

Monumental Brasses in Somerset

PART I.

BY ARTHUR B. CONNOR

INTRODUCTION

MONUMENTAL brasses are not numerous in the West Country. It is a land of stone. Moreover the metal coming from Flanders had far to travel. As a picture-gallery of costume the display of Somerset brasses is not representative, though the pictures are almost invariably good of their kind. No single brass of the thirteenth or fourteenth century is still extant, and one indent only of the latter century remains. It is in the commonly despised inscriptions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that the individual interest of Somerset brasses may best be found. In no county are there more beautiful examples of Roman lettering, and especially of that exuberance of flourishes for which no name less pompous than calligraphy seems appropriate.

Military.—Of armed figures of the fifteenth century there are three examples of considerable beauty, all in complete plate armour. At South Petherton Sir Giles Daubeney, who died in 1445, but whose brass was engraved *circ.* 1430, lies with his lady under a fine double canopy. This brass was restored by Messrs. Waller in 1883. Sir William Wadham, who died in 1452, appears to have laid down the brass to himself and his mother at Ilminster during his lifetime, *circ.* 1440. Each figure has its own triple canopy and super-canopy. Sir Thomas Chedder, 1442, lies alone on his altar-tomb at Cheddar, while

a far inferior brass to his widow Dame Isabel, *circ.* 1475, may be found on the floor of the chancel below.

Of the latter half of the century the figures of John Seyntmour, 1485, at Beckington; an unknown knight, probably a Sydenham, *circ.* 1490, at Chedzoy; and John Payne with livery collar from which hangs the portcullis badge of the Tudors, 1496, at Hutton, are good examples of the beginnings of degeneracy.

The figures of the first half of the sixteenth century descend to a lower plane of clumsiness and ill-proportion, while retaining the simplicity of line of former times. Of this period are, John Brent, 1524, at Cossington; Richard Bluett, 1524, at Kittisford; Thomas Golde, 1525, a small kneeling figure at Crewkerne; Nicholas Fraunceis, 1526, with marginal inscription and four shields boldly carved in stone, at Combe Florey; Sir George Speke, 1528, at Dowlish Wake; and a small quaint kneeling figure of local workmanship, Thomas Payne, 1528, at Hutton.

In the latter half of the sixteenth century and in the beginning of the seventeenth a remarkable improvement in drawing is somewhat discounted by an ill-advised attempt at realism in the form of elaborate shading. No finer examples remain in the whole of England than the large effigies of two kinsmen, John Windham, 1596, at St. Decuman's, and Nicholas Wadham, founder of Wadham College, Oxford, 1618, at Ilminster. The same artist was evidently responsible for both, as also for the figures of an unknown civilian and wife, *circ.* 1600, at Harrow, Middlesex. Other good examples are Sir John Wyndham, 1571, at St. Decuman's; Raphe Jenyns, 1572, at Churchill; and a poorly engraved figure of Edmund Windham, 1616, at St. Decuman's. William Strode, 1649, at Shepton Mallet, kneels in the midst of his family while Death strikes at his wife Joan with an arrow. George Hodges, *circ.* 1630, at Wedmore, wears a buff coat girded with a sash, breeches of leather buttoned at the sides, and jack-boots. He carries a small pike in his right hand.

Ecclesiastical.—Of brasses of priests two only remain, both half effigies, both in copes; an unknown priest, *circ.* 1460, at Wells Cathedral, and John Heth, rector, 1464, at Tintinhull;

but the whole length figure of John Martock, 1503, a physician, at Banwell, also wears a cope; he has no tonsure. Two small half-figures of Martin Forester, a friar, *circ.* 1460, are engraved one on each face of the lectern at Yeovil¹; and a post-Reformation Archdeacon of Taunton, Philip Biss, D.D., 1618, wears civilian clothes, gown and hood at Batcombe. In Wells Cathedral there are still to be seen four brassless slabs of bishops, eight stones on which the indents of priests' brasses may be clearly traced, and one more of a figure in civil dress with ruff and long gown, which may have represented an ecclesiastic of post-Reformation date. Thomas Carter, an architect, who, working for the Society of Antiquaries, made most valuable and accurate plans, sketches and notes in 1794, gives one more indent of a bishop and no less than twenty-two indents of priests, which have entirely disappeared. He sketches also a large complete brass, showing a priest in cope holding a book with marginal inscription recording his name and date; John Roland, canon, 1427. This fine brass is also mentioned by Gough—*Sepulchral Monuments*, ii, 367. The indent of a prior with crozier showing over his right shoulder has been recently exposed to view at Queen Charlton, where the priors of Keynsham had a court house. An interesting indent of a priest kneeling before a crucifix was discovered under plaster on the east wall of the cloisters at Wells in 1927.² At Wedmore there is the indent of a half effigy. Finally a full-sized mitre with inscription and shield commemorates Bishop Lake, 1626, at Wells.

Civil.—The earliest example of civil dress is the beautiful figure of Edmund Forde, 1439, at Swainswick. Other characteristic examples of the fifteenth century are at Banwell, unknown, *circ.* 1480; Roger Harper, merchant, 1493, at Axbridge, and John Bedbere, *circ.* 1500, at Weare. Early in the sixteenth century John Compton, 1505, at Beckington; John Wyther, 1497 (but engraved *circ.* 1520), at Dunster; and Giles Penne, 1519, at Yeovil, are reminiscent of the woodcuts

¹ The faces were intentionally erased at the Reformation and the rest of the effigies is rapidly disappearing under rigorous polishing with abrasive material in this more enlightened age.

² *Som. & Dor. Notes & Queries*, xix, 121-2.

of the time. A headless figure John Blandon, 1554, at Banwell marks the beginning of the tendency towards elaboration. There are some good figures at the end of this century and during the first few years of the next. The brass to John Cutte, mayor of Bristol, 1575, at Burnett shows his merchant's mark and the arms of the city of Bristol. Others are Nicholas Grobham, 1594, at Bishops Lydeard; Rice Davis, 1604, at Backwell; James Biss, 1606, and William Bisse, 1625, both at Croscombe; and two well-drawn figures, seemingly by the same hand; John Worthe, *circ.* 1600, at Thorne St. Margaret; and William Harrison, 1615, at Luccombe. Two pictorial compositions at Wells complete the list. At the Cathedral Humfrey Willis looks towards heaven, turning his back on the pomps and vanities of this wicked world. At St. Cuthbert's Frauncis Hayes kneels on a chess-board under what appears to be the tester of a four-poster, minus the posts.

Ladies.—In Somerset the earliest examples show the kirtle and mantle, and the 'crespine' head-dress, in which the hair is drawn up in a netted caul leaving two small bunches exposed above the ears, and over this a veil or kerchief which hangs down over the shoulders. Examples occur at South Petherton, Joan first wife of Sir Giles Daubeney, *circ.* 1430, who accompanies her husband; and Dame Mary his second wife, 1442, who lies alone; and at Minehead, a somewhat worn figure of an unknown lady, *circ.* 1440. Three examples of widows occur in the same century, Joan, mother of Sir William Wadham, *circ.* 1440, at Ilminster; Elizabeth, widow of Robert Walshe, 1441, at Langridge; and Dame Isabel Chedder, *circ.* 1475, at Cheddar. Examples of the butterfly head-dress are to be seen at Banwell, the wife of an unknown civilian, *circ.* 1480; at Beckington, Elizabeth, wife of John Seyntmour, 1485; and Combe Florey, Florence, wife of John Fraunceys, 1425,—kneeling with her two daughters, the elder having her hair drawn back into a net at the back of her head, the younger with a maiden's flowing hair.

