gathered in St. Mary's in the afternoon.

The medieval brasses at Beddington have been inaccessible for many years. The ones in the main aisle of the chancel have long been covered by fitted carpets, and others are beneath the Victorian choir stalls. Even Mill Stephenson was unable to see the ones under the choir stalls. What a treat it was to be welcomed by the parish, and to see almost all of these brasses uncovered (Fig.1).

The brasses mostly commemorate the Carew family, who lived next door to the church in the manor house, now Carew Academy. Nicholas Carew senior (d.1390) built the family

fortune. A trusted member of Edward III's household, he was made Keeper of the Privy Seal in 1371, the first layman ever to occupy the post (in succession to the cleric Peter de Lacy, whose brass is at Northfleet, Kent). He became very wealthy, and was one of the king's executors. In his will he left the huge sum of £20 to rebuild Beddington church.

Nicholas senior has no surviving memorial in the church. The biggest and best brass is to his son, Nicholas junior, d.1432, and his first wife Isabel (M.S.III) (Fig.2). This London B memorial in the chancel aisle survives almost complete. Its design is conventional. A much more unusual brass, with no known parallels, is for the unmarried Philippa Carew, d.1414, and her thirteen brothers and sisters (M.S.I) (Fig.3). These are shown as a long strip of head-and-shoulders figures with names



*Fig 1. General view of the brasses, with the choir stalls removed on the north side. Beddington, Surrey.  
(photo: © Stephen Freeth)*



Fig.2. Nicholas Carew, junior, esq., lord of the manor, 1432, and [1st] wife Isabel, Beddington, Surrey (M.S.III).  
(photo: © Stella Fitzgerald)



Fig.3. Philippa Carew, d.1414, Beddington, Surrey (M.S.II). (photo: © Stella Fitzgerald)

beneath her own figure. Philippa and her siblings were the children of Nicholas Carew junior's second wife Mercy. His first wife, Isabel, shown on M.S.III, must therefore have died a great many years before 1414. Why was she shown on Nicholas' huge brass and not Mercy, who probably paid for her husband's brass? Did Mercy ever have her own brass in the church?

Other brasses include a cross brass for Margaret Oliver, a Carew servant, d.1425 (M.S.II). This is on the north side of the chancel (not the south side, where Mill Stephenson guessed it to be). Another slab now lacks its inscription but shows a man and woman believed to be Thomas Carew, d.1430, and his sister Isabel, d.1434 (M.S.IV), two children of Nicholas junior and his first wife. Their memorial was seen by John Aubrey (d.1697).

After an excellent tour of the church with **Christine Morgan**, a parishioner (Fig.4), we heard two talks. First **John Phillips**, a local historian, spoke on *The Carew Family and the Church*. The manor house exterior is now 18th century, but it was once a moated site. A dressed stone wall of the former moat has been discovered by excavation. The manor house itself may once have been a stone box like Amberley Castle. The hidden glory of the house, the great hall with its hammer-beam roof, was built c.1510 by Sir Richard Carew, who also built the south chapel of the church. This contains his tomb, though the brass upon it is mostly a Victorian restoration (M.S.VII) (Fig.5). By the 18th century the family's income had declined, and lack of money and a succession of wastrel owners means that there are no Carew memorials from then until the early 19th century.

The second talk was by our Vice-President **Stephen Freeth**, on *The Brasses of St. Mary's Church*. The brasses in the chancel have all been there since the late 17th century, when they were



Fig.4. Christine Morgan giving a tour of Beddington church. (photo: © Stephen Freeth)



*Fig. 5. Sir Richard Carew, 1520, and wife Malyn, daughter of [Sir Robert] Oxenbridge, Beddington, Surrey (M.S.VII). Both figures are 19th-century restorations. (photo: © Stella Fitzgerald)*

recorded by Aubrey. This means that they were there long before the many 19th-century alterations to the church by the architect Joseph Clarke. This is puzzling, because the wills of Nicholas senior and junior both ask to be buried in 'St. Nicholas' chapel'. The present St. Nicholas' altar on the north side of the nave is within one of Joseph Clarke's extensions. Stephen Freeth suggested that St. Nicholas' chapel formerly stood where the south chapel (Carew chapel) is now. This chapel was built by Sir Nicholas Carew c.1520. He must have moved all his forebears' brasses to the chancel.

Much more can be said about the brasses, and there are also a number of interesting incidents.

Profuse thanks are due to various people for such an enjoyable meeting: to the speakers for their talks; to Caroline Metcalfe for making the arrangements and for the splendid tea and cakes; and to Judy Page, churchwarden, and to Christine Morgan and her husband for all their help, and especially for moving the choir stalls on the north side so that we could view M.S.I and II. Matt Kimber of Carew Academy helped us to park at Carew Manor, another great privilege.

**Stephen Freeth**

## A.G.M. formal business

The 2024 Annual General Meeting was held on 20th July at Beddington in Surrey. Apologies were received and the minutes of the last A.G.M. on 8th July 2023 were approved by the meeting and signed. The Report and Accounts for 2023 were also approved. Paul Larsen, F.C.I.I. was re-elected as Independent Examiner.

