

CONTEXTS OF THE CADAVER TOMB
IN FIFTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND

2 Volumes (7)

Volume 1. Text.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Volume I

Abstract	1
List of Abbreviations	2
Introduction	3
I The Cadaver Tomb in Fifteenth Century England: The Problem Stated.	7
II The Cadaver Tomb in Fifteenth Century England: The Surviving Evidence.	57
III The Cadaver Tomb in Fifteenth Century England: Theological and Literary Background.	152
IV The Cadaver Tomb in England to 1460: The Clergy and the Laity.	198
V The Cadaver Tomb in England 1460-1480: The Clergy and the Laity.	301
VI The Cadaver Tomb in England 1480-1500: The Clergy and the Laity.	372
VII The Cadaver Tomb in Late Medieval England: Problems of Interpretation.	427
Conclusion	484
Appendix 1: Cadaver Tombs Elsewhere in the British Isles.	488
Appendix 2: The Identity of the Cadaver Tomb in York Minster.	494
Bibliography:	
i. Primary Sources: Unpublished	499
ii. Primary Sources: Published	501
iii. Secondary Sources.	506

Volume II

Illustrations.

TABLE OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Plates 2, 3, 6 and 23d are reproduced by permission of the National Monuments Record; Plates 28a and b and Plate 50, by permission of the British Library; Plates 51, 52, 53, a and b, by permission of Trinity College, Cambridge. Plate 54 is taken from a copy of an engraving in the possession of the office of the Clerk of Works at Salisbury Cathedral. I am grateful to Kate Harris for Plates 19 and 45, to Peter Fairweather for Plate 36a, to Judith Prendergast for Plate 46, to David O'Connor for Plate 49, and to the late John Denmead for Plate 37b. Plate 37a is the copyright of the Society of Antiquaries of London. All other photographs were taken by the author and Bryan Sadler. The brass rubbings are all in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries of London, with the exception of Plate 14c, and the brass in Plate 12 is in the possession of Norwich Castle Museum. I am grateful for access to these and for the co-operation of all vicars and churchwardens who have made it possible to photograph most of the tombs *in situ*.

Numbers in brackets here refer to Chapter II.

1. Slab of a naked man, c.1200, Shillingstone, Dorset.
2. Henry Chichele, 1427, Canterbury Cathedral [1].
3. Richard Fleming, 1430, Lincoln Cathedral [2].
4. John Brigge, c.1430, Salle, Norfolk [3].
5. Joan Mareys, 1431, Sheldwich, Kent [4].
6. John Fitzalan, 1435, Arundel, Sussex [6].
7. John Golafre, 1442, Fyfield, Berkshire [8].
 - a. general view.
 - b. detail of lower effigy.
8. John Careway, 1443, Fulbourn, Cambridgeshire [9].
 - a. general view.
 - b. detail of effigy.
9. Richard Notfelde, 1446, Margate, Kent [10].
10. John Leventhorpe, 1448, Sawbridgeworth, Herts [11].
11. William Sponne, 1448, Towcester, Northants [12].
 - a. general view.
 - b. detail of lower effigy.
12. Thomas Childes, 1452, Castle Museum, Norwich [13].
13. John Manfield, 1455, Taplow, Bucks [14].
 - a. general view.
 - b. detail - effigy of John.

14. Sampson Meverell, 1462, Tideswell, Derbyshire [15].
 - a. view of tomb from the west.
 - b. view of tomb from the north.
 - c. rubbing (C. Kightly) of the brass on the upper deck.
15. Thomas Bekynton, 1465, Wells Cathedral, Somerset [16].
 - a. general view of the chantry chapel.
 - b. general view of the tomb.
 - c. the upper effigy.
 - d. the lower effigy.
 - e. detail - head of upper effigy.
 - f. detail - head of lower effigy.
16. Philip Astley, 1467, Standon, Herts [17] LOST.
17. John Baret, 1467, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk [18].
 - a. general view of the tomb.
 - b. decorated ceiling of the chantry chapel.
 - c. detail of effigy.
 - d. detail of effigy.
18. Robert Brampton, 1468, Brampton, Norfolk [19].
19. Richard Willughby, 1472, Wollaton, Notts [21].
 - a. general view.
 - b. brasses on upper deck.
 - c. cadaver effigy.
20. Thomas Fleming, 1472, New College, Oxford [22].
21. Agnes Bulstrode, 1472, Upton, Bucks [23].
22. William Gurney, 1472, Stone, Bucks [24].
23. Alice Chaucer, 1475, Ewelme, Oxfordshire [25].
 - a. general view.
 - b. detail - head of upper effigy.
 - c. detail - head of lower effigy.
 - d. artist's copies of the frescoes on the underside of the mensa.
24. Richard Poryngland, 1475, St Stephen, Norwich [26], LOST.
25. Joan Walrond, 1477, Childrey, Berkshire [28].
 - a. general view.
 - b. detail - Trinity matrix.
26. John Beel, 1477, Hitchin, Herts [29].
27. William Catesby, 1479, Ashby St Legers, Northants [30].

28. Laurence Bothe, 1480, Southwell Cathedral, Notts [32],
LOST.
a. London, B.L. Loan MS 38, f. 84v - the tomb.
b. Ibid., f. 86r - the glass.
29. John Rudyng, 1481, Biggleswade, Beds [33].
30. William Robert, 1484, Digswell, Herts [34].
31. Nicholas Mattock, 1485, Hitchin, Herts [35].
32. Tomesine Tendring, 1485, Yoxford, Suffolk [36].
33. John Wisebeard, 1486, Hitchin, Herts [37].
34. Thomas Spryng, 1486, Lavenham, Suffolk [38].
35. Bernard Brocas, 1488, Sherborne St John, Hants [39].
a. upper kneeling effigy.
b. skeleton matrix.
36. John Barton, 1491, Holme-by-Newark, Notts [40].
a. general view.
b. lower effigy.
37. Thomas Heywood, 1492, Lichfield Cathedral, Staffs [41],
a. Stebbing Shaw, *The History and Antiquities of
Staffordshire* (London, 1789), I, 248-49.
b. surviving cadaver effigy.
38. Margaret Shelley, 1495, Hunsdon, Herts [43].
a. general view.
b. detail - head.
39. William Leynthal, 1497, Great Hasely, Oxfordshire [44].
40. Ralph Woodforde, 1498, Ashby Folville, Leics [45].
41. Richard Yate, 1498, Longworth, Berkshire [46].
42. Richard Howard, 1499, Aylsham, Norfolk [47].
a. general view.
b. detail - upper part of right-hand matrix.
43. William Feteplace, 1516, Childrey, Berkshire [63].
a. general view.
b. close-up of male effigy.
44. John Goodrington, 1518, Appleton, Berkshire [65].
45. Henry Willughby, 1528, Wollaton, Notts [77].
a. general view.
b. detail of lower effigy.

46. Roger Rockley, 1534, Worsborough, West Yorkshire [82].
47. John Wakeman(?), Tewkesbury Abbey, Gloucestershire [93].
 - a. general view.
 - b. detail - snake on knee.
 - c. detail - mouse on torso.
 - d. detail - frog or toad near left ear.
 - e. detail - snake on shroud.
 - f. detail - beetle or spider on left upper arm.
48. Unidentified cadaver, Hughenden, Bucks [135].
 - a. general view.
 - b. close-up of torso.
49. Unidentified brass, Sedgefield, Co. Durham [143].
50. London, B.L. Additional 37049, f.32v.
51. Cambridge, Trinity College MS R. 41. 5, f.3r. and v.
52. Ibid., f.7r. and v.
53. Ibid., f.8r. and v.
54. Fresco formerly in the Hungerford Chapel, Salisbury Cathedral.
55. Drawing of the tomb of Jean La Grange, 1388-94, Petit Palais Museum, Avignon.
 - a. general view.
 - b. close-up showing the positioning of the cadaver effigy.
56. Jean La Grange, 1388-94, Petit Palais Museum, Avignon.
 - a. remains of upper effigy.
 - b. cadaver effigy.
57. James Rice, 1489, Waterford Cathedral, Eire.
 - a. general view.
 - b. detail - head.
 - c. detail - torso with toad.
58. Edmund Goldyng, 1511, Drogheda, Co. Louth, Eire.
59. Unidentified double tomb, Stamullen, Co. Meath, Eire.
 - a. former upper slab (?) - effigies in ordinary dress.
 - b. former lower slab with cadaver.
60. Unidentified cadaver, Bewley, Co. Louth, Eire.

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DECLARATION

The English verse epitaphs quoted in Chapter III have been published in "Eight English *Memento Mori* Verses from Cadaver Tombs", *NAQ*, 28(6) (1981), 494-96. Material relating to the argument of Chapter V has been published in "The English Cadaver Tomb in the Late Fifteenth Century: Some Indications of a Lancastrian Connection", *Dies Illa; Death in the Middle Ages*, Vinaver Studies in French I, ed. Jane M. Taylor (Manchester, 1984), 45-57. The analysis of the iconography of vermin on cadaver tombs with special reference to the "Wakeman Cenotaph" in Tewksbury Abbey (Chapter VII) is developed from "The Iconography of the 'Wakeman Cenotaph' in Tewksbury Abbey", *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 103 (1985), 141-48.

ABSTRACT

A cadaver tomb is a memorial on which the effigy, or one of the effigies, is shown as a shrouded body or as an unshrouded skeleton. Funerary monuments bearing such effigies first appeared in England in the 1420's and have commonly been associated with a late medieval Northern European vogue for the macabre. This study questions the widely accepted view that the appearance of these tombs is directly related to the Black Death, that it is necessarily event-dependent, and that the iconography of the cadaver effigy is related to radical theological developments.

The forty-seven identifiable cadaver tombs commemorating members of both clergy and laity who died before 1500, are taken as the sample for study. In an age when patronage, in the arts and in affairs of state alike is recognised to have been the primary means of advancement, one would expect to find a matter at once so personal and so socially sensitive as the choice of a tomb to reflect a perception of fashion. Accordingly, in search of at least a partial explanation for the appearance yet limited dissemination of this new departure in funerary monuments, a cumulative biographical study is made of those commemorated in this way and of their circles of family and acquaintance. The iconography of the cadaver is also reinterpreted as a development within the continuum of mainstream orthodox Western theology and relevant vernacular responses to that orthodoxy.

ABBREVIATIONS

BL	British Library
CCR	<i>Calendar of Close Rolls</i>
CFR	<i>Calendar of Fine Rolls</i>
CPL	<i>Calendar of Papal Letters</i>
CPR	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls</i>
DNB	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
EETS	Early English Text Society
e. s.	extra series
o. s.	original series
PCC	Prerogative Court of Canterbury
PL	<i>Patrologia Cursus Completus,</i> series latina, ed. J.-P. Migne.
PRO	Public Record Office
VCH	<i>Victoria County History</i>

INTRODUCTION

"A preoccupation with death was only to be expected"¹ in fifteenth-century England, or so it seems. According to a familiar interpretation, a spirit of understandable anxiety pervaded that society for a variety of reasons: there was disorder at home in the matter of dynastic succession, and abroad where there was schism in the church. The backdrop to an internally changing society in which an increasingly prosperous mercantile class was gaining land and authority, was recurrent and financially crippling war with France. That such disorderliness should be displeasing to God had been clearly evidenced in unprecedentedly vicious visitations of pestilence in the late fourteenth century. As the half-millennium approached, men may be forgiven for having watched almost neurotically for other well-documented signs of the end of the world.

Fifteenth-century England had its share of social and political instability, and it is the conceit of every age to believe that its problems are somehow more fundamentally earth-shattering than those of its predecessors, as witnesses to the post-nuclear age may testify. That the predominant anxieties of a society should be reflected,

1. Lawrence Stone, *Sculpture in Britain: The Middle Ages*, Pelican History of Art 29 (Harmondsworth, 1955), 213.

even exorcised, in the aesthetic productions of that age, is also to be expected; it takes radically different projections of the known universe to produce a William Langland or a Samuel Becket, as C.S. Lewis once pointed out'. It is, however, dangerously easy with hindsight to massage the artistic production of a particular time and place until it appears smooth and monolithic. Another truism is that every age is a product, socially and intellectually, of its predecessors, part of a continuum, and that individual perceptions of any set of contemporary circumstances will vary widely. Accordingly to attribute the adoption of a striking and apparently new tomb design, the cadaver or *transi*, to anxieties somehow unique to that age, begs many questions and demands leaps of both logic and faith.

The psychological urge to erect a permanent memorial to the deceased, whether the corporate cenotaph or individual grave-marker, is undoubtedly partly subconscious, a product of fundamental and unchanging human needs overlaid by, and interpreted through, dominant beliefs about the nature of life, death and the after-life. The conscious process of the selection of such a monument is, however, much more tangible, combining as it does, the psychological

1. C.S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image* (Cambridge, 1962), 99-100.

response with the social. The choice of a memorial is indeed both personal and corporate, making an individual statement, either by its singularity, or, more commonly, by its willingness to conform to a group norm. The small rectangular headstones of the late twentieth century, generally of granite regardless of the availability of suitable local stone, are not representative of a coincidence of individual impulses; they represent the complex relationship between the advice and strictures imposed by the owners of the burial ground and the headstone manufacturers, but they also reflect a choice on the part of the deceased and his or her surviving circle of intimates, a choice to conform to a particular decorum.

As the survey of scholarship concerned with the medieval cadaver tomb will demonstrate¹, the social dimension to its appearance and dissemination in England has been all but ignored. Yet fifteenth-century tombs were no more selected in a social vacuum than is the granite headstone. Fifteenth-century English society was modelled on hierarchic ideals, though it was almost certainly more fluid structurally in practice than in theory. Social identity and social advancement, therefore, depended heavily upon patronage. In matters of aesthetic taste, of the patronage

1. See Chapter I below.

of the arts, therefore, one would expect to find the less prominent emulating those whom in turn they perceived to be their own social patrons or mentors. What is more, one important distinction may be discerned between that age and this, that is that late medieval English society was subject to a set of rigidly prescriptive beliefs; in other words, social conformity was not only desirable in so self-consciously hierarchic a society, but also overlaid upon that was an absolute requirement to conform spiritually.

This would suggest that beyond the level of psychological explanation for the adoption of a tomb design, there should be a discernible dissemination pattern of social as much as intellectual impetus. The establishment of such a pattern ought to offer a refinement of our understanding of the attractions of the cadaver tomb, and thereby, perhaps open the way to a refinement of our perception of the semantic function of the iconography of the corpse image in fifteenth century funeral art.

Chapter I

THE CADAVER TOMB IN FIFTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND:

THE PROBLEM STATED

The study of the cadaver tomb design in England, its introduction, transmission and the images related to it, must be set in a broader context. That is the purpose of this first chapter, above all because as yet little scholarly attention has been paid to the medieval cadaver tomb compared with other aspects of contemporary visual art. Historians of sculpture and of brass engraving show only marginal interest in what has often been considered to be a depraved design, stylistically relatively static. The cadaver tomb is often invoked by students of the history of ideas as one of the manifestations of the late medieval vogue for the macabre, but that begs several questions. Even studies of the iconography of death in general rarely give it the independent prominence which it deserves. It therefore proves not only feasible but necessary to review those studies of the cadaver tomb which do exist to determine whether certain established premises have really been adequately explored and justified.

In the first place it should be possible to ask certain basic questions of the body of scholarship surrounding a distinct set of artefacts. What was the purpose of the cadaver tomb? When, where and why did the idea evolve? How general or specific was their popularity? How was the idea transmitted? Is there an identifiable development in the iconography involved over a given period? All these questions, it will emerge, have been surprisingly

inadequately answered. There has been only one major study devoted to the iconography of the cadaver as such, Kathleen Cohen's *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol*¹, which will be discussed separately at the end of this chapter.

In the first place, the major English antiquarian sources and county histories, although useful in so far as they assist with the identification of tombs which are no longer extant, have little to offer on the iconography of the cadaver. Indeed, until the advent of Gough and the "romantic" antiquarians, the chief interest was in tombs as genealogical records rather than aesthetic artefacts, hence in heraldry and inscriptions rather than effigies. The earliest antiquarian interest in monuments was, in fact, that of heralds who used tombs as an aid to recording accurate genealogies, such as may be found in the manuscript of Thomas Wriothesley, Garter King of Arms, as early as c. 1530². Perhaps the most important and well known of these early accounts is William Dugdale's *Book of Monuments*, 1641, in which Archbishop Booth's now missing cadaver tomb in

1. Kathleen Rogers Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol: The Transi Tomb in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Berkeley, 1973).
2. London, B.L. Additional MS 45131. For this and other records of the same type, e.g. BL Egerton MS 3510 and BL Lansdowne MS 874, see Richard Marks, "Sir William Dugdale and some Unpublished Early Antiquarian Sources", *Church Monuments Society Newsletter*, 2(2) (1986), 6, a summary of a paper on the subject given at the Church Monuments Society Symposium, Exeter College, Oxford, September 1986, and extracted from the author's forthcoming book on William Dugdale's *Book of Monuments*.

Southwell Cathedral¹, was illustrated by the arms-painter William Sedgwick. This interest in monuments purely as sources of genealogical information persisted throughout the seventeenth century, despite political change. Even Weever's detailed and famous work on funeral monuments records shields and inscriptions but does not describe effigies².