Unusual types of the kennel, or pedimental head-dress of early Tudor times occur at Axbridge, Joan, wife of Roger Harper, 1493; and at Hutton on the brasses of Elizabeth, wife of John Payne, 1496, who wears a charming girle; and her

namesake, wife of Thomas Payne, 1528. Ordinary types are shown at Beckington, Edith wife of John Compton, 1505 ; at Yeovil, Isabel wife of Giles Penne, 1519 ; Dunster, Agnes wife of John Wyther, *circ.* 1520 ; Cossington, Maud wife of John Brent, 1524 ; and at Kittisford, where Agnes wife of Richard Bluett conforms to a pattern unique in Somerset, which is common all over England ; but especially so in the Home Counties.

The ' Paris Hede ', familiar from portraits of Elizabeth's reign, is particularly well shown in brasses to the memory of Jane, wife of Lord Edward Seymour of Berry Pomeroy, *circ.* 1565, at Fivehead ; and Elizabeth wife of Sir John Wyndham, 1571, at St. Decuman's. The latter wears an embroidered underskirt of a fine bold design. Other examples occur at Churchill, Jane wife of Raphe Jenyns, 1572 ; Burnett, Joan wife of John Cutte, 1575, Bishops Lydeard, Eleanor wife of Nicholas Grobham, 1594 ; Backwell, Dorothy wife of Rice Davis, 1604 ; and Hinton St. George, Elizabeth wife of Adam Martin, *circ.* 1600 ; and, with the back lappet thrown forward over the head, Florence wife of John Windham, 1596, at St. Decuman's ; and Dorothy wife of Nicholas Wadham, 1618, at Ilminster. Margery Windham, 1585 (but probably engraved at the same time as her husband's brass at St. Decuman's, 1616), at Stogumber ; the wife of William Bisse, 1625, at Croscombe ; and Sara Kemish, 1621, at Portbury, wear an exaggerated form of this head-dress which has developed into a large hood or calash. The same is seen on the engraved stone to the memory of Nathanill Still and wife, 1626, at Hutton. The wife and daughters of James Biss, 1606, at Croscombe, and a daughter of Nicholas Grobham, 1594, at Bishops Lydeard wear high-crowned broad-brimmed hats over the ' Paris hede '. A very striking instance of this style of hat in stone and colour may be seen at South Brent church. Katherine, wife of John Morley, vicar, 1652, at North Petherton wears a simple cap of the style known to-day as ' Puritan '.

Shrouded Figures and Skeletons.—No shrouded figure survives ; but at Axbridge there is a most interesting indent, showing two kneeling figures with prayer-scrolls to the Holy Trinity, foot inscription, and four groups of children, all in shrouds. This stone has unfortunately been almost entirely

covered by the organ. Skeletons occur merely as adjuncts personating Death, as at Shepton Mallet, where Death strikes at Joan Strode with an arrow; and on several late inscriptions.

Children stand or kneel below or behind their parents in many brasses. At Ilton is the sole instance of a child alone. Nicholas, son of Sir Nicholas Wadham, 1508, wears swaddling clothes.

Crosses.—None remain. There are however three early indents of floreated crosses on coffin-shaped slabs in Wells Cathedral. Another slab at Langridge once contained the effigy of Robert Walshe, Esq., 1427, within a floreated cross. As mentioned above on the east wall of the cloisters at Wells an indent shows the figure of a priest kneeling before a crucifix.

Canopies.—There are fine examples at South Petherton, *circ.* 1430; Ilminster, *circ.* 1440; and Minehead, *circ.* 1440, much mutilated. At North Petherton the canopy over the figure of Eleanor Powlett, 1413, is all gone. The two side shafts were still *in situ* in 1850, the date of a rubbing in the Braikenridge extra-illustrated copy of Collinson's *History of Somerset* in Taunton Castle Library. At Wells Cathedral the huge stone with indent of the brass to Bishop Walter de Heselshaw, 1308, shows a canopy with figures of saints on the shafts. Other indents of canopies at Wells are—an unknown priest, fifteenth century (?); Bishop Ralph Ergham, 1401; and Joan, Viscountess de Lisle (?), 1463.

Religious Devices.—Representations of the Holy Trinity once occurred, as shown by indents, on brasses to Bishop Heselshaw, 1308, and Bishop Cornish, 1513, both in Wells Cathedral; on an indent of shrouded figures at Axbridge; on Thomas Payne's brass, 1528, at Hutton. One evangelistic symbol (St. Matthew) remains at Cheddar, *circ.* 1475; and indents may be seen on Bishop Ergham's brass, on brasses to two unknown priests in Wells Cathedral, and on that of a prior at Queen Charlton.

Collars.—John Payne, of Hutton, 1496, wears a livery collar, from which hangs the portcullis badge of the Tudors. There are no instances on brasses of the Lancastrian collar of SS., or the Yorkist collar of Suns and Roses in this county.

Heraldry.—The arms of the City of Bristol may be seen on the brass to John Cutte, *d.* 1575, mayor of Bristol in 1566, at

Burnett. There are good late achievements on the great Wyndham and Wadham brasses at St. Decuman's and Ilminster. Well-designed shields occur at Baltonsborough, Richard Walton, 1609; Charlinch, Jasper Bourne, 1640; and Fitzhead, 1664 and 1684 to members of the Cannon family. Very pretty designs, similar to those found on the plate of the period occur at Kingston St. Mary, 1672 and 1689,—Dyke; Dunster, 1689,—Blackford; and Pilton, 1712,—Strode. The four shields on the brass to Nicholas Fraunceis, 1526, at Combe Florey are carved in stone.

Merchants' Marks.—At Beckington the brass of John Compton, 1505, shows his mark, and two angels hold his rebus. Here too is the mark of Thomas Webb, clothman, 1585. John Cutte's mark balances the arms of the City of Bristol on his brass at Burnett, 1575.

Engraver's Name.—Signed brasses are very rare. One only in this county bears the engravers' signature, 'Guliel' Cockey de Wincalto' Sculpsit' on an inscription in very pleasing script to Edward Bennet and wife Susan, 1691, at South Brewham. Sam. Hill a former pupil signs the forty verses in praise of his schoolmaster Henry Trat, 1679, at Crewkerne.

Palimpsests.—Up to the present time one palimpsest has been discovered. The brass of Jane, wife of Lord Edward Seymour at Fivehead, *circ.* 1565, shows on the reverse two portions of a fourteenth-century Flemish brass, one a portion of a marginal inscription in Spanish; and an inscription of English workmanship to Gilbert Thornbern, rector of some unknown church, 1428. On the reverse of the shield are a portion of a civilian and a portion of a lady, both sixteenth century.¹ The brasses to Sir John Wyndham and wife, 1571, at St. Decuman's; and Raphe Jenyns and wife, 1572, at Churchill, which may well have come from the same workshop, show many of the known signs of being palimpsest.