The meeting then proceeded to elect the Hon. Officers en bloc: Kelcey Wilson-Lee as President; Nigel Saul, Martin Stuchfield, Nicholas Rogers, David Meara and Stephen Freeth as Vice-Presidents; Penny Williams as Hon. Secretary; Andrew Ling as Hon. Treasurer; and Lucia Diaz Pascual as Hon. Editor.

Rosemary Fitchett retired from the Executive Council by rotation. She was co-opted back at the October 2024 meeting of the Executive Council to help with organising future meetings. Hugh Guilford and Challe Hudson having been duly nominated were elected to serve on the Executive Council.

Rear-Admiral Mike Harris, since 2023 the ninth Lord Harris, was elected an Honorary Member of the Society. He joined at a very young age in 1955, and is currently our senior member. He has twice served on the Council, contributed to the *Transactions*, and currently handles general enquiries to the Society's website. In reply, Mike gave a short, amusing speech of reminiscence and thanks.

The President then made the presentation of the second Jonathan Ali Prize, for 2024. The worthy winner was John Lee, for his article on the Tame family brasses in Fairford church. This is an excellent article, to a very high standard of scholarship.

After the formal business there was a tour of St. Mary's church by Christine Morgan, and talks on aspects of Beddington and its brasses by John Phillips, a local historian, and our Vice-President Stephen Freeth.

At the Executive Council meeting held on 5th October 2024 the following appointments were approved:

*Hon. Assistant Secretary:* Caroline Metcalfe

*Hon. Bulletin Editor:* Stephen Freeth

*Hon. Conservation Officer:* Martin Stuchfield

*Hon. Heraldic Adviser:* Sir Thomas Woodcock, formerly Garter Principal King of Arms.

*Hon. Communications Officer:* Challe Hudson

*Hon. Technical Editor:* Matthew Sillence

**Penny Williams, Hon. Secretary**



## Study Day

### St. Albans Cathedral – 14th September 2024

This Study Day was focused upon St. Albans Abbey and its Medieval Monuments. Around forty members and friends assembled in the Alban Room above the Chapter House for a series of talks and tours.

After a brief welcome from our President, Kelcey Wilson-Lee, and the Dean of St. Albans, the Very Rev. Jo Kelly-Moore, the first speaker was **Norman James**, on *The Monastic Community of St. Albans, 1349-1539*. This set the scene for the rest of the day. St. Albans was a mitred abbey, independent of the bishop. It had extensive lands and great wealth. The *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1535 gave its income as over £2,000p.a., the fourth largest monastic income in England. This income had held up well, as can be seen from such improvements as the Watching Loft, even though revenues from the shrines of St. Alban and St. Amphibalus had gradually declined.

St. Albans was a day's ride from London, and kings and other travellers liked to stop there. The abbey benefited from royal patronage. There are however hints in the records that kings sometimes interfered with the running of the abbey. There were also complaints that excessive power was concentrated in the hands of the abbot.

By the late 12th century there were 100 monks. Half the monks are believed to have died of the Black Death, but there were still 40 at the Dissolution. A current project is discovering the names and details of all the monks between 1349 and 1539, including the various overlapping networks within St. Albans' monastic community. These included thirteen dependent houses (10 priories, one of them as far away as Tynemouth, two convents and a leper hospital), fifty manors and many parish benefices. Tracing names is made more difficult by the random use of toponyms – birthplace, not family name as surname.

The monks were drawn largely from the local gentry, and the abbots were from affluent backgrounds. They all lived well, usually into their fifties and sixties, assisted by lay officers and

servants – over 100 in 1302. The abbey was a centre of learning and music. Almost ten per cent of the monks are known to have been Oxford or Cambridge graduates, sent there by the abbey for their education. The true number is probably higher. The abbey had a printing press before the Dissolution.

The monks took their religion seriously. This can be seen from their continuing involvement after the Dissolution in re-foundations of religious houses and the establishment of schools. Only the most distinguished monks were buried in the church, in the chapter house at first, and later in the presbytery and chantry chapels. The rest were buried in the cemetery outside.

**John Goodall** then spoke on *Abbot Ramryge's Chantry*. Thomas Ramryge (abbot 1492-1521) built his chantry on the north side of the presbytery, with two faces, north towards the north presbytery aisle, and south towards the high altar. It was designed to balance the Wallingford chantry on the south side. From its style it must have been prepared long before his death. It was opulent and expensive, not just a chantry chapel, but also a devotional space and probably an Easter Sepulchre.

Its site was probably determined by the new Great Reredos. (Was an earlier monument smashed out to accommodate it?) It copied many details from the chantry of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester nearby, in particular the horizontal string course or bar of heraldry, and the heraldry itself, pirating the cap of estate from Duke Humphrey's arms, and using rams as supporters!

