

## THE SHIELD OF THE EFFIGY AT BAWDRIP AND A RELATED EFFIGY AT HUNTSPILL

BY MARK DOWNING

The military effigy at Bawdrip, Somerset, is unique. I believe it is the only sculptured effigy in the country represented with a shield, having an inlet in the dexter top corner and having the upper and lower few inches inclined forward. The inlet, called the 'bouche' was intended to receive the couched lance immediately before impact, presumably to steady it. The inclined plane at the upper and lower edges were intended to deflect the point of a weapon away from the face and belly respectively.

It is worth mentioning two other representations of this type of shield on monuments. The first is the brass to Robert Wyril, Bishop of Salisbury *c.* 1375, in Salisbury Cathedral, which shows the bishop's champion Richard Shawell (fig. 4). The top part of his shield projects forward, and there is a bouche in the dexter corner. The second is on the alabaster tomb-chest<sup>2</sup> to Sir William Ryther, at Ryther, who died in 1475. The male and female weepers on the side of the tomb-chest are shown with shields which have bouches in the dexter top corners.<sup>3</sup>

An effigy comparable to that at Bawdrip is to be found at Huntspill, only a few miles away. In this case the shield has been replaced. Whether or not the original shield was similar to that of the Bawdrip effigy is uncertain.

(1) *Bawdrip* (fig 1 & 2); for fig. 2 see frontispiece). The church of St Michael, Somerset. The effigy lies flat on its back under an arched recess in the north transept. The length of the effigy from head to heel is 5ft 8.5in. It is made from a single block of freestone.

The figure is represented straight-legged, with the hands in the position of prayer probably holding a heart. The eyes are open, looking directly above. He has a drooping moustache.

No mail is now represented. If it was represented originally, it must have been made up in putty or gesso or simply have been painted on.

The head rests on a wide single rectangular pillow, with the head protected by a egg-shaped basinet and an aventail. The aventail is attached to the basinet by square vervelles, over a plain band presumably representing leather. The upper-most vervelle is in the form of a flower head. The coat armour is tight-fitting in the upper part which covers the top of the shoulders. The skirts, which are relatively loose-fitting, are cut short in the front and long at the back. On the right shoulder is a articulated spaudler of which own lame only is shown overlapping the upper cannon of the arm. The upper edge of this lame is overlapped by the sleeve of the coat armour.

No longitudinal joins or hinges can be seen on the upper and lower cannons of the arms. It can be assumed that they were protected by vambraces of two gutter-shaped plates joined together. On the right elbow is a couter with a central ridge over the point of the elbow.



Bawdrip (Figure 1)

The hands are protected by finger gauntlets with short smooth cuffs. Most probably the gauntlet would have been of plate with a canvas or leather lining. A similar pair of gauntlets is preserved on the armour of a Vogt of Matsch, at Schoss Churburg.<sup>4</sup>

On the left arm, suspended from a guige which passes diagonally across the chest and over the right shoulder is the shield. On the left side is the sword. This has a long grip with a large wheel-like pommel and a pair of straight quillons with a slight cusp at the centre line of the blade. The scabbard, which is complete, has a locket with its lower edge in the form of an ogival Gothic arch, and a chape on its tip.

On the right hip is a dagger in very good condition, although the grip is damaged. It is the type known as a ballock dagger, as it has two round swellings flanking the end of the grip nearer to the blade.

This type of dagger can also be found for example on an effigy in Hereford Cathedral, traditionally that of Sir Peter de Grandison, *c.* 1360, and also on the brass at Aldbrough, Yorkshire, to William de Aldeburgh, *c.* 1360.<sup>5</sup> Hung around the hips is a very wide bawdrick or hip-belt made up of large plain square plaques with concave bevels along their edges. There is no other sword-belt or suspender for the sword and dagger, we may therefore assume that the bawdrick would have secured them.

Below the skirts of the coat armour a few inches of an additional garment are visible. This may represent the lower edge of the coat of plates or the lower edge of the mail shirt. The cuisses and greaves are represented as smooth, without longitudinal joints, pins or hinges. However, as both the poleyns have two studs on the outer portion of the side-wing,



Bawdrip (Figure 2)



Huntspill (Figure 3)

presumably representing articulating rivets, the cuisses and greaves were most likely represented either as boiled leather or plates. The poleyns are strapped around the back of the knees. A reinforcing bar is represented over the knee-cap.

A spur with a large rowel is shown on the right foot. The toes of the right are foot missing. The left foot is shown smooth without indication of either mail or lames. Below the feet is a head-less animal.