It was only with the advent of Richard Gough³ and his circle in the late eighteenth century, that the funerary monument came to be regarded and studied as a work of art. Gough and his successive illustrators recorded several cadaver tombs, but he limited his aesthetic assessment of them to a few passing remarks, such as the observation that Henry Chichele's tomb in Canterbury Cathedral was, "in a rich and peculiar style"⁴.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the more aesthetically focussed interest in monumental effigies persisted among antiquarians, one of the more notable being C.A. Stothard who devoted all of his short adult life to travelling and drawing monuments, dying in 1821 in pursuit of this obsession. The interest in effigies as a group, however,

1. London, B.L, Loan MS 38; see Chapter 2, no.32, below and Plate 28.
2. John Weever, *Ancient Funeral Monuments* (London, 1631), passim.
3. Richard Gough, *Sepulchral Monuments in Great Britain; applied to illustrate the history of Families, Manners, Habits and Arts at the different periods from the Norman Conquest to the Seventeenth Century*, 2 vols in 4 parts (London, 1786).
4. *Ibid.*, I, 129; see Chapter 2, no.1, below and Plate 2.

did not include an interest in the cadaver effigy, as John Hewitt's enlarged edition of Stothard and Kempe's work makes clear'. In this, for example, John Fitzalan's tomb of c.1435 in Arundel Castle chapel is discussed: Stothard's drawings of the upper effigy are reproduced and described in great detail, but not even the fact of the existence of the lower cadaver effigy is mentioned². This is in keeping with Kempe's views regarding the value of the study of effigies as expressed in his introduction³:

Of the progress of Sculpture I shall presently speak at large; and of costume I may here observe, that we have many proofs that the various dresses which present themselves to us on our monumental effigies were not at all introduced by any inventive or whimsical fancies in the sculptor...It may be also remarked that, with very few exceptions, these effigies present the only existing portraits we possess of our kings, our princes and the heroes of ages famed for chivalry and arms. This considered, they must be extremely valuable...

Hewitt goes on to add⁴

It is, however, matter of satisfaction that he [Stothard] has left so little unnoticed by his pencil which could illustrate the progress of our national costume, regal, ecclesiastical, civil and military.

It may, accordingly, safely be said that the cadaver tomb was so peripheral to the interests of all major antiquarian studies of monuments prior to the present century as to have been virtually ignored.

1. C.A. Stothard and Alfred John Kempe, *The Monumental Effigies of Great Britain*, new and enlarged edition by John Hewitt (London, 1876).
2. *Ibid.*, 163-64; see Chapter 2, no.6, below and Plate 6.
3. *Ibid.*, x.
4. *Ibid.*, xxiii.

A tomb is erected to commemorate an individual. This is, presumably, as far as it goes, an undisputed fact. Certain theories have been advanced which suggest that this was not the sole, nor even the prime purpose of the cadaver tomb, and a few studies have concentrated at length on placing these tombs within a pattern of shifting emphasis in commemoration. Until the middle of the twentieth century, moreover, nobody thought it necessary to suggest what these tombs were for. F.H. Crossley, in what is probably the first "modern" study of tomb sculpture¹, devoted only two half-sentences and six illustrations to cadaver effigies and contributes nothing to the understanding of them. Katherine Esdaile, writing six years later, in 1927, declared that the tombs acted as a "warning to the living"², but did not elaborate upon what is, after all, not an entirely orthodox purpose for a memorial for the dead.

More recently, the purpose of the cadaver tomb has been examined with greater attention, even though artistic fastidiousness often still detracts from more objective observation. As it happens, two of the more persuasive analyses are contained in works which ironically see the period in question as the "waning" or the "flowering" of the

1. F.H. Crossley, *English Church Monuments A.D. 1150-1550; An Introduction to the Study of Tombs and Effigies of the Medieval Period* (London, 1921), 79, 182.
2. Katherine A. Esdaile, *English Monumental Sculpture since the Renaissance* (New York, 1927), 29.

Middle Ages respectively¹. Huizinga's celebrated and innovatory work suggests that the whole *memento mori* form in general, and the cadaver tomb, which he links with it directly, signal cultural decline. His beliefs in what was and was not the function of the cadaver tomb are expressed emphatically enough²:

The desire to invent a visible image of all that appertained to death entailed the neglecting of all those aspects of it which were not suited to direct representation. Thus the cruder conceptions of death, and these only, impressed themselves continually on the minds. The macabre vision does not represent the emotions of tenderness or of consolation. The elegiac note is wanting altogether. At the bottom the macabre sentiment is self-seeking and earthly. It is hardly the absence of the departed dear ones that is deplored; it is the fear of one's own death, and this only seen as the worst of evils. Neither the conception of death the consoler, nor that of rest long wished for, of the end of suffering, of the task performed or interrupted, have a share in the funeral sentiment of that epoch.

His derogatory view of corpse imagery ("living emotion stiffens amid the abused imagery of skeletons and worms"³) seems founded upon a comparison with some nebulous form of asceticism. It does, however, confirm the view, still largely unquestioned, that the purpose of the cadaver tomb is, at least in part, to educate the living.

1. Johan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages: A Study of Life, Thought, and Art in France and the Netherlands in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, trans., F. Hopman (Harmondsworth, 1955, first published 1924); Joan Evans, *The Flowering of the Middle Ages* (London, 1966).
2. Huizinga, *Waning*, 144-45.
3. *Ibid.*, 145.

Persuasive though Huizinga's argument undoubtedly is, his premise that any era can be read according to its unique and homogeneous "spirit" has come under critical scrutiny in recent years. Maurice Keen, for instance, has taken issue with his view that cultural decline in the fifteenth century led to chivalry being a debased and meaningless "tinsel" borrowed from romance; Keen argues strongly for the continuing social utility of chivalry¹. The root of the problem is well summarised by Malcolm Vale²:

His [Huizinga's] Hegelian background led him...to see the "forms of life, thought and art" as expressions of a "spirit" which "unites all the cultural products of an age and makes them homogeneous". Late Gothic styles in the arts, a prolix and outworn scholasticism, an outworn, though still influential, cult of chivalry, and a super-abundance of images in religious art and thought - all emanated from the same "spirit", a spirit which Huizinga considered "decadent".

Huizinga's opinions regarding the cadaver tomb, therefore, must be treated with caution, arising as they do from a desire to align the data with the theory.

A more objective, if general, contribution to the study of the cadaver tomb *per se*, is made by T.S.R. Boase, in his chapter in *The Flowering of the Middle Ages*, later expanded as an independent study³. He carefully examined the

1. Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (Yale, 1984), 3, 199.
2. Malcolm Vale, *War and Chivalry* (London, 1981), 3.
3. Evans, *Flowering*, Chapter VI was expanded as T.S.R. Boase, *Death in the Middle Ages: Mortality, Judgement and Remembrance* (London, 1972), 59-102.

function of all medieval tombs prior to the condemnation of "vain opinion of purgatory" embodied in the acts of 1529 and 1547. He concluded that these tombs fulfilled a commemorative function through the effigy and associated heraldry, while the epitaph generally acted as a request for orisons. He went on to associate charitable foundations with methods of ensuring a quick passage through purgatory. He found the cadaver effigy hard to place in this context except as an imaginative realisation of a judgemental theme, since it displays neither a commemorative function, nor, explicitly, a request for orisons. Ultimately he confessed to a difficulty in ascribing any precise purpose to these tombs¹:

It is a strange preoccupation with putrefaction. The Church had preached the transience of mortal things, but there was in the fifteenth century in Northern Europe a morbid indulgence in disgust which answered some need now hard to understand. The earlier Middle Ages had their fill of the horrors of damnation; and gradually the image lost its potency. The mind must have in the end developed resistance to such gruesome forebodings, and if it was still too dangerous to question orthodox teaching, there must have been many who rejected its crudity and substituted for its detailed realism the less immediate awesomeness of the unknown. A more luxurious and sophisticated society concentrated on the physical corruption of their being.

The greatest value of Boase's discussion of these phenomena lies in his examination of the judgemental beliefs and his clear distinction between the purpose of all tombs before

1. Ibid., 106.

and after the belief in purgatory was discredited. In general terms, he believed that the commemorative function of the tomb eventually completely supplanted its function as a stimulus for orisons. Where the cadaver tomb is concerned, he made the useful distinction between the intentions behind the medieval tomb and the Nightingale monument (1761) in Westminster Abbey, by Roubilliac, on which there is a tableau of the bereaved husband holding his dying wife to his bosom as a figure of Death as a cloaked skeleton with a dart rises up in a posture of attack from underneath the tomb':

It [the Nightingale monument] is an affirmation of human affection in revolt against death, not a reminder of the dust to which we must all come,

These are undoubtedly valuable distinctions in purpose, linked to changing doctrinal beliefs. In fact the earlier English cadaver tombs coincide with a period during which there was a marked increase in the endowment of chantry chapels in general². Joel Rosenthal in discussing the late medieval chantry phenomenon as a form of disposing of wealth, comparing it with post-Renaissance charitable foundations, believed that the chantry served no useful

1. Ibid., 125-26.

2. Joel T. Rosenthal, *The Purchase of Paradise* (London and Toronto, 1972), 32-37.

purpose in terms of social utility. They were, "an institutionalized form of private spiritual succour", focussing, of course, on the next world: the nobility',

...bought their prayers and were mostly content to dream of the splendid monuments which would one day stand over their mortal remains. Men of this sort may topple kings but they do not change the values or social institutions of their world.

But the charitable bequest of real social utility was also seen in terms of spiritual succour, as it witnessed by the plethora of road and bridge repairs which enjoyed prominence in wills alongside the foundation of chantry chapels. Rosenthal does not go into the iconography of the chantry chapel in his survey, but for Boase it would not have involved a huge leap to account for the medieval cadaver tomb as not only a stimulus for orisons but also in part a charitable bequest, especially in view of what appears to have been the accepted opinion, that the cadaver tomb was designed to serve a didactic function.

Erwin Panofsky's work on *Tomb Sculpture*² was written at a date between Huizinga and Boase's work and surpasses both in its clear and concrete theories defining the purpose of the corpse effigy in artistic and dramatic terms. He drew a contrast between the southern European

1. Ibid., 133.

2. Erwin Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture: its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini* (London, 1964).

gisant, with its eyes closed and its arms crossed, obviously dead, and the ambivalent northern European effigies which are also recumbent but have their eyes open and are engaged in prayer. In this context, the cadaver aimed to describe the "actual condition of being dead"¹, often in dramatic contrast to the "representation au vif". He remarked of these double tombs²:

The moral significance of these grisly *transis...*, of course, that of a *memento mori...*

The argument he put forward is especially strong because it placed the cadaver within a clear progression in effigial iconography. Whereas Boase had difficulty in placing this design, from an ideological point of view, between the tomb concerned with the afterlife and the post-Renaissance commemorative tomb; Panofsky saw the same progression in rather different terms which accommodate the *memento mori* image quite naturally. He achieved this by viewing the medieval *gisant* with its heraldry and fine costume not only as a plea for orisons but also as commemorative of status. The cadaver effigy was, then, a rejection of that status, an antidote for the sin of pride. The commemorative post-Renaissance tomb was the final compromise: the elevation of the private qualities of the individual, reflected upon

1. Ibid., 56.
2. Ibid., 64.

after death, both as reassurance as to the deceased's final destination and as example to the living. Panofsky elaborated these views further by making suggestions regarding the origin of the double tomb related to those previously put forward by Ernst Kantorowicz and discussed below¹.

More recently, Malcolm Norris, discussing "English Shroud and Skeleton Brasses"², explored similar themes with special reference to the different categories of engraved brass cadaver tombs. He, like many of his predecessors, was moved to remark that he found them "unattractive as designs", though "interesting for their peculiarity and motives"³:

A brass could arrest the attention of the spectator, not only by recording the status and meritorious works of the deceased, but by startling with a crude revelation of death itself.

And, more specifically,

The motive of the shroud brass was to move the spectator both through concern for his own future and pity for the commemorated. Thomas Morys, Grocer, willed in 1506 - "I wil hafe an honyste Stone layed on me...a marbull Stone with an ymage of myselfe and another of my wife...And the ymagis that shuld be on the stone gravid lyke ij deade carkas as pitou(s)lye made as canne be thoughte holdinge upp ower handes in ower wyndedinge sheats". In certain cases, such as that of Ralph Hamsterley engr, c.1515, Oddington, the

1. Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies; A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, 1957), see below.
2. Malcom Norris, *Monumental Brasses*, 2 vols, (London, 1977), I, *The Memorials*, 206-10.
3. *Ibid.*, 206.

brass was certainly laid in the lifetime of the commemorated for his own contemplation.

In these terms, he produced a concise explanation for the function of the tombs which concurs with the ideas put forward by both Boase and Panofsky and which can be extended to cover all tombs of this type.

An explanation of a different, but not incompatible kind, was put forward in another article which attempted to break new ground, showing that a dismissal of the cadaver tomb as part commemorative and part *memento mori*, need not be the last possible word on the iconography of these memorials'. Sarah Lawson suggested that the cadaver effigy was offered as an "anti-portrait", a "future-portrait" of the deceased. The idealised *gisant* was, in these terms, a present or even past portrait, whereas the cadaver was an imaginative composition in portraying the deceased as he or she was bound to become. She divided cadaver effigies into *vermis*, that is in the process of decay, and *pulvis*, the skeleton². She wrote of these two categories of effigy³,

Even now it presents a dynamic portrait - an attempt to show the subject in different stages of development...The *gisant* may be what was originally buried in the tomb, but the *pulvis* is what you will find if you dig it up. Time is shown in a tangible

1. Sarah Lawson, "Cadaver Effigies; The Portrait as Prediction", *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 25(4) (1974), 519-23.
2. *Ibid.*, 519.
3. *Ibid.*, 520.

form, as it is in the medieval habit of showing successive actions in the same scene in painting or tapestry...It is a little as though the sculptor wanted to reach forward to any future observer of the tomb and execute a portrait that would be relevant to any time,

The theory that the purpose of the cadaver tomb may be seen in terms of the imaginative impulse of the artist is a very attractive one. Unfortunately, there are elements within the article which detract from its central argument. The division of cadaver tombs into two standard categories is not consistent with the many surviving tombs which show the body at several points along the way to total decay: the author evidently did not examine a large sample. She also appears to have been confident that the *gisant* was always an attempt at accurate portraiture, thus ignoring a major controversy. The overall view presented of the cadaver as a "grim joke", is not in keeping with the fifteenth-century philosophy of the after-life. This study remains, however, the only attempt which has yet been made to define the purpose of the cadaver tomb on artistic, rather than devotional or philosophical, grounds. It merits serious consideration.

Failure, to a lesser or greater degree, to give adequate consideration to the many variations upon the iconography of the cadaver tomb, renders all the above views of limited value. Most are dependent on a sample selected simply from

1. Ibid., 519.

those tombs which are best known. These are generally double-decker tombs, which are naturally most impressive, so that the sample has an unrepresentative bias. Huizinga gave no examples at all to support his opinions. The attempted definition of the impetus behind the cadaver tomb as a general trend appears to remain elusive. Accordingly, the author of the most recent general survey of church monuments in England¹ is fittingly cautious:

Taken in their broadest sense, symbolism and allegory were part of the iconography of funerary monuments from the earliest days...one can trace a continuous impulse to represent complex beliefs and abstract concepts in concrete visual terms...It may well be...that the cadaver simply represented a new convention, borrowed in the first instance from France, whose deep psychological roots are lost to us, but which, once it had been introduced, persisted as a powerfully symbolic portrait of death...

If the meaning of the cadaver tomb has not yet been convincingly defined, neither has its origin as a distinctive design been plausibly explained. Brian Kemp was, again, cautious, in reviewing the favoured explanations²:

Historians have long debated the reasons for the emergence of this practice, but, although prevalence of plague, the approach of the half-millennium and even the "decline" of the middle ages have been adduced to explain it, no fully satisfactory reason has been found. If plague were the explanation, one may wonder why the cadaver fashion did not arise after the Black Death in the fourteenth century; if the half-millennium, why it continued in the sixteenth century. As for the

1. Brian Kemp, *English Church Monuments* (London, 1980), 160-61.
2. *Ibid.*, 161.

decline of the middle ages, quite apart from modern historians discrediting the whole concept, it cannot seriously be maintained that men thought in this way in the first half of the sixteenth century...

Most other commentators have restricted themselves to stating the earliest examples known to them. Those explanations which have been offered for the appearance or evolution of the phenomenon may be divided into philosophical theories based on historical events; social explanations, again connected with specific historical events; psychological explanations, which have seen the idea as self-generating; and attempts to trace the iconography in some form as a continuum whose origins belong in classical times.

Of all these theories, the strongest and most ingenious was put forward by the political philosopher and historian Ernst Kantorowicz¹:

...the bone-rattling vitality of the late Middle Ages appears not devoid of some deeper wisdom. What one did was to build up a philosophy according to which a fictitious immortality became transparent through a real mortal man as its temporary incarnation, while mortal men became transparent through that new fictitious immortality which, being man-made as immortality always is, was neither that of life eternal in another world nor that of the godhead, but that of the very terrestrial political institution.

The political institution to which Kantorowicz referred was the so-called "dignity" or office of a great man, for

1. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, 419-37.
2. *Ibid.*, 437.

instance a king or prelate. The "dignity" remained immortal, while the mortal man decayed. The distinction was originally a juridical one which, he argued, assumed tangible form first in the royal funeral rites and then in the reflection of those rites, the double-decker cadaver tomb. The funeral custom in question is said to have originated in England after the death of Edward II in 1327. It involved the transportation of the corpse of the king in a closed coffin, whilst an effigy, dressed in robes of state, was carried on top of the coffin in full view':

...enclosed in the coffin of lead, which itself was encased in a casket of wood, there rested the corpse of the king, his mortal and normally visible - though now invisible - body natural; whereas his normally invisible body politic was on this occasion visibly displayed by the effigy - impersonating a *persona ficta* - the *Dignitas*.

Kantorowicz believed that the ceremony was transferred to France when the Duke of Bedford arranged the funeral of Charles VI in 1422, the same year that similar rites were observed for Henry V. From then on the role of the effigy in French royal funerals became very important.

The juridical theory behind this symbolic separation of the ruler's person from his office was traced by Kantorowicz back to Italy, although it had its place in many systems of

1. Ibid., 421.

political thought. It was, for instance, summarised by Pierre Gregoire, a sixteenth-century French jurist¹:

The Majesty of God appears in the Prince externally,
for the utility of the subjects; but internally there
remains what is human.