The next speaker was **David Carrington** on *The Restoration of St. Amphibalus' Shrine*. This was built c.1360 but destroyed at the Dissolution, when it was used to build a wall between the retrochoir and the Lady Chapel. The fragments were rediscovered in the 1870s and re-erected at minimal expense, using a great deal of brick. David and his team of working stonemasons have now rebuilt the shrine on a new site in the chapel of Our Lady of the Four Tapers, carving new work to



*Detail showing St. Alban from the brass to Thomas De La Mare, abbot 1349-1396, engr. c.1355,  
St. Albans Cathedral, Hertfordshire (LSWI).  
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)*

fill the gaps. The project was completed late in 2020. The results are both accurate and beautiful, and are surmounted by a new embroidered canopy by the Royal School of Needlework. [Further details can be found in Julia Lowe and Ailsa Herbert, *St. Amphibalus and his Shrine*, published by the Friends of St. Albans Abbey (2021) – *Ed.*]

Preparatory work for the shrine's new site included the removal of a raised tomb nearby, to make space for a ramp allowing disabled access. The tomb had been placed here during the 19th-century repairs but is believed to be a real tomb and not just a collection of fragments. The side panels contain indents of brasses, and when the tomb was dismantled the front panel proved to be a palimpsest slab, with indents on both the front and the back!

The afternoon began with two simultaneous tours. Both were delivered twice, so that the audiences could swap over in the middle. The first tour was by **Derrick Chivers**, of *The surviving brasses and indents to the Abbots in the presbytery, and other brasses in the north presbytery aisle*. Derrick had introduced this tour briefly before the lunch break, with a description of antiquarian sources and drawings



*Examining the brass of Thomas De La Mare, abbot 1349-1396, engraved c.1355, St. Albans Cathedral, Hertfordshire (LSWI). (photo: © Stephen Freeth)*

of the monuments from the early 17th century onwards. The second tour was by **Stephen de Silva**, formerly a cathedral guide. He showed us how four of the largest medieval wall paintings on the nave piers, showing Saints Christopher, Thomas Becket, Sitha and (together) SS. Alban and Amphibalus, can be 'reconstructed' by colour projection from hidden lamps, installed in 2019. These reconstructions, which build up slowly, explain and complete paintings which are now terribly damaged. They are also convincing, being based upon surviving original work elsewhere.

Our final speaker was **David Lepine**, on *Re-examining the De La Mare brass*. David explained that the title of his talk was misleading, for the brass has hardly been examined at all! It is one of the nine great rectangular Flemish brasses in England, of which six are extant and three lost. Almost all are for merchants with links to the Hanse. Only two are for clergy – for Abbot Mentmore, De La Mare's predecessor (now lost) and De La Mare's own brass.

De La Mare died in 1396, but the brass's style is of 1350-5. The *Gesta Abbatum* tell us that it cost £14, a very large sum. Was it commissioned abroad because the Black Death had destroyed the English brass workshops? This does not explain why De La Mare did not simply wait longer to commission his brass, once the industry had recovered, or choose a sculpted tomb instead. The explanation may come from his journey to the Pope at Avignon to have his election as abbot confirmed. Because Calais was 'at war', he had to travel via Bruges and Ghent. Here he may have seen and been impressed by the brasses in the churches. While in Avignon, he was seriously ill and close to death. That too may have focused his mind. [Further details about commissioning the brass can be found in the 2023 *Transactions* at p.15. During the tours, members also commented on the large rectangular indents of the Mentmore and De La Mare brasses, still to be seen in the presbytery floor. Mentmore's is noticeably smaller! – *Ed.*]

Thanks are due to the cathedral authorities for all their help; to the speakers; to Derrick Chivers and Stephen de Silva for the tours; and to Caroline Metcalfe and Rosemary Fitchett for their meticulous organisation.

**Stephen Freeth**

## Memoir of a brass rubber

In thanking the Society for making me an Honorary Member after sixty-nine years, it was suggested that a short account of some of my experiences might be of interest.

When I was twelve years old a temporary master came to our school for a term. He must have been on his way to Cambridge, or had just graduated. He was interested in monumental brasses and took six of us by bicycle to the chapel of St. Cross Hospital, Winchester, to experience some brass rubbing (Fig.1). I was hooked immediately, and have still got my first rubbing, of Thomas Lawne, rector of Mottisfont, who died on the ninth day of May, 1518, '*cuius anime propicietur deus*' (Winchester, St. Cross, LSW.VI). I think Mr. Tait may have given each of us a bit of heelball and told us that we could buy a roll of Reed's Detail Paper from W.H. Smith's. Anyway, a new edition of Macklin's *Monumental Brasses*, complete with its list of known brasses, had recently been published. Armed with this, I was off to find the brass to Thomas Aileward, d.1413, secretary to William of Wykeham (Havant, LSW.I).

In the next year or two, as I began to assemble a collection of rubbings, it occurred to me that there must be some sort of society that was interested in these things. It was quite difficult to find out the answer in the days before the Internet, but my parents subscribed to *Country Life* and a letter to the Editor produced the advice to write to Reginald Pearson, F.S.A., of 85 Addiscombe Road, Croydon, the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the Monumental Brass Society. He replied to my letter, offering Associate Membership at five shillings (25p) per annum, and writing, 'I enclose a copy of our latest list of members [well before the days of the anti-social G.D.P.R.] which contains our few simple rules. In case you do not know any members, will you send me a few brief particulars about yourself.' That didn't take long.