Inscriptions.—One Lombardic letter E and two lozenge-shaped stops, part of the inscription surrounding the brass to Bishop Heselshaw, 1308, were discovered under the stonework of Bishop Bubwith's chantry in Wells Cathedral in 1926.² A

¹ *Proc. Soc. Antiq.* xxi, 334-8; *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.* lxxi, 1.

² *Som. & Dor. Notes & Queries*, xviii, 214.

Lombardic letter M. found on the site of the Abbey is in the Glastonbury Museum, and there are some broken indents in the undercroft of the chapter-house at Wells.

The black-letter inscriptions show no unusual features and do not call for special comment; but one to the memory of John Dodesham senior, and his wife Ellen, has a pretty device of leaves at either end at Cannington.

The lettering of inscriptions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Somerset is remarkably fine and scarcely equalled elsewhere in England. Roman lettering may be seen at its best on inscriptions to Bishop Arthur Lake, 1628, and Edward Wykes, 1644, in Wells Cathedral; on four inscriptions to members of the Hungerford family, 1645, 1652, 1653 and 1658, at Wellow; and at St. Cuthbert's, Wells, to Rebecca Sever, 1727.

Perhaps the speciality of Somerset is that form of scrolly lettering with ingenious flourishes which is so pleasing to the eye and which seems to go so well with the periwigs worn by the owners of the names which it records, and their pompous modes of speech. Beautiful examples may be found at Kingston St. Mary, Thomas Dyke, M.D., 1689; at Dunster, Richard Blackford, of the same date; at Pilton, 1712; and at Nailsea, Ann Tyndall, 1720. Less unrestrained examples occur at Otterford, where verses inscribed on two brass plates are let into leger-stones to the memory of two Giles Combes, both of whom died in 1677.

Some lettering has considerable originality, and the hand of William Cockey of Wincanton may be traceable elsewhere. The writer hopes that the reproduction of some of these inscriptions in this and in future volumes may help forward the revival of good lettering which has been so apparent in recent years.

Miscellaneous.—Captain Thomas Hodges, slain at the siege of Antwerp about 1583, 'wonne two ensigns from the enemy'. He left three legacies, 'his soule to his Lord Jesus, his body to be lodged in Flemish earth, his heart to be sent to his deare wife in England'. The brass to his memory at Wedmore, engraved *circ.* 1630, takes the form of an inscription on a cartouche flanked by the two furled ensigns, and surmounted by an inscribed heart.

An inscribed heart also forms part of the inscription to Robert Kellett, 1641, at West Bagborough.

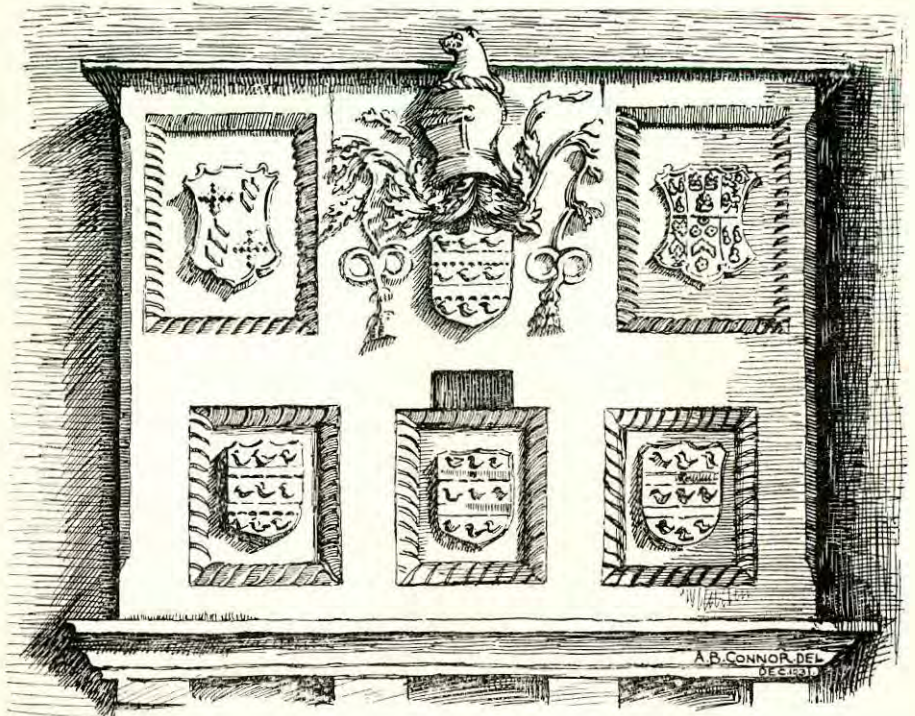
The inscription at St. Decuman's to John Windham and his wife, 1596, is in dialogue. The verses on the inscription to Richard Morice, *circ.* 1580, are an acrostic, and an anagram was lost many years since from Dunster. Louis, Chevalier de Misiers, 'A French gentleman who behaved himself with great covrage and gallantry 18 yeares in the English services and was vnfortunately slaine on ye 6th of Jvly 1685 at the battel of Weston (Sedgemoor) where he behaved himself withall the covrage imaginable against the King's enemies comanded by ye rebel Dvke of Mvnmovth' is commemorated by a small inscription at Middlezoy.

Lost Brasses.—Two brasses, which are lost to the county, are still in existence. An inscription to John Bernard, treasurer and residentiary of Wells, 1459, formerly in Wells Cathedral, is now in the British Museum. In 1924¹ a stone containing an interesting, and in some respects unique brass was found when clearing some outbuildings for conversion into a garage at Grove Park, Warwick. The brass consists of the figure of a knight in plate armour wearing on his head a curiously fluted salade; his lady in butterfly head-dress; foot inscription and shield. Another shield is probably missing. The inscription gives the names, John Thudderle (a mistake for Chudderle, or Chudleigh), and wife Alice. No date is given, but the brass may be dated *circ.* 1475. It has been traced to Hinton St. George through a reference in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1812, part 2, p. 417.

In the Braikenridge extra-illustrated copy of Collinson's History are rubbings, dated 1848, of two brasses now lost—from Hemington, a small figure in civil dress and inscription to John Baumfelde, 1528, 'whyche deputed to god ffull mekely'; from Banwell, an inscription only to Thomas Morse, 1608. Mention is made by Carter, Gough and others of the inscription to John Bernard and the brass to Canon Roland, and also to John Spekington, canon and subdean, 1462, in Wells Cathedral.²

¹ *The Antiquaries Journal*, v, 170–2, 218.

² For a list of brasses mentioned by Collinson and Phelps, which appear to be lost, see *Som. & Dor. Notes & Queries*, xviii, 257.



Thomas more of the city of Taunton
 town of England here by his wife and
 children the 26 day of March the year
 1576 and had 2 wives by the first
 he left 4 children and by the second
 4 more by the third 3 more and
 all of good blood. Amen.

