

Nicholas Stone's Monument to Sir John Wyndham, at St. Decuman's, Watchet

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BENEATH the east window of the north Chancel of St. Decuman's are placed murally two large independent monumental slabs, stated by Dr. Eeles in his history of the Church to be of slate, evidently set together, with a black moulded stone cornice, at the time of the erection of the left-hand slab.

That on the right shows in brass the figures, heraldry, and inscription of John Wyndham and his wife Florence, sister and co-heir of Nicholas Wadham. It was placed by his son and heir Sir John, the subject of the second slab, and is a fine example of Elizabethan engraving by the same hand as the better-known Wadham brass at Ilminster.

That on the left is a distinct rarity in England, though by no means uncommon on the Continent, since it consists of five gilt embossed brass plates inset in the slab. Akin to it is the rectangular brass plate at Old Shoreham, Sussex, commemorating Captain Richard Poole and his son Thomas, 1652; on this is engraved an inscription within a decorative scroll border, and above, an achievement with an embossed shield. Captain Poole was a famous seaman of his day, and the plate may have been engraved to his order, the inscription being cut in England on his death.¹ Apart from the embossed shield, however, there is nothing markedly foreign in the style of the engraving. The achievement of the brass at Yeovil to Thomas Hawker of Vagg, 1696, shows similar workmanship, with the mantling in bold relief, recalling the heraldry of a ledger stone.²

The St. Decuman's slab (Plates VIII, IX) measures approximately 9 ft. by 5 ft. It has a central incised cross against its top edge; then a large flowing scroll, 2½ in. wide, incised to

¹ See *Cheal's History of Shoreham*, p. 172.

² *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxxii, pl. xii.



St. DECUMAN'S SLAB

With Two Brass Embossed Plates of Portraits of Sir John
Wyndham, 1645 (see also Plate IX) and his wife Joan, 1633

From a Photograph by Mr. A. K. Wickham, F.S.A.

an inch of either edge, inscribed VENI. DO'IE IHESV VENI. CITO. Below this centrally is an embossed brass achievement of Wyndham, quarterly of nine, measuring 18 by 15 in., showing gilding but no colours. (1 and 9, Wyndham. 2, Scrope of Upsal. 3, Tiptoft. 4, Sydenham of Langford. 5, Gambon. 6, Wadham. 7, Popham. 8, Townshend. Crest: a lion's head within a fetterlock.)

Either side of the achievement and slightly lower are two brass embossed rectangular plates, 20 by 15½ in., of half-length portraits of Sir John Wyndham, 1645, and his wife Joan, 1633, daughter of Henry Portman of Orchard Wyndham,¹ each enframed by ornamental scroll-patterned borders, and having a small shield at each corner, those of Sir John being 1 and 4 Wyndham, and 2 and 3 Wyndham impaling Portman, while his wife's show 1 and 4 Portman, and 2 and 3 the impalement.

Below these is incised the following inscription in 2-in. Roman lettering, with capitals varying from 2½ to 3 in. :

MEMORLÆ · IOHANNIS · WINDHAM · EQVESTRI · ORDINE ·
 INSIGNIS/ANTIQUA · ET · ILLVSTRI · GENTE · WINDHAMIORVM ·
 DE · FELBRIGG/QVO · GAVISVS · EST · IVRE · HEREDITARIO/IN ·
 AGRO · NORFOLCIENCI · ORIVNDI/ET · CHARISSIMÆ · VXORIS ·
 IOANNÆ · FILLÆ · HENRICI · PORTMAN/DE · ORCHARD ·
 IVXTA · TAVNTON · EQVITIS · AVRATI/CASTISSIMO · CONIVGIO ·
 LIBEROS · SVSCIPERVNT/MASCVLOS · NOVEM · SEX ·
 FILLAS/QVINQVAGINTA · DVOS · ANNOS · CONTINVO · IN ·
 HAC · PAROCHIA/S^{TI} · DECVMANI · IN · ÆDIBVS · SVIS · DE ·
 ORCHARD · FAMILIAM · ALVERVNT/PATRIÆ · IVDICIO · ET ·
 POPVLI · TESTIMONIO/PIETATE · ET · PROBITATE · SVMMÆ ·
 CONSPICVI/HORVM · CINERES · HIC · CLAVSI · ÆTERNVM · DIEM/
 ET · SVAS · ANIMAS · ET · SVVM · PRÆSTOLANTVR · REDEMPTOREM

Below this again come two embossed brass shields, 7¾ by 9 in., of Wyndham impaling Portman, each above the final inscriptions of the dates of death.

OBIERE

ILLE 1 APR
 1645
 ÆTATIS SVÆ
 87

ILLA 13 SEP
 1633
 ÆTATIS SVÆ
 68

¹ The portraits of Sir John Wyndham and Joan, his wife, which are preserved at Crowcombe Court, are reproduced here by kind permission of the Hon. Mrs. Trollope-Bellew. (Plate X).

The note-book and account book of Nicholas Stone, Master Mason to James I and Charles I,¹ contain two separate entries for a work ordered by a Wyndham, hitherto unidentified; in all likelihood this is the monument. The first, from the note-book (p. 100), is as follows:

This 20th of October 1634 Agreed with Mr Windam for to/glas on blak marbell ston of 5 foot brood and 9 foot long and to/carve 2 scuchings of Armes with 2 coots on ech of thim and all/so on Armes with hellmet and crest and mantell and all out of the/sam ston and to laye thim in thar colors and grave an inscription/ and gild it for the pries of 16£ and on Armes of portland ston of/ 3 foot brood and 5 foot in hight and to color thim for 2£ 5s.
 payed March 1636.