Shortly afterwards, living in Devon, I was excited to find brasses in our local church, Lewtrenchard; only inscriptions, but they were not listed in Mill Stephenson (LSW.I, II & III). I told Canon Rutter, the editor of our *Transactions*, who was delighted to print my information, only

to be corrected by one of the Society's elders, the Rev. Vyvyan Hope, who related a complicated family tale involving Staverton church, the Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould (author of *Onward! Christian Soldiers*), and copyings and shufflings of memorials which would be considered illegal nowadays (*M.B.S. Trans.*, X, pt.4 (1967), pp.270-1, and pt.5 (1969), p.401).

My working life was to be spent at sea, which unexpectedly produced some brassy moments. In 1957, having worked my passage up the Amazon aged sixteen, we called at Madeira where I found the brass to the merchant Joao Esmeraldo and his wife, c.1550, in Funchal Cathedral. Christopher Columbus once stayed with him. His brass was known about, but not by me; and when I reported my sighting I received a polite acknowledgement from the Assistant Hon. Secretary, A. Colin Cole (later Sir Colin Cole, Garter Principal King of Arms 1978-92). While visiting Barbados by submarine in 1965 I found an interesting gravestone to the wonderfully-named Fernando Paleologus, 1678, and rubbed his father Theodoro's brass at Landulph, Cornwall (LSW.I), when I got home: 'descended from the Imperyal lyne of ye last Christian Emperors of Greece'. This time the Hon. Treasurer, Augustus White, suggested that 'possibly a mention of the matter could be made in the *Transactions*'. The Editor agreed: *M.B.S. Trans.*, X, pt.4 (1967), p.268.

In the same submarine, I spent two years based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, whose parish church of St. Paul was completed in 1750 and is the oldest Anglican church in Canada. It is built of pine and oak from Boston, Massachusetts, provided by George II. To my surprise I found a little brass inscription there to Louisa Boldero, 1826 (*M.B.S. Trans.*, X, pt.4 (1967), p.269).

Another of my voyages was all the way to Scotland, also by submarine. When ashore, I took the opportunity to follow up something I had found in a naval biography. The family recounted going to church in 1909 at Cruden Bay, near Peterhead, where they saw a stone slab which, they were told, had once contained the brass to a Danish prince killed there in battle. I found the slab there in 1966

and reported its existence to Frank Greenhill, a Past President of the Society, author of *Incised Effigial Slabs* (1976), and at that time our expert on Scottish brasses. He took the trouble to reach Cruden Bay by bus, and found the slab. It contained the indent of a quadrilateral brass that was unlikely to be royal, or as old as recounted in the local myth, but was worthy of being published in our *Transactions* as part of the final chapter of his Scottish Notes (*M.B.S. Trans.*, X, pt.5 (1969), pp.408-9). One of my many regrets is that I never met him.

Cruden Bay was my final maritime discovery, but towards the end of my naval career I attended a defence-related conference held in the stately home of Ditchley Park, near Oxford. On the walls of the saloon, each one beneath a set of antlers, are six brass inscriptions of 1608 and 1610, recording two hunting visits by James I and his son Henry, Prince of Wales (*M.B.S. Trans.*, XV, pt.3 (1994), pp.282-6).

After the Navy, I became Clerk to the Clothworkers' Company. One of my Liverymen gave the Society a mid-19th-century collection of rubbings amongst which was an unusual small cut-out figure of a man in armour in profile, lying on a tomb. The rubbing was annotated 'St. Lawrence Church, Thanet'. No such brass is listed for the church (St. Lawrence, Ramsgate) and an initial visit on my own didn't reveal one in a very cluttered church. Our member Stephen Freeth (now Vice-President and the editor of this *Bulletin*) suggested I take a second look, which I did, in the company of the church's archivist and armed with a ladder and torch. We discovered the figure, high up on the west wall of the south transept: it wasn't a brass but an incised stone memorial (*M.B.S. Bulletin* 92 (January 2003), pp.655-7).

At a meeting of the Society in 2010, Past President Martin Stuchfield showed us some rubbings of his collection of brasses, one of them being to an unknown naval officer, Commander John Ralph Moss who died in 1799. Being the only member of the audience with a naval background, I thought I would try to find out something about him; enough for a caption under an illustration anyway. Well, twelve months and eleven thousand words later I was able to reveal the tale of the hero of Belize (*M.B.S. Trans.*, XIX, pt.1 (2014), pp.57-80).

This project led me on later to take a Masters in Biography, but that is another story.

I think most of us would agree that the 18th century did not produce the most attractive brasses, so it was with some apprehension that I acceded to a request from David Lepine (then Editor of our *Transactions*) to produce that century's section of an edition dedicated to commemorating war dead (*M.B.S. Trans.*, XIX, pt.5 (2018), pp.457-76). Documentary evidence also produced a supplement (Chesham Bois, LSW.IV & V; *M.B.S. Bulletin* 141 (June 2019), pp.816-7).