TAUNTON; ST. MARY MAGDALENE
 Monument to the Memory of Thomas More, 1576
 (Also small inscribed brass plate)

MONUMENTAL BRASSES IN SOMERSET

TAUNTON, ST. MARY MAGDALENE

I.—*Inscription; Thomas More, of the Priory, Taunton, Esq., 1576. (Plate XVII.)*

Inscription in outlined black-letter, which has been filled in with red colouring matter, measures $5\frac{1}{8}$ by $9\frac{3}{4}$ in., and consists of seven lines—

Thomas · more · of The · pryory · of · tabn
 ton · esquyar · hear · lyng · departyd ·
 this · lyfe · The · 26 · day · of · marche · and
 dni · 1576 · and · had · 2 · wyves · by · the · first ·
 he · left · lybing · robart · gefrey · frabncis
 and · iohan · by · the · second · iespar · and
 florance · god · blese · Them · all ·

This small brass plate forms part of a mural erection of free-stone, 7 ft. in width, which once surmounted an altar-tomb in the chancel. It appears to have been removed to its present position on the west wall of the south aisle, and the altar-tomb destroyed, at the 'restoration' of the church in 1845.

An achievement of arms, with shield, esquire's helmet, crest and mantling, is carved in relief. It is flanked by two tilting shields in oblong frames with fluted bevels. Under the achievement is the inscription in brass, below which are three shields in similar frames, each containing the same arms of More of Taunton with marks of difference.

The heraldry is given by Mr. F. Were in *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, viii, 180.

- I. *Quarterly 1 and 4 (gules) a cross lozengy (argent). STOWELL. 2 and 3 (azure) three bends (argent). MERTON. Sir Matthew Stawel married Eleanor, one of the daughters and co-heirs of Sir Richard Merton. Collinson, iii, 250.*
- II. *Achievement. (Argent) two bars engrailed (azure) between nine martlets, 3, 3 and 3 (gules). MORE of Taunton. On a helmet on a wreath a tiger's head erased (argent) should be pierced through the neck with a broken spear or, headed argent. (The animal represented on the monu-*

ment appears to be a bear. The head is coupé, not erased.)

- III. *Quarterly 1 and 6 (azure) three pears pendant (or). STUKELEY. 2. (Gules) three leopards' faces reversed jessant de lys (or). CANTELUPE. 3. (Gules) three lions rampant (or) membered (azure). FITZHERBERT. 4. (Argent) a chevron engrailed between three fleurs de lys (sable). AFFETON. 5. (Argent) a chevron wavy (engrailed?) between three roses (gules) seeded (or). MANYNGFORD.*

IV. MORE, as before.

V. MORE, as before, with crescent for difference.

VI. MORE, as before, with mullet for difference.

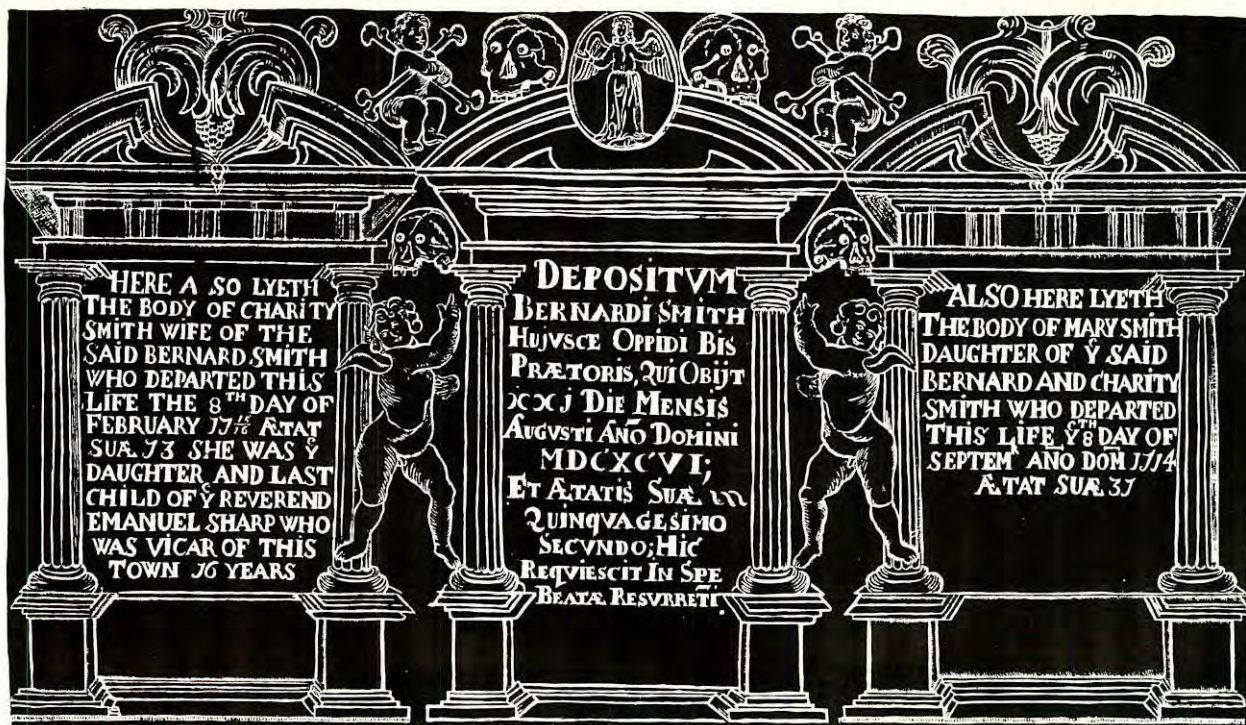
In the year 1549 Sir Francis Bryan and Matthew Coltehirste, to whom Henry VIII granted the Priory of Taunton, procured a licence for alienating it and its various possessions to one Thomas More, descended from the family of More of Bagborough. The licence is dated at Westminster the 22nd of June in that year.¹ 'Mr. More resided in a house called the Priory, in Taunton, where he died in the year 1576, and was buried in the church of St. Mary Magdalene, on the south side of the communion table, where there is a table monument erected to his memory, with many coats of arms.'²

His first wife was Elizabeth, dau. of John Constable, by whom he had—

1. Robert More, of Hawkchurch, co. Dorset, Esq., who married Edith, dau. of Dennys Bond of Purbeck, co. Dorset, and died without issue.
2. Geoffrey More, died without issue.
3. Francis More, of the Priory, Taunton, married Grace, dau. of John St. Albyn of Alfoxton, co. Somerset, who subsequently married, as his second wife, 18 Aug. 1597, Lewis Pope. (See below under heading *Lost Brass.*) By her Francis More had two sons, Francis who died in the lifetime of his father, and Thomas. A daughter Katherine was married in 1623 to Edward Fry of Cannington.

¹ See *History of Taunton Priory*, Rev. Thos. Hugo, *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.* ix, 125-6. He gives a full list of the possessions of the Priory, and references. Orig. 3 Edw. VI, 4 pars, rot. 95; and Rep. Orig. B.M. Add. MS. 6367, p. 98. Appendix, No. CLXXIII.

² Savage's *History of Taunton*, 1822, p. 95.