It is to be noted that Lady Wyndham died in 1633. The second entry from the account book, and in the handwriting of Nicholas Stone, junior, runs:

This 13 of July 1637

Money layed out upon the workmanship of a great grave stone for the worth Fraucis Windam Esq.

In September 1634, For the carriage of a blake marble stone of 9 foot $\frac{1}{2}$ long and 5 foot brood from Scotland yard into Long acre	£	s	
			00 10 0

Payd to Labourers at Scotland crane for taking it up out of the litter and rouling it up into the yard 200 foot from the crane			00 10 0
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Payd to Labour ^r for Loading the stone at Scotland yard into the cart and unloading it in Long acre			00 12 0
--	--	--	---------

Payd to Robert Flower for rubbing and smothing of the said stone			03 00 0
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More since paid for rubbing and smothing polishing and glasing of the said stone be 47 foot $\frac{1}{2}$ upon the superficies at 20d the foot comes to			03 18 0
---	--	--	---------

To Mathew Bensteed for Letting in of the brasse being 5 peeces and making hooles for the pines			00 12 0
--	--	--	---------

For sowing of the pece of the side of the stone being 9 foot $\frac{1}{2}$ long and 5 inches deep at 1d the inch			00 05 0
--	--	--	---------

For cutting the end of the said stone being sawed 5 inches deepe at 9d the inch comes to			00 03 9
--	--	--	---------

Laid out for fine sand and course sand for this worke			00 04 0
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For Drawing the inscription and engraving of it deepe into the stone and cutting of the scrowle atopp being very large letters at			03 10 0
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Som total			13 04 9
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¹ *Walpole Society*, Vol. VII.



SIR JOHN WYNDHAM, 1645
St. Decuman's Slab (*see* Plate VIII)

From a Photograph by Mr. A. K. Wickham, F.S.A.

The Drawing of 2 or 3 drafts for Mr. Windam weh. was sent into the cuntry, my severall waiting & attending ond him at his Lodging by Arundell house and Lincolnes end, the use of my yard roome for 3 yeares & all my advice and assistance I doe freely present unto Mr. Windam as his humble servant.

The reference to the use of yard room from 1634 infers a monument laid by, and suggests that the first slab, paid for, was never used. Moreover the item of 'more since paid for rubbing' in the second account suggests by its amount an erasure of the first work. The scroll 'atopp', the large lettering, the five brasses, all make its attribution to the Stone workshop fairly certain. Mr. A. K. Wickham, F.S.A., has drawn my attention to the fact that in an otherwise detailed account there is no item for the cost of the brasses, as, for example, for the brass inscriptions to Cecilia Puckering at St. Mary's, Warwick (p. 109; and see *Monumental Brass Society's Transactions*, Vol. VIII, pp. 50-1 for illustrations). Stone's note-book is regrettably haphazard and the account book, though more detailed, omits much. In this case, where two or three designs had been submitted during several years, and money paid for a monument presumably not accepted, it seems credible that the embossed plates were, like many complete monuments of his, never entered.

It must be remembered, however, that Stone worked when young under Henry de Keyser at Amsterdam, married his master's daughter Maria there in 1613, and that his son Nicholas became an agent on commission, in connection with shipping Portland stone to Amsterdam. This strong continental tie, coupled with the use of the embossed plate abroad, leaves the attribution of the portraits to Stone uncertain, though one feels on surer ground with the monument as a whole.

It has been noted that the second entry is in the hand of Nicholas Stone, junior. It is possible, therefore, that the finished slab was by him, and not his father, who made the first entry. The son was 19 in 1637, and had been making entries for his father since he was thirteen, so that there can be no indication by handwriting that an entry by the son was the son's own work. The ascription of this monument to the father seems the more likely.

In 1633, when Lady Wyndham died, Sir John was aged 75,

and had two sons Gentlemen Pensioners at Court, Francis, the 4th son, who died in 1641, and George, the 6th son, knighted in 1633, the ancestor of the Wyndhams of Cromer. It would seem that it was Mr. Francis who had to see to the monument in London, and that to his aged father at Orchard designs had to be sent for final approval.

The lettering of the obituaries on the slab is apparently by the same hand as the inscription, but lacks the dot after each word, so noticeable in that. The slab probably remained in Stone's yard until Sir John died, ready to receive its final lettering and be despatched to Somerset. This would explain the absence of items in the second account for removal and fixing, and of receipt of payment of that account.

Thanks are due to Messrs. A. B. Connor, W. J. Hemp, L. F. Salzman, A. K. Wickham, Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries, to Dr. Eeles for identifying the entry for me, and Mr. E. A. Boston for a rubbing of the slab. When this article was written, it was found that Mrs. Esdaile had arrived independently at the same conclusions, which she very kindly allowed the writer to read. As these will be appearing elsewhere, this article has been left substantially as originally written.



SIR JOHN WYNDHAM AND JOAN HIS WIFE, DAUGHTER OF SIR HENRY PORTMAN

From Photographs of the portraits at Crowcombe Court, Som.