After serving on the Executive Council, I found myself responsible for answering all the queries posed through our website. They come from all over the world, but often from Americans from military families who were posted here fifty or sixty years ago, asking to have rubbings identified. Other correspondents include metal detectorists, prospective members, churchwardens, requests for speakers and, believe it or not, someone who had had a knight tattooed on her shoulder! In closing, I must thank, among others, Derrick Chivers, Stephen Freeth and Martin Stuchfield for causing me to seem so knowledgeable; and Challe Hudson for devising a method of showing me in what parts of the country our members live; and also for facilitating our recently-introduced Zoom lectures.

**Mike Harris**



Fig 1. The school brass-rubbing outing (1954).  
(photo: © Mike Harris)



IN·MEMORY·OF·SUSAN·HARRIET·HARCOURT  
DAUGHTER·OF·GEORGE·2<sup>ND</sup>·EARL·OF·SHEFFIELD  
AND·WIFE·OF·EDWARD·HARCOURT·OF·NUNE-  
HAM·IN·THE·COUNTY·OF·OXFORD·BORN·APRIL  
13<sup>TH</sup>·1829·DIED·APRIL·4<sup>TH</sup>·1894·∴·SHE·TOOK  
AN·ACTIVE·PART·WITH·D<sup>R</sup>·CROSSE·IN·RAISING  
FUNDS·FOR·THE·BUILDING·OF·THIS·CHURCH  
AND·TO·THE·END·OF·HER·LIFE·WAS·A·DEVOTED  
MEMBER·OF·ITS·CONGREGATION·∴·THIS  
MEMORIAL·WAS·ERECTED·BY·HER·DAUGHTER  
EDITH·COUNTESS·OF·WINCHILSEA·∴·A·D·1921

*Fig 1. Susan Harriet Harcourt, d.1894,  
Holy Trinity, Hastings, Sussex.  
(photo: © Derrick Chivers)*

## Susan Harriet Harcourt (1829-94)

When I wrote *Modern Memorial Brasses*, published in 2008, I included an illustration of the attractive brass to Susan Harriet Harcourt, who died on 4th April 1894, and who was married to Edward Harcourt M.P. (1825-91), of Nuneham Courtenay and Stanton Harcourt in Oxfordshire. The brass was engraved in 1921 by George Friend, who ran a small engraving workshop in Holborn, London.<sup>1</sup> At the time I was unsure of its location, which I (wrongly) assumed was Nuneham Courtenay. Nuneham House was built in 1756 for the 1st Earl Harcourt, and in the 1760s a church was built nearby in the classical style, dedicated to All Saints. This now contains an effigy of Edward Harcourt. However the effigy was not always there. In 1872-4 Edward had built a new church, also dedicated to All Saints, in the village. In 1890 a south chapel was added, where on his death in 1891 his recumbent effigy was placed together with a seated figure of his father, Rev. William Harcourt (d.1871). Both were moved to the classical church above Nuneham House when this newer All Saints was closed in the 1970s.

Through the good offices of Derrick Chivers the location of Susan Harcourt's brass has now been discovered, not in Oxfordshire, but in East Sussex, in Holy Trinity church, Hastings. The brass is on the arcade wall between the nave and the Lady Chapel (Fig.1). It shows Susan Harcourt in a simple flowing dress kneeling at a prie-dieu, and holding in her hands a model of a church. At the base of the prie-dieu are two sets of initials, on the right G.F. for George Friend, and on the left R.P., for Sir Richard Paget, who designed the brass.

Why was Susan Harcourt (Fig.2) memorialised, not in her home church, but far away on the Sussex coast? One reason was that she was born in Sussex, at Sheffield Park, near Fletching. As her inscription states she was the daughter of George Augustus Holroyd, 2nd Earl of Sheffield. In 1849 she married Edward Harcourt, and in 1871 moved to Oxfordshire on the death of his father. The second reason for her link with Hastings may well have been the increasing popularity of the town as a fashionable watering-hole. Landed families bought private houses in the town where they would come for the winter season. Susan and Edward Harcourt purchased no.5 Robertson

Terrace, built between 1850 and 1854, as their family seaside home. It was an imposing Victorian stucco building in the Italianate style looking out to sea, with a first-floor cast-iron veranda. The 1861 Census shows that the couple were residing there with their two children, three relations and nine servants, and the 1891 Census confirms that the property was still occupied by the Harcourt family. The wealthy visitors also patronised the churches of the town, and Holy Trinity in particular became popular, especially during the incumbency of Dr. Thomas Francis Crosse, vicar from 1858 to 1889.

Crosse took the degree of B.C.L. in 1845, becoming a D.C.L. in 1851. He was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in 1846, but felt a call to ordination and served his curacy at Battle in Sussex. While being prepared for ordination by the vicar of Icklesham, he met the architect



Fig.2. Susan Harcourt with her daughter Edith.  
'Carte de visite' photograph (c.1865).  
(photo: © National Portrait Gallery, London)

Samuel Sanders Teulon (1812-73), who was restoring the church. From 1855 Dr. Crosse lived in Brighton and became interested in building Holy Trinity church. He was appointed incumbent at Michaelmas 1858, two years after he had commissioned a design from Teulon for an oddly-shaped site on Robertson Street. Teulon managed to squeeze in a broad nave, aisle and polygonal chancel, modelled on that of St. Peter at Caen, Normandy (Fig.3).