Apparently it is possible to relate the funeral rite derived from this theory to classical tradition, specifically the funeral of Emperor Septim^us Severus, described by Herodian. Herodian's history was accessible in France from 1546. During the sixteenth century the royal funeral in France became a more and more elaborate affair, sometimes involving separate ceremonies for the corpse and the effigy, all the pageantry accompanying the latter, whilst the former was attended by mourning and lamentations. The nature of the rite meant that the new king could not attend the funeral of his father, as the "dignity" could not be visually duplicated².

Kantorowicz, having described the funeral rite in some detail, extended his discussion further by pointing out that from 1515 onwards, the tombs of French monarchs in St Denis reflected the rite by displaying double effigies³:

The result was a species of monuments showing the reclining dead as a putrefying skeleton-like corpse, whereas on some higher level, or superimposed on the tomb, the deceased would be seen pictured such as he had been during his life.

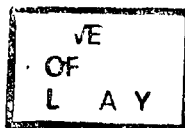
1. Ibid., 422.
2. Ibid., 430.
3. Ibid., 432.

Although these double tombs of the French monarchs are comparatively late for their type, the author's argument for the direct relationship between the funeral rite and the tomb design was greatly enhanced when he observed that one of the very earliest of all extant cadaver tombs is that of Guillaume de Harcigny, who died in 1393, and who was personal physician to Charles VI. Where the French cadaver tomb is concerned, Kantorowicz's argument appears to be largely convincing, but difficulties begin to arise when one attempts to apply this explanation to the English tombs. The first problem is one of chronology: the author stated that the funeral rite was introduced into France from England and so, at a later date, was the tomb design. The earliest English cadaver tombs, so far as can be established, however, date from the 1420's. He described the tomb of Henry Chichele in Canterbury Cathedral, again connecting it specifically with the funeral rite':

Since the parading of the effigy was the general usage at a bishop's funeral in fifteenth century England, it might be expected to find more episcopal tombs worked during the period after the Canterbury pattern.

To support his argument, he mentioned two other English bishops who had double tombs, then added to the list John

1. Ibid., 434.



Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, not pausing to consider whether English secular funeral rites followed the same pattern. He also alluded to the fact that Edward IV requested what appears to be a cadaver tomb in his will, although the circumstances of his death meant that it was never constructed¹. In fact the most obvious deficiency in the whole argument is the unexplained fact that no English monarch rests under a cadaver tomb.

As abstract political theory, based upon juridical evidence, Kantorowicz's argument is a strong one. Where the concrete evidence is concerned, however, the author could have made his case more plainly if he could have clarified the question of transmission between England and France. As it stands, the explanation offered for the emergence of the cadaver tomb does not quite persuade, which, in view of the undoubted strengths of its logic, is a pity.

1. Ibid., 436. The chapel which Edward IV devised to contain his cadaver tomb was constructed in St George's Chapel, Windsor, at the same time as the choir. He desired to be buried beneath a stone, "wrought with the figure of Dethe with scochyns of oure Armes and writings convenient aboute the bordures of the same remeabring the day and yere of oure decease", over it "a vawte of convenient height as the place wil suffre it, and...upon the said vawte...a Chapell or a Closet with an Autre convenient and a Tumbe to bee made and sett there, and upon the same Tumbe an Image of oure figure, which figure we wil be of silver and gilte or at the lest copre and gilt..." In 1482, 33 casks of touchstone were bought for making the king's tomb, and the altar section at least was completed. Neither the upper effigy nor the cadaver was, however, complete, when he died in 1483, and his place of burial went unmarked until 1789. For a full account of the plans for the tomb and the wording of the will, see H.M. Colvin, ed., *The History of the King's Works*, I, *The Middle Ages* (London, 1963), 887-88.

Panofsky was among those who were impressed by Kantorowicz's explanation for the origins of the double tomb. He reiterated the notion that the "dignity"¹,

enjoys a permanence which has nothing to do with the immortality of the soul but attaches to his social or institutional status per se; "Dignitas nunquam perit, individue vero quotidie pereunt", says the great jurist of the thirteenth century.

Being primarily concerned with the tomb design rather than the funeral ceremony, however, Panofsky reversed Kantorowicz's conclusion about transmission and stated that the design originated in France and was brought to England²:

Be that as it may, for nearly two hundred years, French, Franco-German and English art abounded in funerary monuments dramatically contrasting an image of the body rotting in its grave with an image of what may be called the total personality lying in state.

Plainly the inadequacy of the explanation offered by both authors is its reliance, when discussing the jurist's definition, the funeral rites and the tombs, upon the idea of a fundamental dramatic contrast. In each case, the mortal corpse is placed in contrast to the "dignity". The explanation is, therefore, apparently limited to the double decker tomb, and cannot be too readily extended to account for that larger group of English cadaver tombs, the shroud brasses, single corpse effigies and incised slabs.

1. Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture*, 64.
2. Ibid.

In a search for an explanation of the origins of the whole corpus of cadaver tombs we are accordingly thrown back upon the more widely accepted, if less substantiated set of assumptions which Brian Kemp most recently treated with some scepticism'. These may broadly be dubbed the socio-historical explanation for the appearance of the cadaver tomb design.

What occasioned so marked a change in the manner of contemplating - and so portraying - man's exit from life must be largely a matter of conjecture. The abnormally severe visitation of plague in 1348-9, known to historians as the Black Death, though merely an aggravation of what was then a normal dispensation at fairly brief intervals, may have turned men's minds to introspection, and especially to meditate on the need to prepare for sudden death, till it developed into a morbid obsession. Intense preoccupation with the latter end of man's human existence would lead on quite naturally to a custom of setting up a person's funeral monument during his lifetime to serve as a constant reminder of the final outcome of all human strivings, on which he must needs look every time he came to church.²

F.A. Greenhill's introduction to his chapter on "The Human Corpse as Depicted on Incised Slabs"³ clearly presented, with all its reservations and qualifications, the most generally accepted explanation for the iconography of the corpse. Despite the fact that there had been many plagues and epidemics before the Black Death and that *memento mori*

1. Kemp, *English Church Monuments*, 161.
2. F.A. Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs; A Study of Engraved Stone Memorials in Latin Christendom, c.1100 to c.1700*, 2 vols (London, 1976), 1, 286.
3. *Ibid.*, 286-89.

material had been in circulation since the middle of the twelfth century at least¹, this remains the argument most often expressed. The fact that the most vivid accounts of the Black Death derive from Italy, a country in which the cadaver tomb is conspicuous by its absence, does not affect the frequency or the confidence with which the two phenomena are connected. In the absence of any clear investigation of the transmission of the iconography of the corpse, the approach usually adopted has been to treat the phenomenon on a pan-European scale and to attribute its appearance to a pan-European event which conveniently coincided more or less in both date and implication.

Panofsky himself stressed the relevance of the Black Death, connecting it with his account of the evolution of the role of the tomb. He pointed out that in a period when "the office was deemed more important than its incumbent", a "Preoccupation with the macabre" was a product of the "feeling for the collective" after the mass mortality of the Black Death². Malcolm Norris, discussing shroud brasses³, having stated that,

The fashion for such memorials in England can be traced
from the half-figure of Joan Mareys, 1431, Sheldwich,

1. Ibid., 286.
2. Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture*, 63.
3. Norris, *Monumental Brasses*, I, 206.

Earlier Continental examples from Bruges have been described, and figures in sculpture are yet older,

goes on to say,

The ravages of the Black Death created an extraordinary awareness of the sudden end of life, which was reinforced by recurrent plagues and epidemics,

Only Helen Roe's survey of the cadaver tomb in Ireland' has connected specific examples convincingly with specific outbreaks of plague. First of all, however, she repeated the general assumption²:

The primary impulse toward the graphic expression of man's mortality may be best understood if it be looked on as an outcome of the psychological shock and prolonged traumatic effect of the great pandemic of 1347-50, later known as the Black Death. All through Europe in the wake of this catastrophic outbreak of plague a general emphasis on the macabre, coupled with an intense preoccupation with the brevity and uncertainty of human life, becomes even more marked. The later sporadic and frequent recurrence of the disease - inexplicable to medieval minds save as signs of divine displeasure - did little to allay men's anxieties, while it would be difficult to overstate the effect on fifteenth century thought of such works as the *Ars Moriendi* with its awesome account of the agony of death, or the treatise of Denis the Carthusian on the *Four Last Things* which await mankind, Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell.

What is more interesting is her clear attempt not to leave the question at that, but to relate it to individual examples. Her problem was made easier here, though more

1. Helen M. Roe, "Cadaver Effigial Monuments in Ireland", *Transactions of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 99 (1969), 1-19.
2. *Ibid.*, 1.

difficult elsewhere, by the fact that many of her tombs are unidentified, leaving the way open for judicious speculation':

As to the identities of those commemorated, dare we think them noble ladies - the one a Preston, the other perhaps one of the ladies Plunket - who "died young and fair" carried off by the plague which in 1447-50 raged through the districts of the Pale, bringing death to "innumerable multitudes"?

This desire to support a notion of "primary impulse" by reference to specific examples is entirely typical of Helen Roe's study, which is one of the few which has recognised the need to discuss the dissemination of the cadaver tomb in terms of hard facts such as geographical location, social class of owners and economic factors.

The "psychological shock" which Helen Roe attributed to the Black Death, introduces a further type of explanation for the cadaver tomb phenomenon. Some commentators have set aside the need to make a connection with any tangible rite or event, choosing to see the evolution of the corpse iconography as a manifestation of a particular development in the corporate psyche of a culture. Johan Huizinga was the most eloquent proponent of this method. He believed that all late medieval visions of death in literature and

1. Ibid., 10.

art could be attributed to the popularisation of something which monks at least had "always" contemplated':

Three motifs may be distinguished. The first is expressed by the question: Where now are all those who once filled the world with their splendour? The second motif draws on the frightful spectacle of human beauty gone to decay. The third is the death-dance; death dragging along men of all conditions and ages,

and²,

Ascetic meditation had, in all ages, dwelt on dust and worms. The treatises on the contempt of the world had, long since, evoked all the horrors of decomposition, but it is only towards the end of the fourteenth century that pictorial art, in its turn, siezes upon the motif. To render the horrible details of decomposition, a realistic force of expression was required, to which painting and sculpture only attained towards 1400. At the same time, the motif spread from ecclesiastical to popular literature. Until far into the sixteenth century, tombs are adorned with hideous images of a naked corpse with clenched hands and rigid feet, gaping mouth and bowels crawling with worms. The imagination of those times relished these horrors, without even looking one stage further, to see how corruption perishes in its turn, and flowers grow where it lay.

Boase followed Huizinga's lead in this matter, supplying what is more a rationalisation than an explanation. His study of the death motif in the later Middle Ages³ set out to survey; to arrange apparently related cultural ideas logically. Of itself this appears to be an acceptable activity, although it tended to produce analogues of coincidence, rather than patterns of transmission. Boase

1. Huizinga, *Waning of the Middle Ages*, 134.
2. *Ibid.*, 136.
3. Boase, *Death in the Middle Ages*, *passim*.

traced the increasing interest in morbidity through some well-selected examples: for instance he saw the threats embodied in Bromyard's late fourteenth-century *Summa Praedicatorum*¹ realised in the early cadaver tomb. He also related all such material to the "ever popular" story of Dives and Lazarus.

In *Figures of Life and Death in Middle English Literature*², Philippa Tristram also followed Huizinga's general explanation of the debased treatment of the mortality motif, by seeing fear of death as the root of the obsession. She ascribed the intensification in the appearance of such motifs to the Black Death, using the cadaver tomb as contextual material in her study of the development of the *Legend of the Three Living and the Three Dead*, and of the *Dance of Death*. Such literary material is, in turn, generally presented as a context for the tombs, which demonstrates the limited usefulness of the type of survey conducted by Boase in producing answers about sources. Philippa Tristram, however, contributed a useful observation on the psychological explanation for the progressive dramatisation of the corpse³:

1. Ibid., 44-45.
2. Philippa Tristram, *Figures of Life and Death in Medieval English Literature* (London, 1976), 152-83, 194-200.
3. Ibid., 161.

Just as there is a ready connection between the admonition of the *memento mori* and the dramatisation of the words that issue from the tomb, so there is a natural progression from the corpse that talks to one that walks.

A more general and alternative way of accounting for the origins of the corpse symbol, however, is to claim that it has been present in society in some form since antiquity. Certainly it is possible to show that the cadaver tomb appeared at a much earlier date than is commonly assumed. Both Norris¹ and Greenhill² have made claims for the earliest examples; in the case of incised slabs, startlingly early. John Page-Phillips, revising Macklin's work on brasses,³ stated that shroud brasses dated from the late fourteenth century, the first being that of Wouter Copman, who died in 1389, in Bruges⁴. The earliest major tombs are probably those of Harcigny, mentioned above, of Cardinal Lagrange, who died in 1402, in Avignon, and of François de la Sarra who died in 1363, but whose tomb was probably constructed around thirty years later, at La Sarraz, Vaud, Switzerland. At the beginning of the century, G. L. Apperson alleged that there is a very early example in York

1, Norris, *Monumental Brasses*, 206.

2, Greenhill, *Incised Slabs*, 286. In England there is a slab dated c.1200 in Shillingstone parish church, Dorset, showing a naked man, but whether it is a funerary monument or not seems seriously open to question - G.T. Long, "Pre-Reformation Dorset Church Monuments", *Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club Proceedings*, 46 (1925), 14; see Plate 1.

3, Herbert W. Macklin, *The Brasses of England* (Wakefield, 1975), first published 1907; John Page-Phillips, *Macklin's Monumental Brasses* (London, 1969), 82, n.1.

4, Boase, *Death in the Middle Ages*, 45.

Minster, but his information is undoubtedly unreliable¹. The tomb which he attributed to treasurer Robert Claget, who died in 1241, is that conventionally attributed to treasurer Thomas Haxey, who died in 1425. In fact neither attribution bears close inspection and, although the tomb in question is possibly England's earliest extant cadaver, it probably dates from the second decade of the fifteenth century². Apperson's article, however, is one of the earliest cases of specific interest in "monumental skeletons". His approach now appears over-literal: for instance he believed that the tomb of James Rice in Waterford Cathedral, Ireland, was based upon the picture presented when the corpse was exhumed a year after death. Quite implausibly, the worms were alleged to be faithfully copied by the sculptor³,

as well as a frog, which apparently had flopped on to the body during the exhuming operations.

The more plausible interpretation of the intriguing Irish cadaver tombs embodied in Helen Roe's article will be considered later⁴. Apperson, ingenious as he was, overcame the need to find a precise explanation for the appearance of the cadaver tomb by claiming that its origins lay in

1. G. L. Apperson, "Monumental Skeletons", *The Antiquary*, 43 (1907), 216-19.
2. Identification of the cadaver tomb in York Minster, while important, is necessarily speculative in the final analysis - see Appendix 2.
3. *Ibid.*, 217.
4. Roe, "Cadaver Effigial Monuments in Ireland", *passim*; see Appendix, 1.

antiquity. He cited a silver vase with skeletons figured on it which was discovered in a Roman villa at Bosco near Naples, a similar drinking cup from Egypt, and he reminded his readers that it was Horace who said¹,

*Pallida mors aequus puleat pede pauperum
tabernas Regumque turres.*

Kantorowicz too frequently suggested a Roman origin for the medieval ideas which he exposed to view. Much depends on how specific one wishes to make the definition of the cadaver iconography. Certainly the *memento mori* form of many late medieval epitaphs can be traced back in an unbroken line to a very early date, as was proven by Diana Tyson in her analysis of the epitaph on the tomb of Edward, the Black Prince².

Whether or not we accept that the cadaver tomb and its related iconography owe their ultimate origins to Horace or Herodian, the reasons behind the increasing popularity of corpse motifs in Northern Europe in the fifteenth century remain a matter of conjecture. All the theories mentioned above are based upon selected examples and, therefore, never approach the question of why the design achieved its *limited* popularity; after all, throughout the period when the

1. Ibid., 216.
2. Diana B. Tyson, "The Epitaph of Edward the Black Prince", *Medium Aevum*, 46 (1977), 98-103.

cadaver tomb took hold, the most popular effigy remained the conventional *gisant*. The pan-European psychological account of the phenomenon is too general and diffuse to be of real value. The more illuminating studies of the cadaver tomb, accordingly, are likely to be those which examine its dissemination.

Inexplicably, however, with the notable exception again of Helen Roe's study¹, the dissemination of this most arrestingly different group of styles of tomb has provoked little curiosity. Boase noted the important fact that there was generally much less interest in the corpse motif south than north of the Alps². He pointed to Masaccio's fresco in Sta Maria Novella, Florence, as a notable exception, with its painted skeleton and its inscription,

*Io fu ga quel che voi siete a quel che son voi aco
sarete.*

Panofsky went further³ by making a distinction between effigies of the decaying dead and personifications of death itself. The latter is not so rare as the former in Italy. To the Masaccio example he adds Jacobo Bellini's *Sketchbook* illustration of the scholar and the corpse, pointing out that neither example is attached to a grave, being simply

1. Roe, "Cadaver Effigial Monuments in Ireland", 11; see Appendix 1.
2. Boase, *Death in the Middle Ages*, 109.
3. Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture*, 66.

symbolic of mortality. The only example of an individual Italian being commemorated as a deceased person is, apparently, the tomb slab of juriconsult Antonio Amati in Sta Trinita in Florence, probably of the third quarter of the fifteenth century':

He is, if one may say so, somewhat more dead than the normal Italian gisant; but he is emphatically not a *transi* in the hyperborean sense of the term; death's head or no death's head, he remains Antonio Amati L.L.D., "*toto clarissimus orbe*". Here, as in a flash, we see the difference between the Northern Middle Ages and the Italian Renaissance.

Such remarks carry with them a genuine perception, but Panofsky's analysis is ultimately disappointing. Initially he appears to have realised that cadaver tombs were an aberrant taste, but he then proceeded to discuss them as if they had been universally popular.