TAUNTON: ST. MARY MAGDALENE

Inscribed Plate to Bernard Smith (twice Mayor of Taunton) and Members of his Family, 1696-1716

Thomas More married secondly Elizabeth (Edith) daughter of William Stukeley, by whom he had two children,—

1. Sir Jaspar More of Heytesbury, co. Wilts., knt., high sheriff of that county. He married Catharine, dau. of Sir Thomas Packington of Aylesbury, co. Bucks., and died without issue, leaving Thomas, second son of his half-brother Francis, his heir.
2. Florence More married first Edward Courtenay, son and heir of Sir Pierce Courtenay, knt., and secondly Humphrey Walrond, of Bovey, Esq.

The following is an extract from *The Particular Description of the County of Somerset* by Thomas Gerard of Trent, 1633, *Somerset Record Society*, xv, 59, ‘ . . . that fatal thunder-clapp in Henry y^e eight’s daies amongst the rest of religious houses overthrew this priory to the ground, and now in place of it stands a handsome house built by the Moores who still owne it, and one of whom I remember I have seene a tombe in the Church haveing graven on it their Armes of arg. two barres ingrailed asure betweene nine martletts gules; but this house, the cause I knowe not, is so neglected that it is altogether uninhabited.’

II.—*Inscription; Bernard Smith, twice Mayor of Taunton, 1696, aged 52; his daughter Mary, 1714, aged 37; his wife Charity, daughter of the Rev. Emanuel Sharp, 1715–16, aged 73. On the south wall of the south-east chapel. (Plate XVIII.)*

The plate, which measures $12\frac{1}{4}$ by 22 in., shows three inscribed panels, each in a frame composed of an entablature and broken pediment, supported by two fluted Doric columns. The middle of the centre pediment is filled in by an oval, containing the full-length figure of an angel. Two large skulls are perilously perched on the curved sides of the pediment. The pediments on either side are enriched with a conventional design of palm-branches (?) from which hangs a bunch of grapes. Two naked boy angels point upwards to skulls on either side of the central panel, while two naked boys sit, with no visible means of support, hugging cross-bones, in the

spandrels caused by the junction of the pediments. In spite of the absurdity of the component parts, the drawing is not without merit, and the whole forms a dignified composition thoroughly characteristic of the period.

First panel—thirteen lines; central panel—twelve lines; third panel—eight lines: in Roman capitals.

HERE ALSO LYETH
THE BODY OF CHARITY
SMITH WIFE OF THE
SAID BERNARD SMITH
WHO DEPARTED THIS
LIFE THE 8TH DAY OF
FEBRUARY 1715
ÆTAT
SUE 73 SHE WAS Y^e
DAUGHTER AND LAST
CHILD OF Y^e REVEREND
EMANUEL SHARP WHO
WAS VICAR OF THIS
TOWN 16 YEARS

DEPOSITVM
BERNARDI SMITH
HUJVSCE OPPIDI BIS
PRÆTORIS, QUI OBijt
XXj Die Mensis
AUGVSTI ANO DOMINI
MDCXCVI;
ET ÆTATIS SUE (scrolls)
QUINQVAGESIMO
SECUNDO; Hic
REQVIESCIT IN SPE
BEATÆ RESVRREŢI.

ALSO HERE LYETH
THE BODY OF MARY SMITH
DAUGHTER OF Y^e SAID
BERNARD AND CHARITY
SMITH WHO DEPARTED
THIS LIFE Y^e 8TH DAY OF
SEPTEMBER ANO DOMINI 1714
ÆTAT SUE 37

Bernard Smith, twice Mayor of Taunton, married Charity, dau. and youngest child of Emanuel Sharp, for sixteen years vicar of St. Mary's Church, Taunton, 9 Sept. 1669, and died 21 Aug. 1696, aged 57. Charity Smith died 8 Feb. 1715–16 aged 73. There is a tablet on the east wall of the same chapel, on the north side of the altar, to the memory of her father, Emanuel Sharp, his wife Elizabeth, 1689, and their eldest dau. Margerite, who died in 1684.

The adventurous career of Emanuel Sharp is fully narrated in John Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy in the late times of the Grand Rebellion*, p. 369. His father, dying in possession of the rectory of Badialton, left him the advowson, of which he was deprived until the Restoration, when he was reinstated. He was instituted to the vicarage of Taunton, 11 Nov. 1663, and died 20 Jan. 1678–9, aged 70.

LOST BRASS

Savage in his *History of Taunton*, 1822, gives the following :—

(On a Brass Plate.)

Here Christopher Saunders' daughter sleeps under this marble
stone,
Whose Christian lyfe and godly end to God and world is known.
She Elenor by name was call'd and eke was Lewis Pope's Wife,
With whome in all humility and love she led her Lyfe.
Amidst the bitter panges of death at no tyme did she cease,
To parents and to husband both bequeathing love and peace ;
And strengthened she above all strength did suffer paines with
joy,
Embracing Christ, bid world adieu, but kept her unborne boy.
Obiit 12 Decemb. 1595.

In the Marriage Register, 7 Oct. 1594, 'Lewse Pope and Ellin Saunders', and 18 Aug. 1597, 'Lewse Pope and Mrs. Grace Moore'. Lewis Pope married, as his second wife, Grace, dau. of John St. Albyn, of Alfoxton, widow of Francis More. (See *children of No. I.*)

The will of Lewis Pope, of Taunton, Somerset, gent., is dated 22 June 1623, and proved 20 Dec. 1623, by his dau. Johane Pope [126 *Swann*]. He mentions his wife. Thomas Moore, my wife's son, and Roger Prowse, overseers.

DUNSTER

I.—*Effigies of John Wyther, 1497, in civil dress, and Agnes his wife ; also their eldest son John, with foot inscription. Brass engraved, circ. 1520. (Plate XIX.)*

Two effigies of a common type slightly turned towards each other. John Wyther is represented clean shaven and with long hair, wearing over his doublet a fur-trimmed gown with deep full sleeves, and on his feet large round-toed shoes. His wife wears the pedimental head-dress with plain lappets, a close-fitting gown with fur cuffs and fur round the neck and the hem of the skirt. Round the hips is a plaited girdle,

ending in a metal tag with beaded end. Her shoes are also large and round-toed. Below the figures is a four-line inscription in black-letter :

Of y^e charite pray for the soules of Johⁿ wyther & agnes his wyf
& Johⁿ wyther their eldest sone whose bodys Restyth vnder this
stone anno dⁿⁱ Millmo CCCCLxxxvij^o penultimo die septēbris
expectando generalem resurreconem Hortuor' et bitā eteynā amen.

The male effigy measures $19\frac{1}{4}$ by 6 in., the female $19\frac{3}{8}$ by $6\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; the inscription plate $5\frac{1}{4}$ by 23 in. The two figures and the inscription have been relaid in a new stone on the floor at the west end of the nave, north of the font. The original stone has disappeared. This brass is mentioned in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1808, pt. ii, p. 873, and illustrated, Plate II, fig. 8. The figures alone are illustrated in *A History of Dunster*, by Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte, p. 402.

Little is known of John Wyther. That he was a baker appears from an account of proceedings instituted by the Prior and Convent of Bath who applied to the Lord Privy Seal for remedy of certain wrongs which, they said, had been done to their brethren at Dunster by several persons, among whose names appears 'John Wyther, baker'. (*Star Chamber Proceedings*, Hen. VII, no. 122.)