It is this distinctive polygonal chancel that Susan Harcourt holds on her brass. (The polygonal vestry at the east end was not built until 1892 and is not shown on the brass.) It must have been at this period, c.1856-7, that she was residing in Hastings and raising funds for the new church. The history of the church states, ‘. . . Holy Trinity became *par excellence* the fashionable church . . . the congregation consisted largely of wealthy and well-born people who were emphatically ‘in society’.’<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Crosse was undoubtedly dynamic and charismatic, and the building and development of the church owed much to his leadership. It was uncompromisingly High Church in its liturgical tradition. The foundation stone for the new building was laid by Countess Waldegrave in July 1857, and the church was opened in 1858, with the chancel completed in 1862.<sup>3</sup> In many of his buildings Teulon employed a flamboyance and originality which Nikolaus Pevsner has characterised as ‘ruthless individualism’. Here it is



Fig.3. Holy Trinity church, Hastings, Sussex.  
(photo: © Derrick Chivers)

apparent in the polygonal chancel, with detailing in the Early English style.

The polygonal chancel is the part of the church shown on the brass, and Susan Harcourt may well have been involved in that specific aspect of the fundraising. She was clearly attached both to Hastings and to Holy Trinity church, and in 1921, long after her death, her daughter Edith, Countess of Winchelsea (1855-1944), caused this brass to be put up in her memory. Edith had married in 1875 Murray Edward Gordon Finch-Hatton (1851-98), 12th Earl of Winchelsea and 7th Earl of Nottingham and moved to his family estate at Haverholme Priory, Lincolnshire, that Murray had inherited from his father. *Who Was Who 1897-1916* gives his addresses as 5 Robertson Terrace; 6 Bedford Square; and Haverholme Priory. Edith must have retained the Hastings property after her mother's death, and maintained a connection with the town and Holy Trinity. The brass was designed by Edith's son-in-law Sir Richard Paget, Bt., an honorary member of the R.I.B.A., who was present when the memorial was dedicated on Sunday, 5th November 1922.

His design showing Susan Harcourt kneeling as the donor, with her lapdog at her side, consciously echoes medieval brasses, and shows that the craft of memorial brass design still had considerable vigour in the early years of the 20th century.

I am extremely grateful to Derrick Chivers for discovering not only the correct location of the brass, but also much interesting information about the family which has been incorporated into this article. Martin Stuchfield has also provided welcome technical help with the photographs.

**David Meara**

- 1 David Meara, *Modern Memorial Brasses* (2008), pp.151-161; Jerome Bertram ed., *Monumental Brasses as Art and History* (1996), p.79.
- 2 E.W. Leachman, *A Church on No Man's Land, Being the Romance of Holy Trinity, Hastings* (1934).
- 3 The original site for the church had been abandoned because of a landslide, and when the new plot was secured, the poor people living there were resettled in the centre of St. Leonard's. Lady St. John, one of the subscribers to Holy Trinity, wanted to help them and built Christ Church, London Road, as a chapel of ease to St. Mary Magdalen. The church was opened in 1860, its first vicar being Rev. C.L. Vaughan, the son of Lady St. John. He is commemorated in Christ Church by a fine memorial brass showing him in eucharistic vestments, holding a chalice, within an elaborate canopy. It was designed by Clayton and Bell. It is illustrated in *Modern Memorial Brasses*, fig.26, p.43.



## A recently-discovered incised slab at Hietzing, Vienna

Adjoining the grounds of Schönbrunn Palace on the outskirts of Vienna is the parish church of Maria Hietzing. A neogothic façade dating from the 1860s disguises what is essentially a medieval building. A chapel existed on the site in the 13th century, part of a property belonging to the Teutonic Order, which in 1253 was exchanged for other estates in the possession of Klosterneuburg Abbey. Between 1414 and 1419 the abbey built the present church, which suffered damage during the Hungarian invasion of 1484 and the Turkish sieges of Vienna in 1529 and 1683. The present interior decoration is Baroque.<sup>1</sup>

During renovations in 2003 an incised slab was discovered which is now mounted on the south wall of the nave (Fig.1). It is of Adnet marble, the reddish limestone which in Austria performs the same function of a suitable stone for monuments as Purbeck in England. The slab depicts a priest in chasuble holding a chalice. His head rests on a tasselled cushion. His hair is delineated in distinctive bold strokes. The lower part of the slab is missing and the marginal inscription is consequently incomplete. It reads: *Ann<sup>o</sup> M<sup>o</sup> CCCCXXXIII<sup>o</sup> in die marie mag[dalene obiit . . . capellanus huius c]apelle. orate pro [eo]*. From records it is possible to identify this chaplain who died on the feast of St. Mary Magdalene (22nd July) 1424



Fig.1. Incised slab of Matthias, chaplain, 1424, Hietzing, Vienna.  
(photo: © Nicholas Rogers)

as one Matthias. It is likely that Matthias was in charge during the building of the present church.