A further desirable refinement to the study of the cadaver tomb would involve a re-examination of their iconography, recognising that there are evidently several variations on the theme, each, perhaps with its own semantic nuances. Sarah Lawson, in considering the tombs strictly as sculptural artefacts, offered some supplementary ideas about their design. In some respects, she encountered difficulties because the sample she examined was not large enough to support her arguments. Her arbitrary

1. Ibid.

classification into *pulvis* and *vermis*¹, described above, was further refined by a list of "standard" characteristics peculiar to each. This led her to the dangerous conclusion that cadaver effigies were produced separately in special workshops. Having defined the "standard" features, she went on to note rare exceptions to each. A broader survey would, perhaps, have revealed to the author several more "rare" exceptions to each rule. Nonetheless, a study based on the finer distinctions of compositional detail seems inherently laudable.

In the matter of distinguishing between different iconographic variations in the cadaver tomb, F.A. Greenhill's discussion of incised slabs introduced the somewhat subjective division into those "within the bounds of decency" and those "not merely revolting, but positively obscene"². He found no English examples in the latter category, by which he meant those showing vermin. Although he described many variations, particularly in the Low Countries and Britain, he ultimately made no attempt to arrange the differences he observed into any discernible pattern. What is more, he included the chrysom in the same category of memorial, which complicates matters considerably. Chrysons, children dead at birth or who died

1. Lawson, "Cadaver Effigies", 519.

2. Greenhill, *Incised Slabs*, 287.

shortly after birth, shown swaddled, may be rare on tombs on their own, but when they are considered as a group including those shown in their mothers' arms and on "bedstead slabs", they become "too numerous to mention"¹. They really form a class radically different in its inspiration from the shroud or corpse effigy, because, apart from any other consideration, the swaddling bands were arguably the "normal" clothes of such an infant.

In the case of the popular study of English memorial brasses, where there has been much work in recent years on the distinct schools of brass engravers, the analysis of the shroud or corpse in its various forms has been presented in a more orderly manner. Macklin² contrasted shroud brasses with double tombs, noting how unusual it was to find death and life contrasted on a brass. He distinguished shrouded effigies holding hearts, shrouded figures rising from their tombs, and a few which are riddled with worms. He did not, however, offer an overall picture of topographical distribution. Page-Phillips' revision³ simply added that skeletons were, in general, later in date than rotting corpses. He believed that Flemish, London and Norwich schools all engraved shroud brasses.

1. Ibid., 288.
2. Macklin, *Brasses of England*, 212-15.
3. Page-Phillips, *Macklin's Brasses*, 82.

Malcolm Norris, however, offered a much more detailed classification of the different types of shroud brass¹. He divided them into four groups "according to the treatment of the subject": the recumbent shroud effigy, "alive" or "dead", skeletal or not; the kneeling shrouded figure in a votive composition; the Resurrection or Last Judgement brass on which the effigy rises shrouded from its coffin, and the brass showing a contrast between a living figure and a dead one. In the last category he drew attention to double tombs on which the upper effigy is a brass, the lower, a carved stone cadaver. Norris is also the only commentator to consider the shroud as costume, noting its essential neutrality as to the sex or occupation of the person portrayed².

Brian Kemp's consideration of distinct types of cadaver tomb has also shown an alertness to finer distinctions, his approach being a chronological one. He believed that the double tomb was the commonest context for the appearance of the cadaver effigy in the early fifteenth century, giving way to single cadaver effigies in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries³. His belief that the shrouded figure was always shown alone on brasses, is, however, not

- 1, Norris, *Monumental Brasses*, 206-09,
- 2, *Ibid.*, 207,
- 3, Kemp, *English Church Monuments*, 160, 165.

accurate. The great value of this particular survey is the manner in which it has followed the iconography through into the post-Renaissance period, observing the way in which, by the end of the sixteenth century, the shrouded figure had given way in turn to the unshrouded skeleton on a straw mat, and, in the seventeenth century, beginning with the tomb to John Donne (1631) in St Paul's Cathedral, the iconography had been radically reinterpreted as a Resurrection image.

These perceptions reach out beyond the over-simplistic views of Nikolaus Pevsner and his co-editors of the *Buildings of England*' series, who customarily date unidentified cadaver tombs c.1500, simply, it appears, on the grounds that they bear a corpse effigy. It is still not possible to date or place a cadaver tomb on iconographic grounds in the way that a conventional *gisant* can be identified by costume or armour. For this reason alone, there is considerable scope for a work which considers the whole development, or "metamorphosis" of the cadaver tomb in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance in Europe.

In the introduction to her study, *The Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol*², Kathleen Cohen approached the subject of the cadaver tomb from many of the points of view already raised.

1. Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England* (Harmondsworth, 1951-75).
2. Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol*, 1-11.

She initially rejected the definition of the purpose of the tomb as a simple *memento mori*, because it goes against the "traditional purpose of tombs"¹:

If one accepts the position that transi tombs were intended as *memento mori*, then it must be assumed that the men who commissioned the tombs suddenly shifted their orientation from the traditional concern with the salvation of their own souls to the edification of the living.

As this view is not in keeping with a period when more and more chantry chapels were being founded, Cohen thought that to see the tombs as *memento mori* only was an oversimplification, and attempted to formulate a more complex theory of their functions based upon her beliefs about the origins of the design²:

Transi tombs were, in fact, the result of a number of complex interrelated factors. These included traditional moralistic writings, the influence of the Black Death, contemporary *memento mori* imagery, contemporary funerary customs, the climate of anxiety generated by the conflict between traditional ascetic demands of the church and the emergence of nationalism and the accumulation of great wealth, the attempt to humiliate the body in order to gain salvation, the desperate desire for prayers for the soul, the interest in alchemical symbolism, the contemporary representation of dead bodies, such as that of Adam, in connection with resurrection symbolism, and the influence of Neo-Platonic symbolic thought.

The list is dauntingly comprehensive, and presents at a

1. Ibid., 4.
2. Ibid.

glance her determination to analyse all possible influences upon the design. In later chapters of her work she has selected particular factors to explain particular tombs. Here, in the introduction, she has expanded upon items in this list in terms of the psychological pressures which brought them into play.

In seeing the cadaver tomb and related symbolism as a response to the Black Death, Cohen employed arguments similar to those familiar in Huizinga's work: whereas Huizinga considered "fear" to have been the major impetus, Cohen's key word is "anxiety". Not only were the inhabitants of post-Plague Europe anxious about death, but the Black Death was commonly seen as a punishment from God; they were accordingly also anxious about the conflicting demands put upon them by contemporary society, particularly within the church':

...as the wealth of the church increased and its spiritual prestige lessened as a result of the Great Schism, this conflict sharpened. Many church administrators became more involved with the accumulation of wealth and with contemporary power struggles than with the development of spiritual values.

In the author's eyes, this new style of over-anxious churchman was typified by Cardinal Lagrange, who died in 1405, Archbishop Chichele, d. 1443, and the German ^{arch}bishop of

1. Ibid., 7.

Trier, Johan von Sierck, who died in 1456. She summarised her theory of the origins of the tombs of these men as follows¹:

These were the men who commissioned the first transi tombs, proud and powerful, but also religious. The transi was one attempt to alleviate the anxiety felt by these men as a result of the conflict between their own pride and the traditional religious demand for humility.

In some ways Cohen's introductory analysis improved upon the preceding theories which she inherited. It gains strength by exhibiting a seemingly refusal to attribute the origins of the design to any one cause or influence in isolation. It was an attempt to synthesise them, and yet it caused her to fall back also on her own preconceived ideas about the spirit of the age which, one suspects, a study of the career of any one of the individual clerks she cites would not substantiate with any degree of clarity.

Not all of Cohen's "transis"², were considered to display identical iconographic features. She attempted to classify the shifting iconography of the cadaver tomb in terms of geographical and chronological parameters. The earliest examples were depicted as³,

1. Ibid., 7.
2. Ibid., 10-11. Cohen goes to considerable trouble to explain the derivation of "transi" - from *transire*, to go across, to die, yet gives no reason for not using the more straightforwardly descriptive "cadaver".
3. Ibid., 1-2.

...a figure completely swathed in a shroud, as an emaciated corpse with protruding intestines, as a shrivelled body with skin drawn taut across its bony frame and as a decaying corpse covered by snakes and frogs.

New types were created in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as the early types spread through Northern Europe¹:

The emaciated transi was dominant in England, while in Germany and Austria, the corpse figure covered by frogs and snakes became prevalent. Enshrouded figures were used in northern France, Burgundy, England and the Lowlands. Many French transis were shown riddled with worms. In addition a new type developed in sixteenth century France which portrayed the deceased as a handsome nude seen only a few hours after death, a striking contrast to the pitiful naked corpses of the earlier century.

The author discussed the different sculptural compositions which involved transis: the corpse at the bottom of the bas-relief religious scene, or coat of arms; the double decker tomb, sometimes with the upper effigy kneeling, a design dominant in France. By her own admission, "fairly rigid criteria" were adopted "to separate the particular iconographic type of the transi from similar forms". She excluded all personifications of Death itself and all "dead" effigies in normal clothes, recognising all the pitfalls inherent in establishing whether an effigy is supposed to be "dead" or even lying down.

1. Ibid., 2.

All in all, and on the basis of the introductory claims of her study, it would appear that *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol* represents a revolutionary improvement in the methods of investigation applied to the late medieval and Renaissance cadaver tomb; in particular she set aside so many of the assumptions and fastidious value judgements which have become so familiar. She appears to have been eager to establish that the iconography of the corpse was not static and unvarying, and to have searched for more complex answers to the questions of origins and function than were hitherto explored. What, then, has so exhaustive and specialised a study left undone?

The most serious weakness of Cohen's work is evident from the beginning. After the discussion summarised above, the methodology of the study is set out¹:

I shall focus upon certain of the most important tombs in order to analyse a few of the myriad factors that led to the creation of each. In each case I will attempt to understand not only the physical characteristics and historical setting of the monument but also, where possible, something of the personal motivations of the individual who commissioned the tomb.

The conception was ambitious in attempting to embrace all cadaver tombs in Europe to c.1700. Obviously the author

1. Ibid., 9.

could not examine every extant tomb, but on what criteria can one judge a tomb "most important" and justify its selection for special treatment? Can "most important" be also representative? She discussed the way in which these tombs "spread through Northern Europe" and indeed has presented almost complete lists of examples. Yet an examination of "the personal motivations" of the individual who commissioned a tomb suggests that the individual's psychological motives for choosing to have himself depicted a rotting corpse would be examined in isolation. It also presupposed that the deceased, rather than the family or executors, chose the tomb in every case, which is far from probable. The one obvious reason for such choices being made is simply that one individual admired and emulated the choice of another. Cohen's approach has not really allowed for such commonplace means of transmission, although a statistical treatment is implied in her research.

The first English cadaver tomb which Cohen singled out for consideration was that of Henry Chichele in Canterbury Cathedral, described as "the first known transi in England", and dated at 1424, though the evidence in fact points to 1427¹. She described the tomb in detail, quoting the inscription and giving brief details of the prelate's

1. Ibid., 15. On 5 February 1428, a young goldsmith sought sanctuary from the city bailiffs by clinging to the railings of the newly erected tomb. Cohen erroneously dates this incident to 1425, but E.F. Jacob, *Archbishop Henry Chichele* (London, 1967), 90-96, confirms the date as 1428.

career, concluding rather inaccurately that,

Throughout most of his career, Chichele was dedicated to resisting the encroachment of the See of Rome both on his own rights and on those of the crown,

She classed Chichele's with four other tombs, those of Lagrange (1401), Pierre d'Ailly (1420, Bishop of Puy), Bishop Richard Fleming of Lincoln (1431) and Johan von Sierck (1456). All were early cadaver tombs in their countries of origin, all their owners were powerful prelates engaged in political activities. It is, therefore, with some justification that Cohen has concluded¹,

All five tombs present the contrast between worldly glory and the degradation of man in death. Two epitaphs question the worth of worldly glory and wealth; two other vividly describe the horrors that await man in the grave; "a fetid cadaver, food for worms",

In the following argument, Cohen related the contemplation of the corpse to other remedies for pride in earthly power. She developed this notion of the cadaver image as "instructor" by contrasting it with the simple pessimistic view of death in a pre-Christian era: death and corruption in the context of these tombs are not part of the natural process, but are a punishment for sin. She reverted to the commonplace that during the Black Death, "death became more

1. Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol*, 20.

familiar to everyone", and to pointing to the escalation of literary works which equated death with punishment. She made direct dramatic links between Lagrange's tomb and the Italian version of *The Legend of the Three Living and Three Dead*. This, she claimed, is the general derivation of the corpse effigy combined with *memento mori* epitaph. Kantorowicz's findings regarding funeral rites have been reiterated here as the origin of the double tomb, particularly in Chichele's case. In this context, she was careful to point out that there is "no correlation at all between secular double tombs and effigies", but that',

It is possible that the initial impetus for this type of tomb structure came from the use of the effigies in the funeral ceremony, but that later the double structure itself became fashionable apart from any connection with the funeral ritual.

She concluded that the inscriptions and the "transis" on the five tombs, including Chichele's, derived from a moralistic literary tradition, whereas the upper effigy and heraldic display were concerned with the conventional function of the tomb, the salvation of the deceased. What the author has done in this chapter is to synthesize all possible iconographic antecedents of the elements present in the five tombs under scrutiny. What she has not done is to relate

1. *Ibid.*, 42.

these antecedents adequately to the "personal motivations of the individual". To demonstrate that such a tomb was a peculiarly appropriate choice for a worldly prelate, such as Chichele undoubtedly was, is not the same as examining whom he knew, and where he had been, to conceive of commissioning such a singularly fitting memorial.

In the succeeding section of her study, Kathleen Cohen extended her inspection of the moral beliefs of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries to include those which reflect what she interpreted as a neurotic anxiety and desire to abase oneself in order to avoid divine retribution for pride. She introduced here those wills which are characterised by this "almost psychotic humility":

...it is apparent from many wills of the late Middle Ages that expressions of humility were often connected with the degradation of the corpse...The transi tomb was a public and permanent expression of the sentiments regarding humility that were expressed in these wills.

The danger in making this connection is that those who had wills of the type she referred to² did not favour the cadaver tomb as a means of further expressing their humility. The sentiments may have been similar, but it is dangerous to conflate them so precisely.

1. Ibid., 56.

2. The so-called "Lollard wills" and the sentiments expressed in them will be discussed further below - see also K.B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford, 1972), 207-20.

Certain cadaver tombs did, however, express obvious extreme desire for self-abasement. Included in this category is the tomb of François de la Sarra in La Sarraz, Vaud, Switzerland, commonly dated to the 1390's, the effigy showing an array of vile vermin crawling from all the orifices of the corpse. Cohen speculated regarding the antecedents of this iconography¹, but again did not consider why the De la Sarra family should have been moved to choose such iconography.

Although she was cautious to point out that all cadaver tombs were not simple *memento mori* images, Cohen did distinguish a group of tombs which she considered to have a primarily didactic function². All the examples exhibit a complex system of *memento mori* devices. The tomb of Bishop Richard Fox fell into this category. Fox (1528, Winchester Cathedral)³,

was known to have come every day for his meditations into the chantry chapel he had built for himself in Winchester Cathedral, a chapel which contained his transi image. Unlike the earlier transi tombs of Chichele and Fleming, Fox's tomb contained only the transi which was accompanied by the symbols of office the mitre and crosier; it had neither the upper figure accompanied by the symbolic angels nor the requests for prayers of the earlier tombs.

1. Ibid., 93-94. The iconographic heritage of verminous tombs will be further considered in Chapter VII below.
2. Ibid., 84-95.
3. Ibid., 87.

The other tombs mentioned in this chapter are, in the majority, German. The author saw this "emphasis on didacticism in Germany" as "the result of the developing ideas which matured in the German Reformation"¹. Tombs with a didactic message, however, as she was at pains to point out, "constituted but a relatively small proportion of the total number of transi tombs". Unfortunately in Fox's case, the "historical setting" for his tomb is if anything at odds with his likely personal motivation for having made this choice.

By now the pattern of Cohen's work has clearly emerged. As she moved forward in time, she selected fresh groups of tombs for study on the basis of what she perceived as changes in the iconographic function of the cadaver image. Hence the tomb of Thomas Bennet, Precentor of Salisbury Cathedral, who died in 1558, has been set amongst its iconographic peers and classified as "A Symbol of the Resurrection"²:

The tomb-chest and transi are set within a square recess with a centred arch. At the feet of the transi is a crudely carved skull, probably that of Adam, for on the wall of the niche above the skull are the fragments of a crucifixion,

In this instance, no biographical details about Bennet have been supplied, the concern having been chiefly to place the

1. Ibid., 94.
2. Ibid., 111.

tomb in its sculptural and iconographic context rather than in relation to the person commemorated thereby.

It would accordingly be easy to raise certain expectations from the introduction to Kathleen Cohen's book, only to have them ultimately thwarted. By the time she has moved from the study of medieval cadaver tombs to their Renaissance descendants, it is plain that her purpose was to order the tombs as sculptural artefacts rather than to relate the individuals who are commemorated by them to one another. She may not have been concerned with sculptural techniques or stylistic variants to a great degree; but the work is, nevertheless, essentially art-historical, in search of iconographic antecedents and coincidences. When the author did venture into the historical background of the people commemorated in the tombs, the individual recedes further, sacrificed to a highly refined pursuit of *zeitgeist*. Cohen's refining and ordering of the material is undoubtedly valuable: the work contributes inestimably to an understanding of contexts and, thereby, the correct interpretation of many identifiably distinct iconographic images. Yet, because of the very wide scope of the book, its methods of selection and its concentration upon the shifting intellectual ambiance of the tombs, it is actually

very difficult to rescue any living individual from the grand plan'.