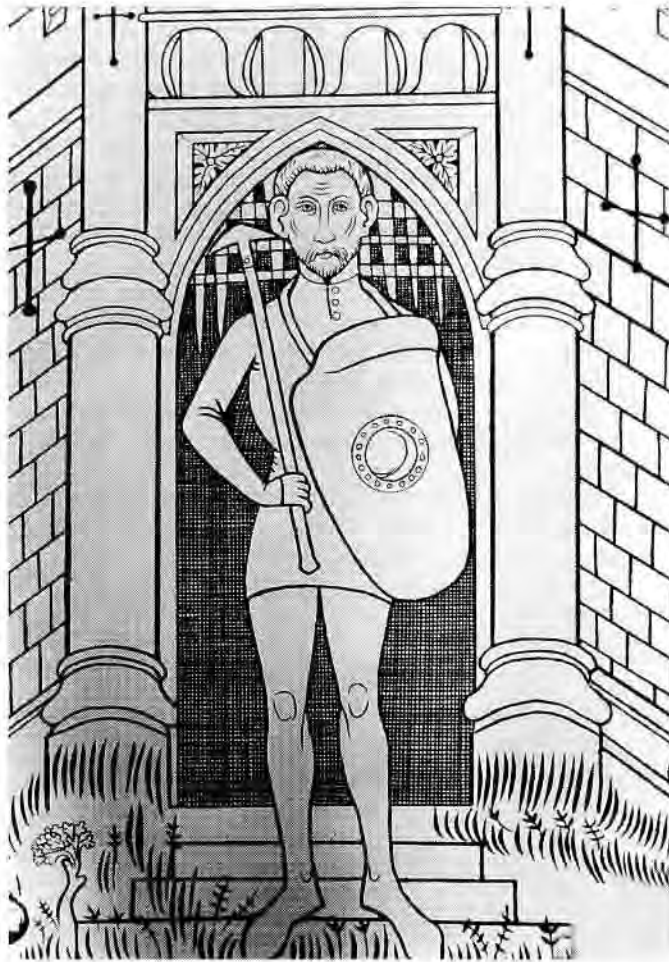
Traditionally, this effigy is known as Simon de Bradney.<sup>6</sup> The first mention of his name is in the inquisition of his father's death which occurred in 1324.<sup>7</sup> Simon, who was then aged twenty five was his father's heir. In 1330 he was granted a licence to build a chantry chapel within the church at Bawdrip.<sup>8</sup> A chaplain was appointed to celebrate divine service for the souls of the said Simon, his wife Beatrice, his father Joachim and mother Joan and their ancestors.

In 1331, together with others, he was accused by Hugh de Langelonde, knight, of assault at Bridgwater.<sup>9</sup> He was appointed in the years of 1347<sup>10</sup> and 1349<sup>11</sup> as one of the collectors for tenth and fifteenth taxation in the county of Somerset. He held land at Bawdrip,<sup>12</sup> Bradney,<sup>13</sup> Currypool,<sup>14</sup> Hescombe<sup>15</sup> and Sanford<sup>16</sup> for knight's service. Simon died in 1375 without heirs.<sup>17</sup>

(2) *HUNTSPILL* (fig 3). The church of St Peter, Somerset

The effigy lies flat on its back under a low arched recess, in the south wall of the nave. The length of the effigy from head to heel is 5ft 10.5in. It is made of a single block of free-stone.

The figure is represented straight-legged, with the hands in the position of prayer. The eyes are open looking directly above. He has a drooping moustache. As with the effigy at



Richard Shawell (Figure 4)

Bawdrip, no mail is shown. The head rests on a helm with the sights facing uppermost. These are in the form of two wide horizontal slits, divided in the middle by a vertical strip. On either side of the helm are a pair of hands and feet, forming part of the crest, which was a bearded man.

The head is protected by a pointed basinet, which has a fore-and-aft keel in its upper part. Hanging from the basinet is a vaentail, this is attached to the basinet by square vervelles, over a plain band presumably representing leather. A wire is represented as being passed through the vervelles. As with Bawdrip the coat armour is cut short at the front and long at the back.

A guige passes from the right shoulder to the left arm. As the guige does not pass over the left arm, I believe that the arm to the left shoulder, is a replacement. The shield as previously mentioned is also a replacement. The defence of the right shoulder is similar to that of the Bawdrip effigy. On the right elbow is a couter with a small side wing. No longitudinal joins, pins or hinges are shown on this arm. The hands are protected by plate

gauntlets with short cuffs which I believe are restorations. Around the hips is a bawdrick, which is made up of square plaques each with a different quatrefoil flower. On the right hip is a well-preserved dagger. The grip which has bevelled edges, expands towards the end further from the blade. The short quillons are inclined towards the blade.

As with Bawdrick, an additional garment can be seen below the front hem of the coat of armour. The cuisses and greaves are smooth. Poleyns similar to those at Bawdrick are strapped around the back of the knees, with two studs on the outer portion of the side-wing with a reinforcing-bar over the knee-cap. An additional lame projects below the poleyn. The feet which rest on a head-less animal, are shown smooth with spurs with large rowels attached to the heels. One leg is said to have been restored during the 1960's.

When Mr Alfred C. Fryer visited the church, in preparation for his study on Monumental Effigies in Somerset,<sup>19</sup> he noted that the head of the lion was lost. This has now been restored with something which looks more like a cat.

He also noted that the cross-guards of the sword were straight and that the grip of the sword was widening at the top. These must have been broken and lost, and have since then been crudely restored.

Traditionally the effigy is supposed to represent a member of the Cogan family, who held the manor of Huntspill by knight's service. The effigy may represent either, Richard Cogan who died 1368<sup>19</sup> or his son William, who died in 1382.<sup>20</sup>

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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