**Nicholas Rogers**

<sup>1</sup> *Kleiner Kirchenführer der Pfarr- und Wallfahrtskirche Maria Hietzing* (Hietzing, n.d.); [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pfarrkirche\\_Maria\\_Hietzing](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pfarrkirche_Maria_Hietzing)

## Book review

*Death and Dying in the Middle Ages: Proceedings of the 2022 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Christian Steer and Jenny Stratford (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2024). pp. xviii, 244, 54 pp. of colour plates. ISBN 978-1-915774-19-4. £49.50.

These thirteen papers include one directly concerned with brasses: Nicholas Flory on the chantry foundation plate from the Basel Charterhouse, now in the Historisches Museum, Basel. Among other papers, Ann Adams

reconstructs the lost tomb of Louis de Gruuthuse in Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekerk, Bruges; Julian Luxford examines the chantry chapel and effigy of Prior Leschman at Hexham Abbey, Northumberland; Lisa Monnas studies the hearse-cloths of Henry VII at Oxford and Cambridge; and Richard Asquith analyses the process of executing a will. A fuller review will appear in the *Transactions*.

**Nicholas Rogers**

## The brass to John T. Appleby in the abbey grounds of Bury St. Edmunds

First published in 1948, *Suffolk Summer* is an account of John T. Appleby's wartime experiences cycling through the lanes of Suffolk. He was serving as a Technical Sergeant in the 8th Air Force between March and November 1945, before being demobbed and returning to America. The book chronicles the author's journeys to numerous towns and villages in East Anglia, looking not only at brasses, many of which he rubbed, but also at the architecture and the landscape. The book is an easy read, and, although short on detail, its 136 pages provide an interesting account of this part of England, now changed beyond recognition.

John (Jack) T(ate) Appleby was born on 10th June 1907 at Fayetteville, Washington County, Arkansas, the eldest of five children of George and Gertrude Appleby who owned orchards and a fruit-canning business. He graduated in 1923 from the University High School established as part of the University of Arkansas to support teacher training. In 1928 he read his A.B. degree from Harvard College before travelling to Paris to study at the Sorbonne. Returning to Washington, he wrote a regular column and book reviews for the *Washington Post*.

During the closing months of World War II he was posted to England as a Celestial Navigation trainer for pilots in the 8th Air Force, despite the fact that U.S.A.A.F. pilots flew their missions by day and had no need of such training. This meant that Appleby was virtually redundant, ending up doing office work which, by his account, did not amount to much. This left him plenty of time to explore the countryside around his airfields at Lavenham, Suffolk, and later at Thorpe Abbots, Norfolk.

Appleby was introduced to brass rubbing by two American soldiers he chanced to meet in Long Melford church while they were rubbing the brasses. Inspired, he rubbed his first brass on 21st April 1945, that to Jankyn Smith, 1481, in the church of St. Mary, Bury St. Edmunds (M.S.I) (Fig 1). He rubbed his last brass on 23rd August that year, the one to Robert Braunche, d.1364, and his

wives at King's Lynn, Norfolk (M.S.II). It was not easy rubbing the Braunche brass; it had been lacquered, and after sandbags had been placed on it for protection during the war, sand had become embedded in the lacquer. Finding suitable paper and heelball was not normally a problem, but at St. Mary-le-Tower, Ipswich, he found that the heelball he had purchased the day before in fading light was brown, not black. He somehow secured the help of three beat policemen to find a shop which would sell black heelball, to the astonishment of other men in uniform who assumed that he had been arrested for a serious offence.

Appleby was helped in his pursuit of brasses by a Mr. H.I. Jarman, owner of a photographic studio in Bury St. Edmunds. On being demobbed, he returned to Fayetteville, initially working on the family estates before publishing *Suffolk Summer* in 1948. His name appears in an M.B.S. membership



Fig 1. [Jankyn Smith], 1481,  
St. Mary, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk.  
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

list for 1951. He was also the author of several books on English kings (Stephen, Henry II and Richard I), and an associate editor of the *American Historical Review*. He died on 19th December 1974.

It seems very appropriate that he is commemorated by a small brass plate fixed to a pillar bordering the Old English Rose Garden within the abbey ruins at Bury St. Edmunds (Fig.2). The brass plate is ornamented with three roses commemorating his gift to the town, the construction of the rose garden. *Suffolk Summer* has been continuously in print since 1948, and the royalties at Appleby's request are still devoted to maintaining the rose garden.