The foregoing survey does not claim to provide an exhaustive account of all the literature related to the cadaver tomb in Britain. It may, however, have served to introduce many of the assumptions commonly held, the different types of research undertaken and the most relevant specialist studies. Nor is it claimed that this has been an impartial review of the works covered. To indicate deficiencies in the current state of investigation is not necessarily to suggest that any one author has fallen short of attaining his or her proposed ends. Deficiencies there are, however, in all existing studies of the development of the medieval cadaver tomb, above all because no-one has yet satisfactorily explained its dissemination. It is the aim of this study not to be arbitrarily selective and not to accept assumptions, but rather to attempt to uncover something of the social, economic, doctrinal, political and literary influences behind "fashions in shrouds". The problems may be largely intractable, the material arbitrarily self-selecting according to the survival of identifiable tombs, but at least some progress may be made by looking at the

1. For example, one finds Cohen's research a little suspect where certain particulars are concerned. She accepted that the fragmentary cadaver effigy at Flamborough, Yorkshire, commemorates "Marmaduke, Cunstable of Flaymborgh knyght" (75n.), when it is perfectly clear that Cunstable, or Constable, is the man's surname, a common one in the East Riding at that date, there being no such office as "Constable of Flamborough" in any case.

surviving English cadaver tombs comprehensively and seeing what emerges too by examining the careers of those who were commemorated by them. The pursuit of a defining spirit for any age is one aim of the study of a group of related artefacts, the approach to an understanding of the reasons behind individual choice is another. Plainly the first necessary step is to assemble the surviving evidence.

Chapter II

THE CADAVER TOMB IN FIFTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND:

THE SURVIVING EVIDENCE

As a corpus of concrete artefacts, the early cadaver tombs in Great Britain are exceptionally inscrutable. What information may be elicited from obvious approaches to them *en masse* can be either unremarkable, unreliable or both. For example, patterns of geographical distribution naturally depend on surviving monuments. Given that such survival itself has its own geographical bias, any conclusions based on the location of cadaver tombs are open to statistical distortion. Scotland, where there is one unique surviving tomb, is the most obvious case in point. The rarity of Scottish cadavers is surely attributable to the nature of the Reformation in that country quite as much as to the original popularity of this or any other type of effigial monument. Even set against patterns of distribution of other types of monument, the distribution of surviving cadavers may not be very informative; having such a pronounced visual impact, these tombs may have been valued less or more than others during the intervening centuries of more or less vigorous congregations and diocesan advisory committees. Even when these anomalies are ignored, what present day geographical distribution demonstrates may not be entirely insignificant; a concentration in the home counties and East Anglia, the areas most open to Continental influence, either directly or through London and the court. Here was the perennial melting-pot of this as any fashion, with the West Country following the trend later.

The fact that such a high proportion of surviving cadaver tombs have lost their inscriptions makes chronological distribution equally hard to establish without distortion. Even when tombs are dated, the date of death of the person commemorated and the date at which the effigy was selected and laid down may be radically different. Both Henry Chichele and Thomas Bekynton are reliably recorded as having had their tombs constructed more than a decade prior to their deaths in 1443 and 1465 respectively. At the other extreme are the tombs which are laid down by executors, children or even grandchildren. In Fenny Bentley, Derbyshire, there is a tomb which commemorates Thomas Beresford and his wife Agnes. She died in 1467, he in 1473 and, as the long Latin inscription is at pains to point out, fought at Agincourt. The tomb, however, may be firmly dated on stylistic grounds alone to a period at least seventy years later. The comparatively anonymous shrouded effigy must have provided an attractive practical solution to delayed posthumous commemoration, especially in the early sixteenth century when portraiture on effigies was becoming more life-like. What pattern of chronological distribution may be detected through the following list of surviving identifiable tombs, simply suggests that through time examples become more numerous and move down the social scale.

Even if precise dating of tombs were possible, that would merely give room to other problematic areas of evidence. In many, even most, cases it is not clear how far the cadaver effigy was a matter of personal decision on the part of the commemorated. Several of the early major examples may be shown to be a matter of personal choice; but for the rest, the evidence that the tomb was selected by any one member of a particular family has to be sufficient for the purposes of demonstrating patterns of dissemination.

Moreover, the apparently precise evidence of wills - invaluable though it is - is even more fragmentary than one might expect. Where a will survives to document an existing tomb, most frequently the place of burial only and not the type of effigy is specified. For example, in 1467, John Baret of Bury St Edmunds clearly prescribed in some detail his most personal monument in St Mary's church prior to his death, but his elaborate will of the same year merely records¹,

And my body to be beryed by the awter of Seynt Martyn, namyd also our Ladyes awter, in Seynt Marye chirche at Bury, vnder the p'cloos of the retourne of the candilbeen, be fore the ymage of oure Sauyour, and no stoon to be steryed of my graue, but a pet to be maad vnder the ground sille ther my lady Schardelowe was wont to sitte, the stoolys removyd, and the body put in as neer vndyr my grave as may be wythoute hurt of the seid grave.

1. Samuel Tymms, ed., *Wills and Inventories from the Registers of the Commissary of Bury St Edmunds, The Archdeacon of Sudbury*, Camden Society, 49 (1850), 15;

Without the survival of the tomb, there would be no way of knowing even from so uncommonly detailed a provision as this that the monument in question had on it a cadaver effigy.

On the other hand, there are several wills, necessarily chance survivals, in which cadaver tombs are requested, but either the tomb does not survive, or the executors never carried out the wishes of the testator. In the first category, in 1439, is the famous early English will of Lady Isabel Beauchamp, Countess of Warwick, who ordered her tomb for Tewkesbury Abbey church in the following terms¹:

...and my body to be beryed In the Abbey of Tewkesbery, yn such place as I haue assyngned, And that my grete templys with the Baleys be sold to the vtmost pryse, and deliueryd to the sayde Abbat and the howse of Tewkesbery, so they groche no3t wth my lyenge, and with suche thyng as y woll haue done a-bowt my body, And my Image to be made all naked, and no thyng on my hede but myn' here cast bakwardys, and of the gretnes and of the fascyon' lyke the mesure that Thomas Porchaly'n' hath yn a lyst, and at my hede Mary Mawdelen' leyng my handes a-crosse, And seynt Iohn' the Evangelyst on the ryght syde of my hede; and on the left syde Seynt Anton', and at my fete a Skochen' of myn Armes departyd with my lordys, and ij Greffons to bere hit vppe; And all a-bowt my tumbe, to be made pore men' aⁿd wemen' In theire pore Array, wth their' bedys In theire handes.

The most regrettable example of a tomb's disappearance is that of Edward IV in St George's chapel, Windsor, for the

1. F.J. Furnivall, ed., *Fifty Earliest English Wills*, E.E.T.S., o.s.78 (1882), 116-19.

request in his will, dated 1483, was partly carried out¹,

...upon the same stone to be laid and wrought with the figure of Death with a scutcheon of our armour...

Less well known are two wills from Norfolk in which the testators request cadaver tombs which are not extant². In the will of Thomas Abbys the elder of Buxton, dated 7 March 1532/33 and proved at Norwich 19 February 1538/9, the testator asks for burial,

...in the Church of seynte Andrewe of Buxton aforesayd in the hede alley of the North parte of the grave or tombe of myn grethe Erentaser Sur James Abbys sumtyme Vekyr of Buxton...It'm I wyll myn Executors to bye a gravestone of vj fete long and iij fete in brede or more wythin one yere next after my decease wyth a Image of dethe in a wyndyngshete uppon it holdyng up his handis wyth his harte in_ them_ with this little skroowe passing from his mouthe dne Ihu accipe cor meu & under his ffete this scripture folowyng A myrrour of dethe here y^e may see Abbys thelder in his lyfe days sumtyme a man as now ye be hevyn mutt be ther nede all that for his sowle prayith,

The second comes from the will of Elisabeth Felmyngham, widow of Roberet Felmyngham gentilman and previously wife of John Holdiche Esquier, dated 31 January 1523/4 and proved at Norwich 9 April 1524. The testator requested burial in the church of the Blackfriars, Norwich, beside her first husband:

1. Charles Ross, *Edward IV* (London, 1974), 417; Colvin, ed., *History of the King's Works I, The Middle Ages*, 887-88.
2. I am grateful to Roger Greenwood of Norwich for these two references, the first from Norwich Consistory Court, Cooke, 18, 159d; the second, N.C.C. Groundesborough, 6, 1r.

Item I woll that my executors do make a plate of laten gilt with an ymage pictured in the same of o^r lady and also an ymage of my husband John holdiche kneeling on the oon sid with his two sonnes and myn kneeling by hym with a scoching of his armes and myn and the oon of them in his wynding schet and the other in his cott Armour byfore the said ymage and i and my thre daughters and his in ther wynding schet's behind me in the said plate with scripture concernyng where we lye and the said plate to be sett in a wall as nere my said husband grave and myn as may be convenyentli by the discrecon of my executours,.,.

Although no concrete realisation of these wishes survives, these wills show something of how the cadaver iconography was viewed by the testator. It is apparent that the distinction made by the modern iconographer between the shrouded corpse and the personification of Death does not apply. Of the two Norfolk wills quoted also, one appears to consider the *memento mori* function of the effigy as prominent, the other simply to use the shrouded effigy to indicate pre-decease.

The intriguing feature of Lady Isabel Beauchamp's will is her reference to what is apparently a pattern on which she wishes her tomb to be based. One might indeed imagine that the best clue to the arrival and dissemination of a tomb design might lie with the workshops which produced funerary monuments. Unfortunately, however, and yet again, the evidence about tomb production in general for the period in question is so fragmentary that there is little to be gained from this line of enquiry. Approximately five actual contracts for tombs survive from the medieval period in

England, none of them for cadaver tombs'. Each of the earliest extant tombs is, in addition, so unlike any of the others, that one is forced to conclude that they were specially commissioned. In stone effigies, although certain iconographic details are common to many, notably the hand holding a portion of the shroud over the genital area, there is no obvious common pattern in terms of sculptural detail, and no clearly evident patterns of design development either regionally or chronologically.

At first sight, admittedly, the case of the shroud brass is more promising. Recent work on brass workshops and their distinctive styles has made it possible to attribute a number of the early shroud brasses to specific centres of production². Thus the brass inscription on the tomb of Henry Chichele in Canterbury Cathedral, c.1427, may be attributed to London Series B. Other relevant products from the same workshop include the brass to John Brigg, Salle, Norfolk which may be the earliest English shroud brass³. It is not clear which John Brigg is there commemorated on what Greenwood and Norris consider with some justification "the

1. Paper delivered by Dr John Blair, The Queen's College, Oxford, at the Fourth International Symposium of the Church Monuments Society, Exeter College, Oxford, September 1986.
2. Robin Emerson, "Monumental Brasses; London Design c. 1420-85", *JBAA*, CXXXI (1978), 50-78. I am particularly grateful to the author for his assistance in attributing some shroud brasses to the workshops identified in this paper.
3. See Plate 4.

finest shroud brass in the Country"¹. On stylistic grounds they consider it to be mid-fifteenth century, and Emmerson ventures c.1430². The will of Thomas Brigg, son of a John Brigg, is dated and was proved in 1494, requesting a memorial worth 26s. 8d. for his father. Greenwood and Norris, however, dismiss the previous assumption that this will refers to the shroud brass, for they argue that the date is too late, the price too low³. They suggest that the brass relates, therefore, to the great-grandfather, rather than the father of the testator, and was possibly laid down retrospectively. Not in this case alone the attraction of the anonymous shroud memorial to the tardy executor or negligent descendant may create complications for the modern scholar.

On iconographic grounds too an early dating of the Salle brass may be corroborated. The engraver has shown the emaciated corpse holding his shroud over his genitals in the same manner as was conventional in stone monuments from the 1420's. As a design feature, this persists in stone into the sixteenth century, but is relatively uncommon on brasses. Once the cadaver as a type of monument was well-established, the medium of brass, already being exploited

1. Roger Greenwood and Malcolm Norris, *The Brasses of Norfolk Churches*, Norfolk Churches Trust (1976), 50.
2. Emmerson, "Monumental Brasses; London Design", 73.
3. Greenwood and Norris, *Brasses of Norfolk Churches*", 50.

for experiments with perspective effects and degrees of semi-profile because of its greater artistic flexibility, facilitated a variety of inventively draped shrouds. The Salle brass may, by contrast, be an early example of the shroud brass simply marrying the East Anglian preference for brasses with a pattern whose analogues are at this date in stone.

Also attributed to London Series B is the Trinity brass on the tomb commemorating Sir Sampson Meverill, at Tideswell, Derbyshire (d.1462)¹. The brass is mounted on the upper deck of a double tomb with a stone cadaver effigy on the lower deck. Moreover, the same workshop produced the first known kneeling shrouded composition, to Agnes Bulstrode, Upton, Bucks., (d.1471)², and the very fine brass to John and Joan Leventhorpe, Sawbridgeworth, Herts.³, now commonly dated to the time of Joan's death in 1448⁴.

The Series B workshop of brasses has been identified by stylistic detail alone - no written documentation of its work nor of the names of the craftsmen involved survives. The brasses with common stylistic details in this group

1. See Plate 14.
2. See Plate 21.
3. See Plate 10.
4. R. Emerson, "Monumental Brasses: London Design", 73. The details of what distinguishes one workshop from another is considered in some detail in this article, involving lettering types, details of the positioning of praying hands, and other minor design variants.

stretch back to c.1360 and the workshop declines after 1460. Other brasses attributed to it are those of Richard Manfield, at Taplow, Bucks (1455)¹, possibly the brass to Thomas Flemyng, New College, Oxford², although this is dated 1472, and the lost brass to Richard Poryngland, St Stephen's Norwich, 1457³.

Under the influence of B, series D began in around 1410, producing the brasses of :-

Pethyn, Lytchett Maltravers, Dorset, c.1475.

Gurney, Stone, Bucks, 1472 (Plate 22).

Eleanor Moleyns, Stoke Poges, Bucks, 1476.

An anonymous brass, Toddington, Bedfordshire, c.1480.

Abbot(?), Hitchin, Herts, 1493.

Robert, Digswell, Herts, c.1480 (Plate 30).

Oldfield(?), Stifford, Essex, 1484.

Spryng, Lavenham, Suffolk, 1486 (Plate 34).

Tendring, Yoxford, Suffolk, 1485 (Plate 32).

According to Emmerson, Series E brasses were particularly favoured in Kent, and include in their number:-

1. See Plate 13,
2. See Plate 20,
3. See Plate 24,

Mareys, Sheldwich, Kent, 1431 (Plate 5).

Bamme (lost), Gillingham, Kent, 1431.

Notfelde, Margate, Kent, 1446 (Plate 9).

Series F began in 1475, and included:-

Brocas, Sherbourne, Hants, 1488 (Plate 35).

Walrond, Childrey, Berks, 1477 (Plate 25).

Yate, Longworth, Berks, 1498 (Plate 41).

Chylton, Newington-next-Hythe, Kent, 1501.

Leynthall, Hasely Great, Oxfordshire, 1497 (Plate 39).

Beel, Hitchin, Herts, 1477 (Plate 26).

Mattock, Hitchin, Herts, 1485 (Plate 31).

Shelley, Hunsdon, Herts, 1485 (Plate 38).

Catesby, Ashby St Legers, Northants, 1479 (Plate 27).

Finally, to series G may be attributed:-

Reynes(?), Clifton Reynes, Bucks, c.1500.

Wisebeard(?), Hitchin, Herts, c.1500.

Symondes, Cley, Norfolk, 1508.

After 1500, it is not so easy to attribute brasses to specific workshops as an element of mass-production is clearly apparent. One has only to look, for instance, at the anonymous, early sixteenth-century, crude little brass at Biddenham, Bedfordshire. It is apparent that in this instance the engraver has used the same cartoon for both

figures, simply turning it over to produce a mirror-image. The fact that the figure on the right is female is indicated by longer hair and a pair of strange little breasts on her collar bone, both features evidently added free-hand to the original design. To expect such work to represent any attempt at portraiture would be naïve in the extreme.

Nonetheless, the pattern of workshop attribution demonstrated above has, for the early period at any rate, certain negative points of value. Firstly it seems that the shroud brass was not the preserve of any one London workshop, but that each in turn produced a few. Nor does it seem that any pattern of sub-types, such as the resurrection brass or the skeleton, was the preserve of any one workshop. One is forced to conclude that, in this early period in the history of the shroud brass, the design was a matter of choice on the part of whoever placed the order. That the choice of workshop was perhaps a matter of personal recommendation, again takes one away from the tomb as artefact to the human factor behind the choice.

Such information on workshops and the topographical distribution of surviving cadaver tombs, sparse though it is, will later provide useful corroborative material when

the tombs are placed in their human, intellectual and social context. Meanwhile it is important not to lose sight of the fact that all the workshops discussed were located in London, and as such can hardly have traded in isolation from one another. The only provincial group of early shroud brasses which in any respect rivals the London groupings is the series of Norfolk brasses produced in Norwich :-

Brampton, Brampton, c.1468 (Plate 18).

Legge, Fransham Great, c.1500.

Dussyng, Kirby Bedon, 1505.

Sampson, Loddon, 1546.

Anon., Fincham, c.1520.

Hobson, Frenze, c.1520.

Tyard, Banburgh, 1505.

Scottowe(?), St Michael, Norwich, 1515.

Childes, St Laurence (now Castle Museum), Norwich, 1452
(Plate 12).

Wymer, Aylsham, 1507.

Howard, Aylsham, 1499 (Plate 42).

Briggs, Wiveton, 1544.

Once these Norwich workshop brasses have been added to the canon of shroud brasses, virtually all of them, at least

1, Robin Emerson, private correspondence.

until 1510, are attributed. It seems to follow that workshop distribution, itself reflecting topographical distribution, supports the view that the designs were imported from the Continent, and disseminated through the channels of overseas trade and royal court.

Perhaps the safest, if most obvious, conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing discussion, however, is that the cadaver tomb, at least in its early years, was apparently more a question of supply meeting demand, than the reverse. That demand, in turn, does not readily yield to topographical or chronological analysis. One is, therefore, forced back upon the tombs themselves as the clearest expressions of local or even individual taste. What might have prompted that taste is the ultimate concern of this study. A necessary preliminary to this approach is the identification, where possible, description and location in time and place of the corpus of cadaver tombs.