John Wyther the younger made his will in 1532. He seems to have placed this brass to the memory of his parents and himself about the year 1520 (the date suggested by the costume and style of engraving), and to have forgotten to leave room for the date of his own death to be added.

II.—*Inscription and shield ; Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Chamberlayn, alderman of London, wife of Hugh Stewkeley of Marsh [in Dunster], Esq., 1598, aged 56, lived a widow for ten years.*

Inscription, $8\frac{3}{4}$ by $31\frac{1}{2}$ in., in nine lines of Roman capitals—

HERE LYES BVRIED ^EY BODY OF THAT VERTVOVS GENTLEWOMAN ELIZABETH (THE
WIFE OF HVGH STEWKELEY OF MARSH ESQVIRE, THE DAUGHTER OF RICHARDE CHAM-
BERLAYN, OF LOND^O ALDERMAN, WHOE LIVED A WYDOWE · X · YERES, & DYED ^EY XIXTH OF



Et pro cheris man for the soules of John Wyther & Agnes his wyf
 & John Wyther their eldest sone whose bodies resteth under this
 stone anno dñi milmo CCCC lxxxvijº per ultimo die septºbris
 expectando generalem resurrectionem evortuoz et vita eterna amen

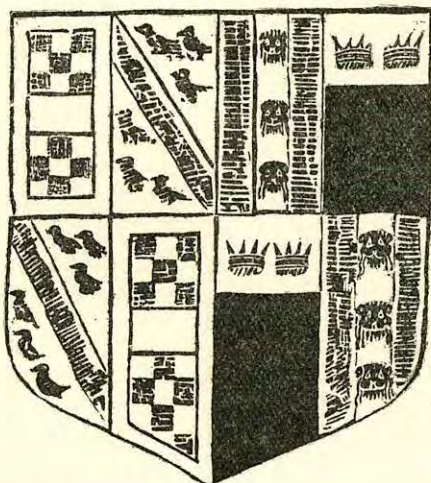
DUNSTER

Effigies of John Wyther, 1497, and Agnes his wife
 (Brass engraved circa 1520)

MONUMENTAL BRASSES IN SOMERSET

SEPTEMBER, 1598. BEINGE OF THE AGE OF . 56 YERES . LEVINGE BEHIND HER BY HER
 SAYD HVS BAND . 2 . SONNES, & 4 . DAUGHTERS. THOMAS. & GEORGE THO. : MARIED
 ELIZABETH SOLE DAUGHTER & HEIRE OF IOHN GOODWYN, ELDEST SONNE OF SR
 IO : GOODWYN OF WOORNE IN ^EY COVNTIE OF BVCKING̃ : KNIGHT. IOANE ^EY WIFE OF
 GEORGE LVTTRELL OF DVNSTER CASTLE ESQVIRE, SVZAN MARIED VNTO HENRY DRV :
 RY OF HYGELEY IN ^EY COṼTIE OF BVCKING̃. ESQVIRE, MARGARET & VRSULA VNMARIED.

Above the inscription is a shield, $6\frac{1}{2}$ by $5\frac{1}{2}$ in., (*see accompanying illustration*), bearing—
 Quarterly I and IV, chequy (*arg. and sable*) a fess (*gu.*) all within
 a bordure (*az.*). STUKELEY.¹



II and III (*az.*) a bend between 6 martlets (*arg.*). LUTTRELL.
 Impaling. Quarterly I and IV (*erm.*) on a pale (*sable*) 3 lions' faces (*or.*). CHAMBERLAIN.
 II and III (*arg.*) on a chief (*az.*) 2 eastern crowns (*or.*).
 DOWNES.²

Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Chamberlain, alderman of

¹ Arms (quarterly) confirmed and crest granted to Thomas Stewkeley of Marshe, Somerset, Esq., by R. Lee, Clarencieux, 21 June 1595.

² In 1588 Robert Cooke, Clarencieux, granted a quarterly coat to Robert Chamberlain, gent., son of Richard Chamberlain, late alderman and sheriff of London, and Anne, his wife, daughter and heir of Robert Downes of Yalding, Kent, gent.

London, married as his second wife, Hugh Stewkeley of Marsh in Dunster. Her sister Margery married Edmund Windham. There are brasses to the memory of Margery, 1585, at Stogumber, and of her husband Edmund Windham, 1616, at St. Decuman's. Elizabeth had two sons and five daughters by Hugh Stewkeley. A daughter Anne, who died before her parents, is not mentioned in the inscription.

In his will, dated Jan. . . ., 1587, proved Feb. 19, 1588 (1588-9), by Elisabeth Stukeley, his widow [28 *Leicester*], Hugh Stewkeley directs that he should be buried in St. Sepulchre's, London, near his first wife, Christian, and his son William, should he die in London; but if in Somerset, 'then in the Chancel of the Priory Church of Dunster, over against my seat or pewe, or else in the Church of Carhampton, near my father and mother'. He was buried at Dunster, 7 Feb. 1588.

He mentions 'My daughters Susan, Margaret, and Ursula, not married. My wife Elisabeth. My godson Hugh, son of William Steynings. Tenement at Counyngar [*sic* for Cuneagar] Hill, which I had of the demise of Sir John Luttrell and Dame Mary, widow of the said Sir John. If my heir be under age at my death, I give to Lady Burleigh £100 to get the wardship of him. My son Thomas to apply his studies to the Law. My son George Stewkeley. Peter Stewkeley, my father, dec^d, Lands in Marsh, Dunster and Carhampton, which I purchased of Hugh Smithe, Henry Dodington, and William Morgan, Esq^{rs}, and John Morris, gent. My park, Mynehed Park, Manors of King Brimpton, Withypoole, Wootton Courtney, &c., to my eldest son Thomas Stukeley, my youngest son George, lands in Stokenheathe, Whitechapell, Fulham, &c., Middx.' (Brown's *Somerset Wills*, i, 79.)

Elizabeth Stewkeley's will, dated 10 Aug. 1598, proved 11 Feb. 1598-9 [20 *Kidd*.] directs that should she die in London, she should be buried at St. Olave, Old Jewry; but if in Somerset, at Dunster. She was buried at Dunster 24 Sept. 1598. She mentions 'My late Mother Ann Chamberlain. My daughters, Susan Drewrye, Margaret and Ursula. My daughter in law, Elisabeth Stukely. My daughter Joan Luttrell. My Brother Robert Chamberlain. My son, George Stukely. To Thomas Luttrell, my godson, a chayne, at age of 21. Hugh Luttrell, 2nd son of my daughter Joan Luttrell, £20. To George, a jewell or tablet of gold. My sister, Margaret Windham, and her children, Thomas, Zacharias, Edmund, John, Francis, George, and Hugh Windham. Residue to Thomas Stukely.' (Brown's *Wills*, i, 79.)