It is both surprising and charming that an American who was only in England for seven months should have formed such a bond with Suffolk, its people and its brasses. His descriptions of railway travel pre-Beeching, with his bicycle, and of East Anglian life in wartime all hark back to an age which is lost for ever. Rationing limited what was available, and a cup of tea from a railway café could be just as bad then as it is now. On the other hand, petrol rationing allowed Appleby to enjoy country lanes and village streets that are now increasingly dangerous. Churches could be locked, too. He tried to get into Acton



Fig.2. The brass plate commemorating John T. Appleby, abbey ruins, Bury St. Edmunds. (photo: © Philip Whittemore)

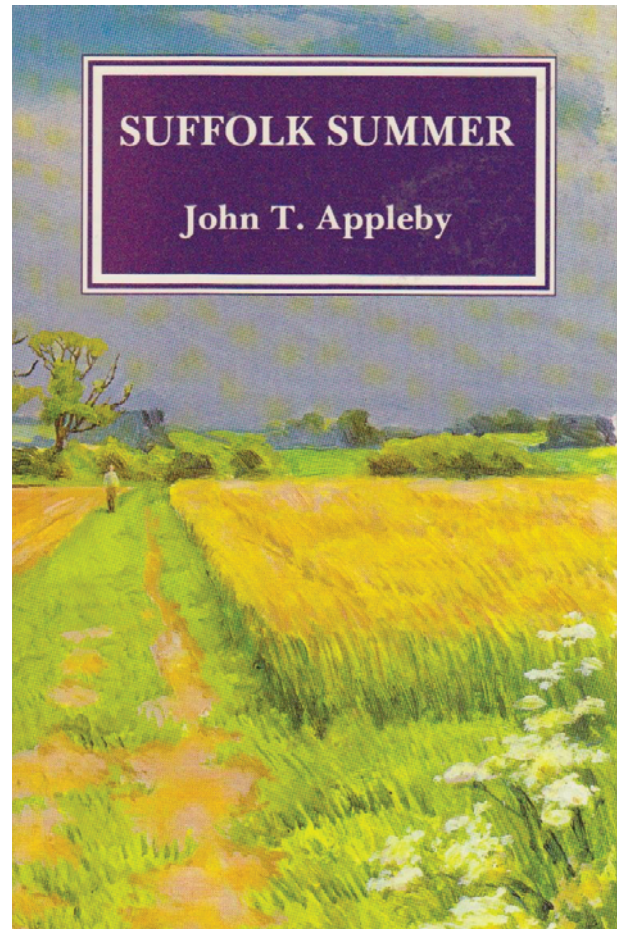


Fig.3. The front cover of a new edition of 'Suffolk Summer'. (photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

church three times, without success. Controlling his temper, 'I always felt, perhaps unreasonably, that churches with brasses should be left open at all times for the convenience of brass-rubbers.' A Roman Catholic, he was much offended to be charged five shillings to rub the brass at Trumpington. In Durham Cathedral he was reliably informed by a local man that 'at the rate the Protestants were practising birth control, soon there would be nothing but Catholics left.' Appleby's comments on the Labour landslide in the 1945 General Election are also very perceptive, and worth visiting.

If anyone hasn't read *Suffolk Summer* (Fig.3), copies are still available and I recommend it as a delightful read, especially on a church crawl around East Anglia.

**Philip Whittemore**

Sources:  
*American Historical Review*, 80, no.2 (April 1975), pp.551-2.  
 encyclopediaofarkansas.net.  
*M.B.S. Trans.*, VIII, pt.5 (1947), p.164.

## Leeds International Medieval Congress, 2024

This year over 2,700 attendees came together in Leeds and virtually for the International Medieval Congress, the largest academic conference of its kind in Europe. Taking place over four days at the beginning of July, and based at the University of Leeds, it welcomes participants from over sixty different countries. In addition to academic papers the programme includes excursions, performances and workshops, and major fairs for books, crafts and societies. There is also a very popular disco.

Over 2,000 papers were presented during the four days, and nearly fifty sessions could be taking place at any one time. This year, fortunately, the organisers introduced a new virtual platform so delegates can view recorded sessions afterwards. There is a terabyte of recorded sessions now available for conference attendees!

The theme in 2024 was 'Crisis', and virtually every aspect of Medieval Studies was covered in the conference papers. Sessions of particular interest to M.B.S. members covered mourning, remembrance, and commemoration and the senses. They included papers on the evolution of women's dress during the Wars of the Roses, clerical cadaver monuments,

remembrance in Tudor London, and funerary monuments to children.

The Society attended the Historical and Archaeological Societies Fair as part of *Making Leeds Medieval*, the celebratory event each year on the final day of the conference. This fair is open to the general public as well as delegates, and combines displays from societies and crafts with live entertainment including music, combat displays and falconry. It was a good opportunity to engage with students, academics and the wider public and to explain the range of events and research undertaken by the Society, as well as our advice and funding for conservation. We reckon we spoke to around fifty people during the day. Participants were able to browse recent copies of the *Transactions*, learn about the opportunities to publish their own research through our publications, and find out details of the Jonathan Ali essay prize. Special thanks are due to Dirk Visser who assisted me in manning the stall, and to Challe Hudson for providing books on brasses for visitors to peruse (Fig.1), and a QR code poster for quick access to our website.

**John Lee**



*The Society's table of publications at the Leeds International Medieval Congress.  
(photo: © John Lee)*