The list of cadaver tombs in the British Isles to 1500 which follows, is drawn from previous accounts, published and unpublished, as well as my own personal observations. The descriptive notes are not designed to present a stylistic analysis of each tomb as artefact, but simply to identify it. To the best of my knowledge, the list is complete with regard to surviving tombs, and also includes records of many no longer extant.

Principles of Compilation:-

1. Bibliography

The bibliographical references apply to the chief sources of information in each case, i.e. the most full, accessible, modern and reliable source. Hence antiquarian sources from which the references are themselves drawn are not cited here unless they contribute additional material. An attempt has also been made wherever possible to draw a clear distinction between sources pertaining to the tomb and those concerning the commemorated person; the latter will accompany any biographical material elsewhere in the thesis.

2. Chronology

The lists have been arranged in chronological order, although it has not proved possible to be utterly consistent regarding chronology. Where possible, the date at which the tomb was laid down is that cited, but in the absence of this information, the date of death of the person commemorated is given as the approximate date of the tomb. Nonetheless, it is important to recognise that the two dates are rarely the same. The problem of who chose the tomb, whether it was laid down immediately consequent upon death, sometime previously or some considerable time later, is an issue which is discussed in due course.

3. Supplementary List, 1500-1558

Similar principles have been employed in compiling this list of later tombs, except that the information presented is not so full, nor have I undertaken to visit them all in person. The function of this list is to act as a supplement, so that it will be possible to refer to continuing, persisting and changing trends in the spread of the cadaver tomb in England throughout the entire medieval period.

4. Undated and Unidentified Tombs

Tombs for which no date can be established and those which cannot be attributed at all are not integrated into the chronological list, but are listed alphabetically by family name or place at the end of the main lists. The popular dating "c. 1500", often encountered in church guide books where such tombs are discussed, is generally based on the belief that this was when the fashion for the cadaver tomb was at its height, rather than on the basis of any more specific individual evidence. It does not fall within the scope of this study to attempt a systematic dating and attribution exercise, but in one or two individual instances arising out of the argument presented in following chapters, speculation may be entered.

Abbreviated References used in the Lists:-

- Cohen Kathleen Rogers Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol: The Transi Tomb in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Berkeley, 1973).
- Crossley Fred H. Crossley, *English Church Monuments A.D. 1150-1550: An Introduction to the Study of Tombs and Effigies of the Medieval Period* (London, 1921).
- Emmerson Robin Emmerson, "Monumental Brasses: London Design c.1420-85", *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, CXXXI, (1978).
- Gough R. Gough, *Sepulchral Monuments in Great Britain*, Vol. II, (1786).
- Greenhill, F.A. Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs: A Study of Engraved Stone Memorials in Latin Christendom, c.1100-c.1700* (London, 1976).
- Macklin Herbert Macklin, *Brasses of England* (1907, reprinted Wakefield, Yorks., 1975).
- Mill Stevenson, Mill Stevenson, *A List of Monumental Brasses in the British Isles* (London, 1926, 1938, reprinted as one volume 1964).
- Panofsky, Erwin Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture: Its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini* (London, 1964).
- Pevsner Nikolaus Pevsner, ed., *The Buildings of England* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1951-75).
- Richardson Society of Antiquaries, London, MS 698, W. Richardson, *List of Monumental Effigies in England and Wales* (1898).
- Stone Lawrence Stone, *Sculpture in Britain: The Middle Ages*, Pelican History of Art, 29, (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1955).

Christ Church Cathedral, Canterbury, Kent.

The finely painted alabaster double-decker tomb of Henry Chichele considerably pre-dates the prelate's death in 1443. It is a strong candidate for being the earliest of its type in England. It dates from sometime before February 5 1428, when a young goldsmith called Bernard, *juvenis de partibus transmarinis*, is reported to have clung to its railings in search of sanctuary from the city authorities¹

Both effigies on the tomb are original. The upper one shows the archbishop in full pontificals, with his staff, hands clasped in prayer. There are angels at his head and feet. All the drapery is covered with richly painted and gilded patterns. The cadaver effigy, largely because of the medium, is sculpturally qualitatively different from those made from other forms of stone, the translucence of the alabaster conveying a smoother, more delicate and, consequently, less tortuously macabre spirit. Viewed through three trefoil arches, the body is shown to be emaciated, but not in a state of decomposition, the eyes closed. The hair is tonsured, cut in the standard "pudding-

1. E. F. Jacob, *Archbishop Henry Chichele* (London, 1967), 93. Cohen, 15, adopts the date 1424, based on an earlier reading of Jacob's in "Chichele and Canterbury", *Studies in Medieval History presented to F. M. Powicke*, ed., R. W. Hunt, W. A. Pantin and R. W. Southern (Oxford, 1948), 386-95, 388, corrected in the later book.

basin" of the age. The shroud is not knotted but otherwise conforms to the commonest iconographic detail of three-dimensional British cadavers, in the way it is held over the genital area by the effigy's left hand.

The statutes of All Souls' College, Oxford, Chichele's foundation, 1438, provide for the upkeep of the tomb, which has, as a consequence, undergone two reconstructions and numerous repaintings. The figurines were replaced in 1662-64 and again, by wooden ones, in 1897. At the latter date the shields were also replaced. Six brass shields, bearing the arms of the dioceses of Chichester, Sarum, Coventry and Exeter were removed, and Gloucester was replaced by Hereford. An impalement of Lumley with Fitzalan was also removed.

The brass-work was originally executed by London workshop B, who made the inscription plate reading,

*Pauper eram natus, post Primas elevatus
Iam sum prostratus et vermibus esca paratus
Ecce meum tumulum,
Quisquis eris qui transieris rogo memoreris
Tu quod eris mihi consimilis qui post morieris
Omnibus horribilis, pulvis, vermis, caro vilis.*

Cohen, *passim*,
Crossley, 299, pl. 190.
Emmerson, 73,
Gough, pls XLIII-IV,
Pevsner, *East Kent*, 199.
Stone, 213.

St Mary's Cathedral, Lincoln.

Richard Fleming is commemorated by another double-decker tomb in a chantry chapel in the choir of Lincoln Cathedral. The upper figure shows Fleming in episcopal vestments, hand raised in blessing, head bare, supported by angels, at the feet a dragon with shields containing the crucifix head and feet. The lower effigy is a very worn cadaver, arching out of its shroud. The hair may be tonsured, and it is certainly shown in a bowl-like shape common on these effigies, contrasting with the curling locks of the upper effigy. The cadaver is viewed through three ogee arches. Pevsner considers this to be the earliest of its type, apparently unaware of the dating of Chichele's monument. Gough quotes authorities contending that the cadaver is the earlier tomb of a kinsman; but this seems improbable.

The long Latin inscription, which was originally on a tablet attached to the tomb, now no longer extant, is quoted in full by Cohen, 17:

*Isthuc qui graderis paulisper perlege lector;
 Sta, speculans, quod eris, in me nunc Vermibus eso;
 Qui fueram pridie Juvenis, forma speciosus;
 Artes Oxonia discens Puer ingeniosus;
 Juris Divini crescens exinde Magister;
 Pape Martini Camerarii honore, Minister;
 Hic cum Presulibus in Lyncolne sede locavit,
 Et propriis manibus mira Pietate sacravit,
 Post Eboracensis tituli fulgore serenus
 Sub Glebis densis jaceo; quamvis vir amicus*

in such stylised figures. The effigy is accompanied at its feet, by an epitaph in English verse, on a plate eighteen by eight and a half inches:

here lyth John Brigge under this marbilston
Whos sowle our lorde ihu have mercy vpon
ffor in this worlde worthily he lyvid many a day
And here his bodi ys beryed and cowched under clay
Lo frendis fre what euyr ye be , pray for me in yow
pray
As ye me se in soche degre , So shall ye be a nother
day.

Emmerson, 73.
Greenwood and Norris, *The Brasses of Norfolk Churches*, 50.
Pamela M. King, "Eight English *Memento Mori* Verses from Cadaver Tombs", *N&Q* 28(6)
(1981), 495.
Macklin, 211.
Mill Stevenson, 363.

4. *Joan Mareys* 1431 Plate 5
St James, Sheldwich, Kent.

A brass of a female half-effigy in a shroud, twelve by seven and a half inches, holding a heart inscribed, *ihc / m'ci*. There are two shields, of which one is now loose: they are of William Langley of Knolton, and Mareys, the husband of the commemorated. The figure has a long face, long hair, and shows the shroud falling off. At the bottom it has curious little breasts. It is situated on the chancel floor. It was probably laid down some time after the death of the lady in question, no doubt by her husband

who outlived her by over twenty years. It bears comparison with the Leventhorpe brass (no. 12) at Sawbridgeworth, although it is a product of London workshop E, according to Emmerson. This workshop seems to have concentrated on Kent for its business. There is a conventional Latin inscription, stating who is interred and asking for prayers:

*Hic jacet in misericordia dei Johanna quondam uxor
Willelmi Mareys armigeri / que ab hujus mundi vita
migravit, ultima die mensis Octobris Anno Domini
m^occcc^oxxxi^o Cujus animam deus ad vitam eternam
perducatur, Amen.*

Emmerson, 73.

Macklin, 211-12.

Mill Stevenson, 257.

Page-Phillips, *Macklin's Monumental Brasses*, 82.

Scott Robertson, "Sheldwich Church", *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 18 (1889), 288-302.

5. *Joan Bamme* [LOST]

1431

St Mary Magdalen, Gillingham, Kent

Unfortunately this brass is now lost. It showed a lady in a shroud with four sons and three daughters, and was situated in the Grange chancel. She is said by Hasted to be Joan, wife of Richard Bamme esquire and daughter of John Martyn, judge of the Common Pleas. Mill Stevenson was, apparently, in possession of a plate which he published. On the

evidence of this, it has been attributed to London workshop
E by Emmerson.

Emmerson, 73.

Edward Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, 12 vols
(2nd ed., Canterbury, 1798), IV, 245.

Mill Stevenson, 231.

6. *John de Arundel*, 1435 Plate 6
Lord Maltravers and 7th Fitzalan Earl of Arundel
Fitzalan Chapel, Arundel, Sussex

A double-decker stone tomb, let into the wall between the choir and the altar of the Lady Chapel. The recumbent effigy on top of the mensa is of a man in full armour, with a round helmet and Lancastrian livery collar of SS's, his hands clasped in prayer. There are angel supporters at his pillow, and a horse with oak leaves in its mouth, the Fitzalan cognizance, at his feet. The effigy wears sword and dagger. The cadaver below is viewed through three pairs of trefoil arches with pendants. It is nearly skeletal, lying on its shroud with hair spilling out, unlike the more conventional "pudding-basin". Pevsner remarks on its "macabre elegance". It holds the shroud over its genitals with its left hand. Both effigies are large, measuring six feet and four inches in length. No inscription survives. The date of the tomb, long believed to be a cenotaph, is uncertain because of the curious circumstances surrounding

the retrieval of the body from Beauvais, where Fitzalan died.

Cohen, 42n, 46n, 192.

Panofsky, pl. 262.

Pevsner, *Sussex*, 88.

M.A. Tierney, "Discovery of the Remains of John, 17th Earl of Arundel, (obit, 1435), *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, XII (1860)232-39.

7. *Isabel Beauchamp, Countess of Warwick* [LOST] 1439

Tewkesbury Abbey, Gloucestershire

Nothing remains of the effigy formerly housed in the chantry chapel on the north side of the choir. Lady Isabel was depicted, according to Cohen, as "a corpse in a smock-like shroud", with her hair spread around her. It is particularly unfortunate that the effigy is no longer extant as the case is a unique one where the commemorated describes her effigy in some detail in her will, which will be discussed below (see 255-58):

And my Image to be made all naked, and no thing on my hede but myn here cast bakwardys, and of the gretnes and of the fascyon lyke the mesure that thomas Porchalyn hath yn a lyst, and at my hede Mary Mawdelen leyng my handes a-crosse, And seynt Iohn the Evangelyst on the ryght syde of my hede; and on the left syde, Seynt Anton and at my fete a Skochen of myn Armes departyd with my lordys, and ij Greffons to bere hit vppe; And all about my tumber, to be made pore men and wemen In there pore Array, with their bedes In there handes.

Massé maintains that these requests were carried out. There is no source quoted for the details of the shroud, added by Cohen. The inscription which survives around the top inner edge of the chantry asks for prayers for the soul of the deceased in conventional manner.

Cohen, 122n, 192.

M.R. James, *Abbeys* (London, 1901), 49.

H.J.L.J. Massé, *The Abbey Church of Tewkesbury with some Account of The Priory Church of Deerhurst, Gloucestershire* (London, 1901), 90-91.

Isabel Beauchamp's will is preserved in the P.C.C. registers, 27 Luffenham, and is printed in F.J. Furnivall, *Earliest English Wills*, EETS, o.s. 78, 116-19.

8. *Sir John Golafre* 1442 Plate 7
St Nicholas, Fyfield, Berkshire.

In the two-bay Golafre chantry on the north of the choir, this fine double-decker stone tomb remains in a relatively good state of preservation, the only missing parts being those which, because they projected above the body of each effigy, had to be carved from separate pieces of stone and pegged into place. The tomb is a simple mensa with crenellated edges and no superstructure. There are seven recently repainted armorial shields around the base of the top, as well as evidence of the former existence of six more. The upper effigy shows a man in fifteenth-century armour. His feet, now missing, rested on a pair of crouching dogs. The lower effigy, the cadaver, viewed from the side through two squared off apertures, powerfully

represents what later becomes the most widespread iconography of this type of effigy. The bone-structure is evident, if not anatomically correct, the neck muscles taut, the hair shown in a short pudding-basin style, the cheeks sunken and the eye-sockets empty. The shroud is knotted above the head and below the feet and was held over the genitals by the left hand. Only the fingertips of both hands survive, however, the arms being broken off at the shoulder. The quality of the sculpture is in keeping with the fine decorated alterations which were made to the church under Sir John's benefaction.

F.G. Brabant, *Berkshire* (London, 1934),
Cohen, 42n., 67n., 192.
Pevsner, *Berkshire*, 145.
Stone, 214, pl.168.

9. *John Careway*

1443

Plate 8

St Vigor's, Fulbourn, Cambridgeshire

In a recess beneath a cusped arch on the North side of the sanctuary, a wooden open-sided chest, like a feretrum, encloses this single stone cadaver effigy. There was a short inscription on a brass scroll on the back wall of the niche, but the plate is now missing. The effigy is comparatively large, around six feet in length, and is anatomically convincing. The shroud is knotted at the top only, above the tonsured, pudding-basin hair, and was held

over the genitals by the left hand, which is now missing. The right arm is also broken off below the elbow. The face shows close-set eyes, prominent cheekbones and a gaping mouth. The nose is missing. There is no indication that the effigy has ever been disturbed, as the feretrum is of carved dark oak contemporary with the stonework. Careway was rector of the church.

Pevsner, Cambridgeshire, 389.

10. *Richard Notfelde* 1446 Plate 9

St John the Baptist, Margate, Kent.

This brass is reputed to be the earliest example of the skeleton, as opposed to the corpse, on a tomb. There is no shroud. It has been attributed to London Series E by Emmerson. Reputedly recut and restored, this brass is situated in the choir where it may no longer be viewed with ease as it lies under a fitted carpet.

Emmerson, 77,
Macklin, 211-12,
Mill Stevenson, 244-45.

St Mary the Great, Sawbridgeworth, Herts.

The brass to John Leventhorpe, junior (d.1484), and his wife, Joan Barrington (d. 1448), is ascribed by Emmerson to the date of her death. He identifies it as a product of London workshop B on account of the smoothly flowing drapery, bulbous noses and treatment of long hair; this workshop had ceased operating by 1475. The brass shows husband and wife standing, shrouded, holding hearts, which are now defaced but were probably inscribed. There are two royal shields on the tomb, which is now mounted murally on the north wall of the bell-tower at the west end of the church, and other shields have been lost. There is an inscription in Latin verse, reading:

*En iacet hic pulvis putrede vermīs et esca
Est famulus mortis dum vita iam caret ista
Hic nil scit nil habet nec virtus inde relucet
Cerue luto vilius horrox terror fetor orbis
Opprobium cunctis as est abiecum plebis
Hic frater aspice te spira suffragia pro me*

This was formerly placed on the wall in the south aisle, where the brass lay on the floor, but is now mounted below the figures. Its script positively identifies it with Series B. The plate giving the identities and dates of death of the two figures is now missing.

Emmerson, 56-57, 73.
Macklin, 212-13.
Mill Stevenson, 195.

St Laurence, Towcester, Northants.

Archdeacon Sponne's double-decker cadaver tomb is of the table type, with stone effigies. No part of the tomb is wooden, contrary to Pevsner's assertion. It has been much over-restored and the pop-eyed head on the upper effigy is not original. The inscription is missing, but originally took the form of brass plates mounted around the edge of the top deck, where the fixings may still be seen. The upper effigy has been heavily repainted in red, white, blue, grey and black, and shows Sponne in his archdiaconal robes. Although other parts of the tomb also shows signs of having been "touched up", the cadaver effigy has not been subjected to the same treatment, but shows traces of original paintwork. The shroud lies open and flat, knotted at the top only. It is draped across the groin from the right hand side, but both arms lie straight by the effigy's sides. The effigy is of an emaciated corpse with an interesting face, although the formerly pegged nose and tip of chin are missing. It has the conventional pudding-basin hairstyle. This effigy is approximately 5 feet 3 inches long, whereas the upper effigy measures somewhat over 6 feet. Under the lip of the upper table there are little grotesque heads alternating with fleshy foliage and acorns. The whole tomb on its plinth stands 6' high. On the north wall facing at the east end of the south choir chapel, which is Sponne's

chantry, is a wooden board of a later period describing the benefactions which he made to the church and the town of Towcester. Some of the glass in the east window of the church is taken from Sponne's property, the Tabard Inn.