The children of Hugh and Elizabeth Stewkeley were:—

1. Sir Thomas Stewkeley, born 1569, died 1639, married

- Elizabeth, only child and heir of John Goodwin. She died 19 Apr. 1649, at Hinton Ampner, Hants, where there is an inscription in brass to her memory.
2. George Stewkeley, married Elizabeth, dau. of Sir Humphrey Drewell.
 3. Joan, married, 1580, George Luttrell. She was buried at Dunster, 22 Nov. 1621. He set up a great monument of marble and alabaster against the south wall of the chancel (whence it was moved to its present position in the s.e. chapel in 1876), with recumbent figures to the memory of his parents; also effigies of himself and his wife, the former kneeling westward, the latter lying dead by his side. He died 1 Apr. 1629.
 4. Susan, married Henry (afterwards Sir Henry) Drury. She died 1640. There is a brass to her memory at Penn, Bucks.
 5. Anne, born 1570, baptised at Dunster 26 Aug., buried at Dunster 5 Sept. 1585.
 6. Margaret, born 1574, baptised at Dunster 15 June, died 1606.
 7. Ursula, born 1576, baptised at Dunster 27 Sept., married Henry St. John.

III.—*Inscription; Mary, daughter of Richard Blackford, gentleman, and Elizabeth his wife, 1669, in her twelfth year. Relaid in a new stone on the floor of the North Aisle. (Plate XX.)*

Inscription of five lines in Roman capitals, and two lines of English verse in Roman text, $8\frac{1}{2}$ by $6\frac{3}{4}$ in.

HERE LYETH ^EY BODY OF MARY BLACKFORD
 (DAUGHTER OF RICHARD BLACKFORD GENT:
 AND ELIZABETH HIS WIFE) WHO DEPARTED
 THIS LIFE THE 22TH DAY OF IVNE 1669
 AND IN THE 12TH YEARE OF HER AGE.

Shorte was her life, longe was her payne,
 Greate was our lofs, much more her gayne.

IV.—*Inscription with arms below on the same plate; Richard*

Blackford, gentleman, 1689, aged about sixty-five. Relaid in a new stone on the floor of the South Aisle. (Plate XX.)

Inscription of four lines in italics, the name, 'Richardus Blackford', only in Roman text; also six lines of Latin verse and the arms on a cartouche of rococo shell pattern below, under which the indispensable finish of the period, a skull, cross-bones and two sprays of laurel, $9\frac{1}{2}$ by $14\frac{1}{2}$ in.

P. M : D.

Hic intumulatus jacet Richardus Blackford

Generosus obiit 16^{to} die February 1689.

circiter Annum 65 ætatis suæ.

Siste gradum properans, et Mortem meditare ferocem

Non fugit Imperium ulla Corona suum.

Si Virtus, Probitas, vel Cultus mentis adornans

Quemlibet armarēt non moriturus erat.

Clarus erat patriæ Legibus, sincerus Amicis,

Nulla ferent talem sectā futura virum.

The arms (incorrectly given by Savage and others) are—*(Gules) a chevron (arg.) between three estoiles (or).*

This is a very good example of that charming style of lettering which seems to show forth the irrepressible joy of the writer in fine curves. It is found at its best in this county. Obviously by the same hand is the beautifully-wrought inscription to Thomas Dyke, M.D., 1689, at Kingston St. Mary.

The will of Richard Blackford of Dunster, Somerset, one of the King's Masters Extraordinary in the Court of Chancery, dated Jan. 8, 1688, was proved Apr. 4, 1689, by Elizabeth Blackford, the relict. [47 *Ent.*] He mentions 'My son William. My daughter Sidwell Blackford. My sister Mary Coffin. My sister Christian Blackford. My cousin John Quireck. My cousin Robert Siderfin. My sister Hawkins. My son in law Edward Dyke'. (*Brown's Som. Wills*, iv, 78.)

In 1667 Richard Blackford, an attorney of the King's Bench, acquired one-third of the manor of East Luccombe from Sir P. Fortescue, bart. The family built and lived in the old house at Dunster formerly called 'The Hall'.

HERE LYETH ^EY BODY OF MARY BLACKFORD
 (DAUGHTER OF RICHARD BLACKFORD GENT :
 AND ELIZABETH HIS WIFE) WHO DEPARTED
 THIS LIFE THE 22.TH DAY OF IVNE 1669.
 AND IN THE 12.TH YEARE OF HER AGE .

Shorte was her life, longe was her payne .
 Greate was our Ioss, much more her gayne .

P. M. D.
Hic intumultatus jacet Richardus Blackford
Generosus obiit s². die February 1689.
circiter Annum 65 ætatis suæ.

Siste gradum, properans, et Mortem meditare ferocem
Non fugit Imperium ulla Corona, suum.
Si Virtus, Probitas vel Cultus mentis adornans
Quemlibet armaret non moriturus erat
Glorus erat patria, legibus, fœderis Amicis,
Nulla ferent talem, secta, futura virum.



DUNSTER

Inscribed Plates in Memory of Members of the Blackford Family
 XVII Century

MONUMENTAL BRASSES IN SOMERSET

V.—*Inscription* ; Edward, son of William and Mary Sealy, 1693, aged 3 ; Justine, mother of William Sealy, 1695, aged 81 ; Elizabeth, dau. of William and Mary Sealy, 1696, aged 3 ; Mary, wife of William Sealy, 1702, aged 44 ; William, son of William and Mary Sealy, 1705, aged 23 ; Mary, wife of Francis Chaplin, dau. of William and Mary Sealy, 1737, aged 57 ; Elizabeth, dau. of Francis and Mary Chaplin, 1788, aged 80. Relaid in a new stone on the floor of the North Aisle, to the east of No. III. (Plate XXI.)

The plate, with fringed borders at the sides and base, measures $12\frac{1}{2}$ by $22\frac{1}{2}$ in. It is divided into three compartments by two Doric columns, supporting plain round arches the outer sides of which rest on brackets. Under the centre arch is a skull with cross-bones ; under the side arches cherubs. Cherubs also fill the two outer spandrels, the inner ones containing winged hour-glasses. The whole composition is crude in execution, but there is a dignity about the design which is characteristic of the period. The lettering in italics shows individuality, that of the first entries, 1693, 1695 and 1696, is good. In subsequent entries the initial letters are Roman capitals, and gradual deterioration sets in until the latest record in 1788 is poor in the extreme. Altogether this inscription is a most interesting example of local workmanship during a period of nearly a hundred years.

The first panel consists of nine lines.

*Edward y^e son of william
Sealy and mary his wife died y^e
7th day of feb^r: 1693: *Ætatis suæ* 3° [scroll]
*Iustine y^e Mother of William sealy
died y^e 5^t day^e of A^p: 1695 *Ætatis* [scroll]
suæ 81° Elizabeth y^e daughter
of William sealy and mary his
Wife died y^e 24 day of Iune 1696
Ætatis suæ 3° [scrolls]**

The centre panel—ten lines.

MeMento mori
 Mary y^e Wife of William
 Sealy died y^e 9th day of No^v 1702
 Anno Ætatis 44^{to} Connubij Vere 23^{tio}
 Mary y^e Wife of Francis
 Chaplin, and Daughter to
 William Sealy, and of
 Mary his Wife, Departed
 this Life, y^e 4th day of Dec^{b^{er}}_Δ [sic]
 Anno Dom̄i : 1737 Aged 57 * [sic]

The third panel—seven lines.