Pevsner, Northamptonshire,

13. *Thomas Childes*

1452

Plate 12

St Laurence, Norwich, Norfolk.

This skeleton brass, now displayed in the Norwich Castle Museum, is the first identifiable cadaver brass of local, as opposed to London, workshop provenance. The effigy measures 22" and is mounted on a board. There is no shroud and, indeed, the skeleton is quite animated, standing on a representation of the ground with tufts of grass engraved on it. It holds the right hand across the chest and the left hand appears to be raised in a gesture of greeting or blessing. There was formerly an inscription plate accompanying the brass which called Childes, "*clericus istius ecclesie*".

Macklin, 211-12,
Mill Stevenson, 354.

St Nicholas, Taplow, Bucks.

This curious brass commemorates the children of Robert Manfield, Richard, son and heir, died in 1455, aged 19, his sister Isabelle and his half-brother John. Only John is shown as a shrouded figure with crosses at his head. Richard is in civil dress, with a livery collar, and Isabelle in a mantle, her hair long and worn loose. The brass is of London Series B provenance. The brass also bears an unusual inscription in English verse:

Here lythe Rychard þe sone and þe syre
Of Robard Manfeld Squyer & kateryne his wyfe
Wyth Isabelle hys suster bothe yonge & fayre
That at xix yeer of age he lefte hys lyfe
Wyth yong John his brother be the seconde wyfe
The yeer full complete of cristus in incarnacyon
Rychard dyde þe vi day of Aprill a.m. iiii ltv
God rewarde her soulys wyth eternall saluacyon

Emmerson, 71.

Gough, 171.

King, "Eight English Verses", 495.

Macklin, 211.

Mill Stevenson, 49.

St John the Baptist, Tideswell, Derbyshire.

A modern tomb chest now forms the framework for this tomb, which has a mercy-seat trinity and shields in brass on the top and a three-dimensional stone cadaver effigy below. The tomb, which is situated in the centre of the chancel, was restored in 1702, then again in the nineteenth century. The cadaver conforms to the standard iconography, the shroud held across the genitals. The brass is another product of London Series B, which in addition to some shroud brasses, also made the inscription for Henry Chichele's tomb and the tomb of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick.

The brass is surrounded by scrolls which read:

Ego sum Alpha et Omega primus et novissimus

Qui baptisat fuerit salvus erit

Qui perseveravit usque in finem fabius erit

Quos deus vincit necnon separet

There is an inscription plate, with "Arthur Wall fecit" scratched in the corner, which is part of the eighteenth-century restoration. This inscription reads:

*Sacrilegi olim Saculpturas arras furatii
sunt huius monumenti memorie
Sampsonis Meverell militis quia
postea reparata sunt Inip..., Julian
ius Statham ac,...*

Around the top of the mensa there is also a long biographical inscription which appears to be part of the nineteenth century work:

Under this stone lieth Sampson Meverell which was borne in Stone in the Feast of Saint Michael the Archangell and there Christened by the prior of the same hous and Sampson of Clifton Esq and Margaret daughter of Philip Stapley in the year of our Lord M CCCIIII^{xx} Viii and so lived and endured under the Service of Michael Lord Audley and Dame Elizabeth his wife the space of XVIII years and more and after by the Assent of John Meverell his fader he was wedded in belfer the Kings Mann^{or} to Isabell the daughter of the wor^{sh}ipfull knight S Roger Lech the XVII day of pasch and after that he came to the Service of the noble John Mountagu Earl of Salsbury the which ordeyned the said Sampson to bee a Capitayne of Those Wor^{sh}ipfull places in France and after the death of the said Earl he came to the service of John Duc of Bedford and so being in his service he was at XI grete Battayles in France within the spa^{ce} of two yeres and at Saint Lure the s^{aid} Duc gave him the order of K hood after that the said Duc made him K Constable,... and by his commandment he kept the Constable Court of this Land till the death of the said Duc and after that hee abode under the service of John Stafford Arch Bishop of Canterbury and so endured in gr^{eat} mor^{ty} departed from all wo^rldly service with the mer^{cy} of our Lord Jesu Christ the which d^{ep}ed his Soul from his body in the feast of St Magyt in the yeare of our Lord MCCCCLXII and suchs word may be proved that grace paseth Cuning Amen.
Devoutly of y^r Charity sayth a pater noster with an Ave for all Xtian soules especiall for the soule whose bons resten under this ston^e.

Emmerson, 73.
Mill Stevenson, 87,
Pevsner, *Derbyshire*, 236.
Richardson MS.

St Andrew's Cathedral, Wells, Somerset

Thomas Bekynton's alabaster double tomb is preserved in its own chantry chapel, between the ambulatory and the south side of the choir in the cathedral at Wells. It was returned to its original position after the restoration of the choir in 1850. The tomb was, according to Stone, erected by the bishop himself in 1451, and consecrated at a service where he said mass *for his own soul before a large congregation* in the following year. He lived for a further thirteen years (not thirty as Cohen alleges). Bekynton contracted with the city powers that they should pray annually for his soul in this chapel in return for his providing the city with a water supply. The tomb itself rests under an elaborate canopy, facing the altar of the chapel, which is structurally intact, complete with original paintwork, pendant vaulting, fine tracery and a small piscina, but lacks its original reredos.

The tomb also bears much original paint. It is sculpturally of a very high quality. The mensa on which the upper effigy rests is supported by four crocketed corner posts, surmounted by angel supporters, whose wings fan out round the arched base of the upper slab. The upper effigy shows the bishop in episcopal vestments, elaborately draped and

decorated with painted patterns in red and gold. His head is mitred, resting on two pillows, his face etched with fine lines, arranged to suggest a slight serene smile. His hands, which were across his chest, and his feet have unfortunately broken off. The lower effigy, the cadaver, which bears no trace of paint, suggests a completely contrasting severity. The face is taut, hollow cheeked, with empty eye-sockets and a gaping mouth. The frail and translucent body arches out of the shroud, which is knotted top and bottom. The left side of the shroud is arranged over the genitals, but both hands, which are now broken, lay by the effigy's sides. The cadaver bears comparison with that of Alice Chaucer, also made of alabaster which as a medium confers a particular fine frailty to the image. As a total composition, Bekynton's tomb is, perhaps, unrivalled for the striking contrast of images presented by the two effigies.

Apperson, "Monumental Skeletons", 217.

Cohen, 68-9 and passim.

G.H. Cook, *Medieval Chantries and Chantry Chapels* (London, 1947), 62, 121-22, pl. 27.

Crossley, 39, 145, 166, 171(pl.).

Panofsky, 64.

Pevsner, *North Somerset and Bristol*, 306.

Stone, 214.

St Mary's , Standon, Hertfordshire

The shroud brass to Philip Astley has been lost. In 1925 there remained a group of six sons and four daughters, all shrouded. The sons' brasses measured 5 inches by 5 inches, the daughters, 5 by 3½. These plates had been removed from the church and were in private possession. Originally the brass commemorated Astley and his four wives, Lettis, Margret, Elizabeth and Alice. Two antiquarians recorded curiously variant versions of the inscription:

*Hic jacet Philippus Ashley quondam famulus
illustrissimi principis Ricardi nuper Ducis Eboraci:
Latitia, Margareta, Elizabetha, ac Alicia uxores ejus,
qui quidem Philippus obiit 22 die mensis Julii Anno, Dom.
MCCCCLXVII*

John Edwin Cussons, *History of Hertfordshire, Sixteen Parts in Six Volumes* (Hertford, 1870-81), I, 176.

*Hic jacet philippus Astley armiger quondam Farnubus
illustrissime Principis Ricardi nuper Ducis Eboraci,
Latitia, Margareta, Elizabetha ac Alicia exores e jus,
qui quidem Philippus obiit 22 die Mensis Julii An, Dom
1467.*

Christopher Perowne, *A History of the Parish of Standon* (Hertford, 1967), 54-55.

Mill Stevenson, 197, 583.

St Mary's, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk

The chantry chapel, with its tomb chest bearing a single cadaver effigy, was prepared during John Baret's lifetime. The chest has a cornice of purbeck marble. On the "selure" around the effigy's head are the words, *Ego nunc in pulvere dormio*. Under the head and beside the body is a scroll inscribed in red with blue initials:

Domine secundum actum meum noli me iudicare, Nihil dignum in conspectu tuo feci, Ideo deprecor magestate tua ut tu deus deleas iniquitatem meam, John Baret,

In blue letters with red initials at the end of the chest is inscribed,

Ho that wil sadly beholde me with his ie
 John Baret
 May se hys owne merowr and lerne for to die,

On the pedestal between the effigy and the cornice is a further inscription reading:

Wrappid in a selure as a ful rewli wrecche
 No more of al myn good to me ward wil strecche
 From erthe I kam, and on to erthe I am browht;
 This js my natur, for of erthe I was wrowht;
 Thus erthe on to erthe to gedir now is knet,
 So endeth each creature Q'd John Baret,
 Qwerfor 3e pepil inweye of charite
 Wt 3o' good pr^ryeris i prey 3u help me,
 for lych as i am right so schal 3e all be,
 Now God on my sowle haue m'cy & pite, Amen,

The front of the tomb has seven panels. The outer two contain Baret's monogram in blue and red. The second and sixth contain a quatrefoil within which a brass shield was

once fixed. The centre three panels spell out on scrolls within quatrefoils the Lancastrian motto, *Grace me Gou'rne*. The central panel shows a little figure holding the scroll, wearing a livery collar of S's. The east end of the tomb chest is composed of three panels, in the centre an *Agnus Dei* with the words, *Deus propitius esto michi peccatori*. On the south wall near the tomb is an alcove containing a piscina; on the back wall there is a collar of S's surrounding Baret's monogram. The ceiling of the chantry is adorned with scrolls, the Baret arms, Lancastrian mottos and stars which were originally made of mirror glass. The arms are, *Argent, a bend sable, between three square buckles Gules*. The effigy itself is grimly emaciated. The shroud is draped copiously and covers the hair in folds. It is not knotted in the conventional manner, but the left hand pulls part of it across the genitals. The eyes are open.

Cohen, 41n., 72, 91 (dating wrong).

Montagu Rhodes James, *Suffolk and Norfolk; a Perambulation of the Two Counties with Notices of their History and their Ancient Buildings* (London, 1930), 49.

King, "Eight English Verses", 495.

Pevsner, *Suffolk*, 129.

19. *Robert Brampton*

1468

Plate 18

St Mary's, Brampton, Norfolk.

The small scale brass to Robert Brampton and his wife Isabel is now mounted murally in the choir. It shows two shrouded effigies, the female on the right, her long hair arranged

down her back under the shroud, which is held up across her lower chest by her hands which are clasped in prayer. She is quarter turned to her right, looking upwards. The male figure, on the left is in a similar attitude, but has his large hands, palms facing forwards, raised in a votive gesture. Both direct their gaze to the centre top of the slab, where there is, also in brass, a figure of the Virgin Mary wearing a crown and suckling her child. Both effigies have scrolls coming from their mouths, bearing Latin inscriptions of dedication to the Virgin. There was once a large shield between them, but this is now missing. At the base of the slab is a Latin inscription plate recording Brampton's rank and date of death. The brass is the product of a Norwich workshop, and is believed by Greenwood and Norris to have been engraved c.1486.

Greenwood and Norris, *Brasses of Norfolk Churches*, 10, 46,
Macklin, 211.
Mill Stevenson, 781.

20. *Mary Drury* [LOST]

1469

All Saints, Thorndon, Suffolk

No trace of this brass remains beyond the following account:

In the chancel on a stone, the portrait of a woman in her winding sheet about whose head are these armes p'pale France and England quarterly a labell of three points ermine and azur a chevron (ermine drawn) charged with 3 bores heades coupe. About the armes these

wordes, "these be the armes of Dame Catherine Sewynford
sometyme Duchesse of Lancaster that by S'r William
Sewynford had sonne and heyre S'r Thomas Sewynford
knight, father to Dame Catherine, wife to S'r Will'm
Drury knight the w'h S'r Willia' and Dame Catherine
among other had Marie the wife of Edward Grymstone
esquier that god hath endued with great vertue and
beautye and here is interred (who dyed the 6th of March
a'o Dni 1469)." On the stone ar 4 coates more,

1. - on a fess 3 mullets perced,
2. Argent on a chevron 3 boares heades coupe arg,
3. P'pale - on a fesse 3 mulletts p'ced & arg, on a
chiefe vert 2 mulletts or, Written under the
coate Marie Grymstone,
4. P'pale Drury & arg, on a chevron (ermine drawn) 3
bores (page changes) heades arg, under written Dame
Catherine Drury,

D.N.J. MacCulloch, ed., *The Chorography of Suffolk*, Suffolk Records Society (London, 1976), 74-75.

21. *Richard Willughby*

1472

Plate 19

St Leonard's, Wollaton, Nottinghamshire..

The unusual tomb of Richard Willughby and his wife is one of two commemorating the Willughby family in their chantry chapel at Wollaton. On the bottom deck there is a conventional stone corpse effigy, but on the top deck there are two separate brasses showing Willughby in armour, hands clasped in prayer, his helm under his head, and his wife, wearing a cloak and horned headdress. The slab is spangled with shells, the family device, and five coats of arms. The brass has been attributed to London Series D. The tomb is set into a recess in the wall under a canopy of angels holding shields, latticework and crocketing. The cadaver

effigy is almost skeletal, the head particularly skull-like. It holds the shroud over the genitals with the left hand.

The other double tomb in the chapel commemorates Henry Willughby, d. 1528, and his four wives. It may be observed that in instances where more than one person is commemorated by a double tomb there is never more than one corpse effigy on the lower deck. This would seem to indicate the symbolic rather than representative intention of the cadaver effigies in these compositions, although entire shrouded families are not uncommon on brasses.

Cohen, 192.

J.P.C. Kent, "Monumental Brasses - a New Classification of Military Effigies, c.1360-c.1485", *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 3rd series, 12 (1949), 70-97.

Pevsner, *Nottinghamshire*, 207.

22. *Thomas Fleming*

1472

Plate 20

Ante-chapel, New College, Oxford

A brass showing a small emaciated figure in a shroud, commemorates Fleming, a fellow of the college, *in utroque juris baccalarius*. The inscription is now partly covered. The brass has been attributed to London Series B.

Emmerson, 73

Macklin, 212.

Mill Stevenson, 415.

St Laurence, Upton, Buckinghamshire

The effigy of Agnes Bulstrode, kneeling in her shroud, is all that remains of this London Series B brass which used also to show her husband, nine sons and two daughters. The inscription has also been lost. Her hands are clasped in prayer and she is looking up to the right. This is the earliest surviving example of a kneeling shrouded effigy, although effigies in votive postures on shroud brasses are much more common than recumbant figures.

Emmerson, 73.
Macklin, 211.
Mill Stevenson, 51.

St John the Baptist, Stone, Buckinghamshire.

The London Series D brass to William Gurney esquire, of Bisshopston shows Gurney shrouded and his wife in ordinary dress. His effigy has lost its head.

Emmerson, 76.
Mill Stevenson, 49.

[If strict chronological order of tombs by date of death of the commemorated were to be observed, the tomb at Fenny Bentley, Derbyshire to *Thomas and Agnes Beresford* would be included at this point. Thomas Beresford died in 1473. The splendid tomb, however, on which the two effigies are completely concealed by their shrouds, dates from around 1580. The couple's sixteen sons and five daughters are shown around the sides of the mensa, and there are three stanzas of Latin verse relating how Thomas was, amongst other exploits, present at Agincourt. Why there should have been a delay of a century between his death and the erection of his tomb is a matter for speculation.

Cohen, 193,
Pevsner, *Derbyshire*, 137.]

25. *Alice Chaucer*

1475

Plate 23

St Mary's, Ewelme, Oxfordshire.

The Duchess of Suffolk's very elaborate double-decker tomb is situated in the John the Baptist chantry chapel in her church at Ewelme, which forms part of the complex of school and almshouses which she founded there. It forms the partition between the chapel and the chancel of the church. The upper effigy has elongated features, wears a coronet, wimple, and a simple gown, and has the order of the Garter

on her left arm. Her hands are clasped in prayer. Over her head there is a decorative canopy, where four angels support the pillow. This effigy is placed on a table tomb which is surrounded by angel-weepers bearing shields, all painted and lavishly gilded.

Beneath this level is a series of two-light tracery apertures, through which a delicate shrivelled cadaver effigy of semi-translucent alabaster can just be seen, although it lies slightly below the present floor-level. Above it, on the ceiling of the lower chamber, are painted Mary Magdalen, John the Baptist and the Annunciation.

There is an elaborate canopy above the tomb, divided into three bays by octagonal standards which form the pedestals for fourteen wooden angels. Each bay has three demi-figures of the heavenly host, hands together in prayer. No inscription survives, but Gough recorded the following:

*Orate pro anima serenissime principisse Alicie ducisse
Suffolchie hujus ecclesie patronae et prime fundatricis
hujus elemosynariae, quae obiit xx die mensis Maii, anno
MCCCCLXXV litera dominicali A.*

Cohen, 42n., 46n., 67n., 69n., 191.

G.H. Cook, *Medieval Chantries and Chantry Chapels* (London, 1947), 77-78.

Crossley, 8, 24, 99, 103, 127, 150, 154, 158, 235.

Gough, II(3), 248.

St Stephen, Norwich, Norfolk.

The brass to the rector of St Stephen's is now lost. It used to show a man in his shroud surrounded by four scrolls. From the surviving rubbing of the brass in the Society of Antiquaries, Emmerson has located it with London Series B, finding it similar in pose and drapery to the Leventhorpe brass at Sawbridgeworth (No.11). This is anomalous, as the date, 1457, on the brass, is surely a mistake by the engraver, as Poryngland's will was proved in 1475. Series B is thought to have finished by 1475.

Emmerson, 73.
Mill Stevenson, 358.