William the Son of William
 and Mary Sealy Died y^e 28th day of
 April Anno Dom̄i 1705 Ætatis Suæ 23^o [sic]
 Elizabeth the Daughter
 of Francis Chaplin and Mary
 his Wife departed this Life
 the 6th of May 1788 Aged 80

The Sealy family appears to have been prominent tradesmen in Bridgwater in the seventeenth century ; but the writer has been able to find very little about the Dunster members of it, and nothing at all concerning the Chaplins.

In the Rate-book for the year 1686 the names of William Sealy and George Chaplin occur.¹

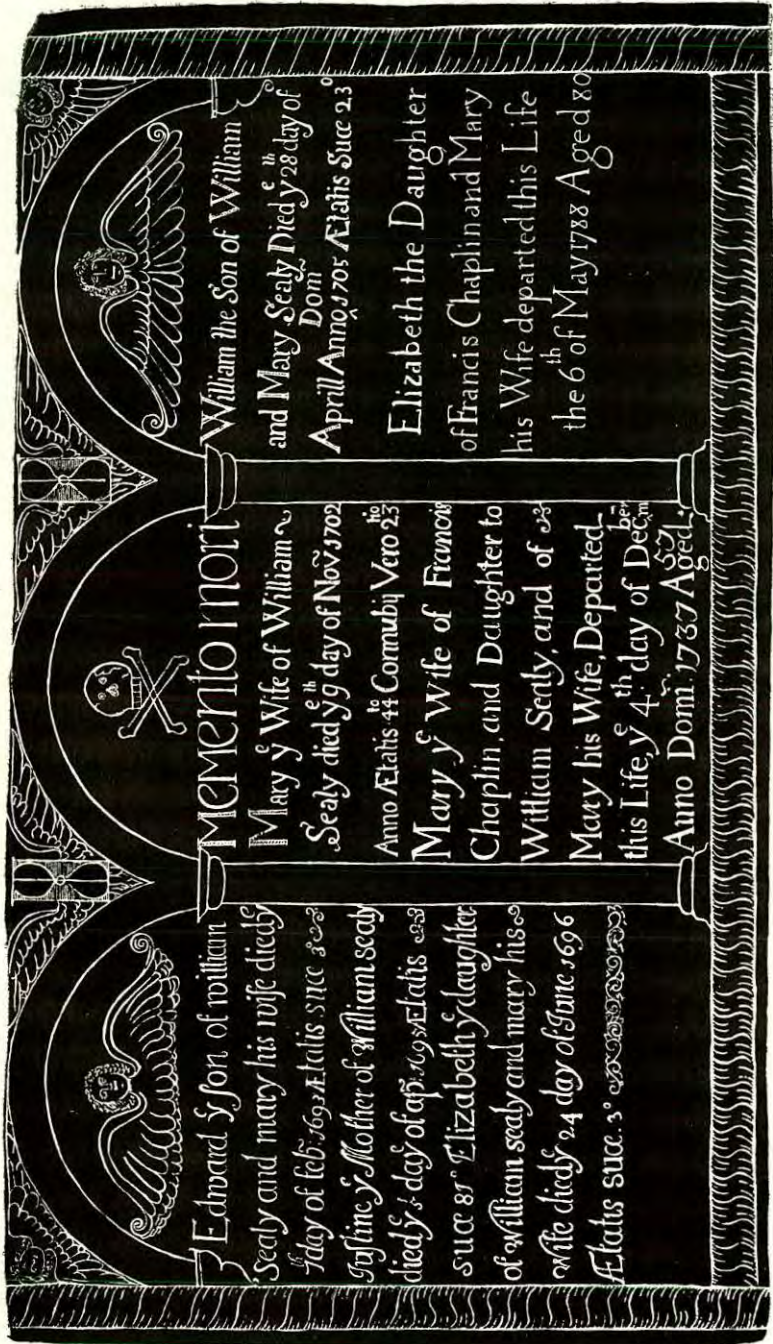
In the Overseers' Accounts for 1693² is the following entry : ' May y^e 10th Received of M^r. William Sealy 3s. 4d. being moneys leveyed by the Justice on M^r. Thomas Joanes A minister for being overcome with bear And give to the poor as followeth . . . '

In the year 1708, ' We have bound out 7 apprentices which are as under : Henry Eastine to M^r. John Sealy for M^r. William Sealy's estate.'

In 1713 William Sealy's name appears among the witnesses

¹ Hancock's *Dunster Church and Priory*, 145-6.

² *Ibid.*, 150.



Edward ſon of william
Sealy and mary his wife died
the day of feb. 1693 Aetatis ſuæ 32
Iſtine Mother of william ſealy
died the day of apr. 1698 Aetatis 33
ſuæ 81 Elizabeth ſealy daughter
of william ſealy and mary his
wife died the day of June 1696
Aetatis ſuæ 3

MEMENIO MORI
Mary ſealy Wife of William
Sealy died the 9th day of Nov 1702
Anno Aetatis 44 Cornubij Veto 25
Mary ſealy Wife of Francis
Chaplin, and Daughter to
William Sealy, and of
Mary his Wife, Departed
this Life, the 4th day of Decem^{ber}
Anno Domini 1737 Aged 57

William the Son of William
and Mary Sealy Died the 28th day of
April Anno 1705 Aetatis ſuæ 23
Elizabeth the Daughter
of Francis Chaplin and Mary
his Wife departed this Life
the 6th of May 1788 Aged 80

DUNSTER

Inscribed Plate in Memory of the Sealy Family. XVII-XVIII Centuries

MONUMENTAL BRASSES IN SOMERSET

to the receipt for a bequest of ' Coll. Alexand. Lutterell to ye poor of the psh '.

LOST BRASS

The brasses are transcribed in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1808, part II. On page 246 occurs the following, which is also given in Savage's *Hundred of Carhampton*, 1830, p. 411.

In capitals—

ANAGR. AMAROR. AMORIS.

HUC. MODO: TUNC ILLUC. PASSIM. VESTIGIA. FLECTES.
 AST. HIC. IN. ÆTERNUM. SISTE. MARIA. PEDEM.
 NE DUBITES. DABITUR QUICQUID. DEERAT. TIBI. VIRGO.
 DESPICE. MORTALEM. CONJUGE. DIGNA: DEO.
 HERE LYETH THE BODY OF MARY, YE DAUGHTER OF
 JOHN NORRIS, LATE CUSTOMER OF MINEHEAD, WHO
 DYED 22 OF MARCH, 1673.

Prebendary Hancock mentions it as lost.

THE POYNTZ BRASS

Prebendary Hancock, *Dunster Church and Priory*, p. 82, has the following note, ' Mr. C. H. Samson informs the writer that this inscription was originally found carved on the ancient stone altar slab now used as the altar of the priory church. The stone had been used as a floor slab, but the accustomed five crosses were visible on it. The inscription was copied on the brass mentioned above before the stone was reset as the altar slab of the priory church '.

The writer wishes to express his gratitude to Mr. Ralph Griffin, F.S.A., and Mr. Mill Stephenson, F.S.A., for their kindness in reading his manuscript and for much help in various ways.