St Giles, Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire

The effigy is now missing from this little shroud brass on the south side of the altar, as are the figures of children which were once part of the composition. The inscription reads,

*Hic hoc lapide sepelitur corpus venerabilis domine
Eleanore Mullens baronisse quam primitus desponsavit
dominus Robertus hungerforde miles et baro et hanc
postea nubitā honorabilis dominus oliverus manyngam
miles quorum animabus propicietur deus. Amen.*

There were also two shields on the brass. It has been attributed to London Series D.

Emmerson, private correspondence,
Gough, II(3), 207,
Mill Stevenson, 49,

28. *Joan Walrond*

1477

Plate 25

St Mary, Childrey, Berkshire.

This London Series F brass is a very complex composition of many elements. It is situated on the floor at the east side of the Fetep lace chantry chapel, which is on the south side of the choir. Five of the original six armorial shields surround the slab. At the centre top there is a mercy-seat Trinity, similar to that on the upper deck of the tomb to Sampson Meverell at Tideswell (No.15), measuring 10 inches by 20. Below that there is a plate 21½ inches by 8½, on which there is the following inscription:

Maker of mankynd, O God in trynyte,
Of thyn high mercy grant me this bon,
That for my soule seyth a patemoster & ave,
Doughter to Thomas Walrond bapthised be pe name of
loue,
Wife when pat in the world le'nd to Robert Strangbon,
The Second day of Aple hens passed & leyd her in
grave,
Ther alder sowlis mercy lord grant them to haue, Amen,

At the bottom of the slab there is a shrouded effigy, or rather an engraved picture of a shrouded figure lying in its coffin. The only similarly complex composition is that of the brass to Bernard Brocas at Sherborne St John (No.39). In both cases the brass seems to seek to emulate the double tomb with its range of contrasting images.

Emmerson, private correspondence,
King, "Eight English Verses", 495,
Mill Stevenson, 18,
H.T. Morley, "Shroud Brasses of Berkshire", *Berkshire Archaeological Journal*, 33
(1929), 34-39.

29. *John and Margery Beel* 1477

Plate 26

St Mary's, Hitchin, Hertfordshire.

The effigy of John Beel, scrolls and the inscription plate are missing from this large brass, mounted on a mensa in the south chancel chapel. What remains is the shrouded effigy of a woman, 35 inches in height, three-quarters turned to the right, with long wavy hair. The shroud is copious, but is draped to reveal much of the right leg. The hands, clasped in prayer, are off-set to the right and the left elbow shows. The brass is badly corroded. There are also two groups of children, four sons and four daughters. The brass is attributed to London Series F.

Emmerson, 78,
Mill Stevenson, 187,

St Leger, Ashby St Legers, Northamptonshire

The remains of the huge brass to Sir William Catesby and his two wives, Phillipe Wilcotes, d.1446, and Joan Barre, d.1471, all in shrouds, was restored to its original position in 1913. What survives is the top half of the central male effigy and two of the three original inscription plates. The effigy faces straight forward, his hands clasped in prayer, his shroud arranged over short hair like a hood. The right hand side of the shroud is hooked up to conceal the lower part of the torso. The slab, 11 feet, 4 inches by 4 feet, 3 inches, was originally diapered all over with small scrolls, and each effigy had a horse-shoe-shaped label around its head. Below the figures were groups of three sons and three daughters, and at the corners of the slab were four coats of arms.

The two surviving inscriptions read:

Hic jacet domina Johanna secunda uxor Willelmi Catesby, militis, antea uxor Renardi de la Bere, et filia Thome Barre, militis, et Alicie uxoris ejus sororis Johannis Domini Talbot, creati Comitis Salopiensis, que obiit xi Augusti Anno Domini MCCCCLXXI.

Hic jacet Willelmus Catesby miles quondam trencheatorum unus regis Henrici Sexti qui obiit [blank] Anno Domini MCCCCLXX , Cujus anime propicietur Deus, Amen,

The missing inscription is reported to have read:

Hic jacet Philippa uxor prima Willelmi Catesby, militis, et dimidia heres Willelmi Bishopton, militis, et Philippe uxoris, unius quatuor heredum Willelmi Willicotes, armigeri, et Elizabethæ uxoris ejus, filie

*et heredis Johannis Trilow, militis, que obiit xx
Decembris Anno Domini MCCCCXLVI.*

Around the edge of the slab was once a marginal
inscription, reported to have read:

*Omnibus et singulis vere penitentibus et confessis qui
istam ecclesiam in festo sancti Leodegarii et per
octavas ejusdem devote visitarint annuatim ad
reparacionem edificii calicum librorum aliorumque
ornamentorum pro divino cultu inibi necessariorum manus
quocienscunque porrexerint adjutrices seu alias
orationem dominicam cum Salutacione Angelica pro
salubri statu Willelmi...*

The brass belongs to London Series F.

Emmerson, 78.

Mill Stevenson, 378.

R.M. Serjeantson, "The Restoration of the Long-Lost Brass of Sir William Catesby",
Associated Architectural Societies, 31 (1911-12), 519-24.

31. John Glemham [Lost] 1480

Glemham Parva, Suffolk.

A lost brass described in the *Chorography of Suffolk*:

In the church hard by the rood loft on a fayre stone 3
portratures in brasse a man in his winding sheet on
eyther side a woman under them this epitaphe; *Orate pro
a'i'abus Joh'is Glemham armigeri et Anne ac Alienore
uxorii' eius, qui quidem Jo'hes obiit (blank) die
mensis (blank) a'o millessimo cccc (blank) et
predicta Anna obiit 5 die mensis martij a'o Dni 1466 et
dicta Alienora obiit 30 die Junij A'o Dni 1480 quoru'
a'i'abus p'pitiet'r Deus amen.* Under the portrayture
of the dexter woman are the figures of 3 sonnes and as
many daughters, under that of the second 5 sonnes and
as many daughters. On the stone above the man's head
Glemham's single coate & quarterly or & gules a bordure
engrayled. Over the dexter woman's head p'pale Glemham
his single coate and quarterly or and gules a bordure
engrayled. over the other p'pale Glemha' and Brandon.
Under the epitaph p'pale 1, and the 1 wives coate 2,
Glemha' 3, 2 wives coate.

MacCulloch, ed., *Chorography of Suffolk*, 79.

St Mary's Cathedral, Southwell, Nottinghamshire

In his unpublished book of funeral drafts, Dugdale drew a double-decker tomb with the caption

*In quadam capella vocata Booth's Chapell ex australi
parte ecclesia*

On the top deck of the tomb there is a bishop in full pontificals, mitred, wearing a white surplice and a blue cope. There is a coronet around the lower half of the mitre. The crozier which the effigy held in its left hand has been broken off. Below, and seen through a triple arch, is a shrouded corpse, the shroud held over the genitals with the left hand. This effigy is shown in white, as if of a different stone from the mensa, which is slate-coloured. There is no superstructure shown. On the same page, Dugdale illustrates the indent of a brass to a bishop, *Adhuc in dicta capella*, and, on the next page, the indent of a brass to an archbishop with a cross-staff, also from the same chapel. The problem here lies in attributing the double tomb to one of the founders of the chantry in the chapel of St John the Baptist, the two half-brothers who came to be archbishops of York, William and Laurence Booth, who died in 1464 and 1480 respectively. The archiepiscopal brass, it may be presumed, commemorated the other.

A. Hamilton Thompson, on examining the certificates of the charity commissioners for Southwell, stated that it was unclear whether William Booth, in founding the Jesus mass in the chapel of St John the Baptist on the south side of the church, was referring to an existing chapel or to a new one which he had begun or intended to build. The new Booth chapel when it was built, was certainly also dedicated to St John the Baptist. Laurence Booth's will makes clear that the new chapel was still unfinished when he died, and it was completed by his executors. Hamilton Thompson concluded, therefore, that William Booth repaired an older chapel and was buried within the site, but the actual building of the chapel was undertaken by Laurence and his executors. He quotes Thoroton who noted a "fair marble stone" under which one of the Booths was buried, which he also called a "plain blue stone" on the south side of the nave. This was apparently not Laurence's tomb, which he said was in the rebuilt wall of the south aisle. Raine's notes on the will of William Booth corroborate Thoroton's view by stating that "a plain and unpretending monument was placed to commemorate him", hardly an apt description of the double cadaver tomb.

Confusing matters further are Dugdale's sketches of the glass in the Booth chapel: two figures are shown kneeling, one an archbishop with cross-staff under whom is written, *Robertus Bothe Ebor archiepiscopus*, the other a bishop with

slab, 11½ feet by 5 feet. A label issued from the mouth of the missing effigy and read,

*Quatuor O Sancti me Bedford archilevita
John Rudyng famulum precibus defendite vestram*

At the top, two angels held the Baptist's head in a charger over something, also missing. Crescents and scallops were sprinkled all over the slab and at the end of alternate lines of the marginal inscription, which was mutilated in Gough's time, but seemed to read:

*[Rudyng marmoreus lapis est datus iste Johanni
Quem trucis ethereus rex salvet ab ore tyranni]
Laud pessumdet eum baratri resupina potestas,
Lumen sidereum sed ei det diva majestas
Qui gravis in vita legu' vir erat graduatus,
Bis prebendatus & Bedford archilevita
Et meritis magnus sancti rector Michalis
Glowcetir, ut celis hillarescat det facit agnus
[hujus bacilice sponsus fuerat inheritosus
Talis erat qualem descripci plus liberalem.]*

Below the feet of the missing effigy was the other latin verse:

*Tu' fera mors quid agis humane prodiga stragis
Cedo quot offendis q'd in hunc discrimina tendis
Dic cur tela strius nature depopulatrix
Dic cur non metius hunc trudere vasta vocatrix,
Cur te non puduit fatali forte ferire
Vivere quem decuit, & plebs lacrimatur obire
Crede nec injurias mortalibus hunc dare somnis;
Namqu' meus furias caro tandem senciet omnis
Horrida tela fero, morsu necis urgeo seclum,
Nec vulgo nec hero parcens traho singula metum
Quid valet altus honos, rex, dux, princeps q'sacerdos,
Hanc subeunt sortem, nequeunt precurrere mortem,
Mors ego sum finis lustrantibus hic peregrinis,
Terminus itineris quem nec pret'ire mereris,
In scriptis legitur, caro quevis morte potitur,
Et vox applaudit vulgo; mors omnia claudit.*

The figure of Death is located at the bottom right of the entire composition. This is a very early date for the personification of Death on a tomb, although the iconography is clearly closely related to the cadaver.

Gough, II (3), 273, Pl. CII.

K.W. Kuhlicke, "The Rudyng Brass, Biggleswade", *Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society*, 9 (1955), 284-85.

Mill Stevenson, 2, 827.

34. *William Robert*

1484

Plate 30

St John the Evangelist, Digswell, Hertfordshire

The shroud brass to William Robert and his wife Joyce Peryent is situated in the sanctuary of the ante-chapel in Digswell parish church, the chapel being the original medieval building onto which a large modern church has been added. The effigies, attributed to London Series D, are 26½ inches high. Their heads are quarter turned to face each other, but their bodies face the front, with their hands clasped in prayer in the centre. The shrouds are draped to meet across the abdomen and part again below the knee. The knots are offset to the outside at the top and to the centre at the base, where the figures are shown standing on a grassy mound. In instances such as this where the figures are highly stylised, there is every indication that both were made from the same cartoon, reversed in one case, with

distinguishing details, such as the long hair and breasts on the female figure, added freehand. The figures had scrolls, now missing, issuing from their mouths, and there is a group of two sons below the male figure and the indent of a group of three daughters under the female, all in ordinary dress. There were four shields at the corners of the slab, none of which survives in brass, although one of the indents is carved. The inscription simply records that Robert was auditor to the bishop of Winchester and gives his wife's date of death, leaving his blank, thereby indicating that the brass was laid down in his lifetime.

Emmerson, 76,
Macklin, 212,
Mill Stevenson, 184,

35. *Nicholas Mattock* 1485 Plate 31

St Mary's, Hitchin, Hertfordshire

All that remains of the shroud brass to Nicholas Mattock and his family is the reset figure of his wife. The figure is 40 inches high and what remains is in good condition, although the feet are missing. She is quarter-turned to her right, with long wavy hair flowing out from her shroud, which is pegged together in the front. She has wide eyes, a straight mouth and very plastic limbs, her plumpish elbows thrust out sideways, hands clasped in prayer. Only the

shroud gives any indication that this attractive young woman is dead at all. The brass has been attributed to London Series F.

Emmerson, 78,
Macklin, 212,
Mill Stevenson, 187.

36. *Tomesine Tendring* 1485 Plate 32
St Peter, Yoxford, Suffolk

This London D Series shroud brass shows a figure of a young woman in a shroud, 3 feet 6 inches in length, with three sons and two daughters also in shrouds and two daughters in ordinary dress. There is one shield, three others being lost.

Emmerson, private correspondence,
Macklin, 212,
Mill Stevenson, 476.

37. *John and Ellen Wisebeard* 1486 Plate 33
St Mary's, Hitchin, Hertfordshire.

The probable identification of this shroud brass was made by Mill Stevenson, despite the fact that the inscription is now missing. It shows a man and a woman, accompanied by five

daughters and three sons, all shrouded. The large figures have their heads quarter-turned to face each other, but their bodies face forwards, hands clasped in prayer centrally. The knots of their shrouds at their feet point inwards, the top-knots, now missing, pointed outwards. The figures stand on little mounds representing grass. They were originally 27 inches high. The brass has been attributed to London Series G.

Emmerson, private correspondence,
Mill Stevenson, 187,

38. *Thomas Spryng* 1486 Plate 34

SS. Peter and Paul, Lavenham, Suffolk

On this shroud brass in the vestry of Lavenham church, Thomas Spryng, with his four sons, rises shrouded from a tomb, facing his wife who is shown rising from another with their six daughters. This is, therefore, an early example of the "Resurrection " iconography, looking forward to the Last Judgement. Although they are apparently rising from their tombs, the adult figures are in a kneeling posture, the shrouds shown open at the bottom and copiously draped around and behind them. The female figure has lost her top-knot. All the children have their hands clasped in prayer, but the large figures have their held apart in front of them, possibly in a gesture of supplication to the now

missing device which was above them, probably a Trinity or Christ in Majesty. The gesture may be compared with that of Robert Brampton (No.19), venerating the Virgin and Child on his brass. Also missing from the Spryng brass, which is London Series D, are the shield and scrolls. The inscription on which the wife's date of death is blank, is of the conventional kind, asking for prayers, but also stating that Spryng, *hoc vestibulum fieri fecit in vita sua*.

Emmerson, private correspondence,
Macklin, 213,
Mill Stevenson, 462.

39. *Bernard Brocas*

1488

Plate 35

St John, Sherborne St John, Hampshire.

The north chapel of the church of Sherborne St John is the Brocas family chantry. On the floor to the right of the altar is the complex composition in brass commemorating Bernard Brocas. He is shown kneeling, bareheaded in armour and a tabard of arms, half turned towards the indent of what was probably a tabernacle or cross. The figure is 2 feet, 8½ inches in length. Beyond that, on the left of the brass, is a large heraldic device, showing the Brocas arms and their distinctive crest of a *Moor's head coupéd at the shoulders radiated as the sun or*. At the top there are two shields, Brocas quartering Roches, and Sandys, and at the

bottom lies a skeleton in a shroud, measuring 23½ inches in length. The top of the skeleton, i.e. its left side, is missing in the middle, but enough survives to show that it was lying on a completely open shroud, knotted in the conventional manner top and bottom. It is clearly skeletal, rather than the representation of an emaciated corpse. The whole composition comes from London Series F.

A short inscription under the kneeling figure used to record the date of death. There are also the remains of a much more elaborate inscription around the margin of the slab. Reconstructed by Montagu Burrows this reads:

*Pondere marmoreo tenebroso subtus in antro
Bernard Brocas jacet armiger arma reliquens,
Humanum multum fuerat reddunt decoratum
Mores dapsilitas illum amplectendaque honestas,
Occubuit Maii terna,,denaque luce
Anno sed Domini centenis multiplicatis
Bis septenario septenarius duodeno
Quatuor his addo numerum perficiendo,*

Emmerson, private correspondence,
H.K.C., *Brasses to the Family of De Brocas in the Church of Sherborne St John*, a folder available in the church, date and place of publication unrecorded,
Mill Stevenson, 164.

40. *John and Isabella Barton*1491

Plate 36

St Giles, Holme-by-Newark, Nottinghamshire

John Barton's is a double-decker tomb of unusual design. On the top of the mensa there are two well-carved effigies:

John Barton wears a long civic gown and his wife a close-fitting dress and butterfly headdress. Both have their hands clasped in prayer, their heads resting on cushions. The feet of the female figure rest on a small dog, Barton's feet on his rebus, the bar and tun. The two effigies, which are approximately life-sized, are supported on a section of barrel-vaulting, under which lies a small emaciated figure of a cadaver, rather crudely and angularly carved, its left hand holding the shroud over the genitals. The tomb divides the choir from the lady chapel. On the lady chapel side of the base is inscribed (Job, xix, 21), *Miseremini mei saltem vos amici mei quia manus domini tetegit me*. Round the rim of the barrel a pattern is painted, and there used to be six painted shields on the tomb. The tomb is the focal point of a church which itself stands as a memorial to Barton, being lavishly decorated inside and out with his arms, the arms of the staple of Calais, woolpacks, sheeps' heads, the rebus and monographs.

Pevsner, *Nottinghamshire*, 53.
Richardson MS,
Stone, 214.
Nevil Truman, *Holme by Newark Church and its Founder* (Gloucester, 1946).

The Cathedral, Lichfield, Staffordshire.

At one time there was an elaborate double tomb to Heywood, dean of Lichfield, in his chantry chapel in the cathedral. It had a very ornate crocketed canopy, under which the dean was shown in vestments, bare-headed, hands clasped in prayer. On the lower tier there was a stone cadaver in a shroud. Although Cohen has claimed that the tomb is now lost, the cadaver effigy itself does survive, mounted on a modern slab in the north transept. It is badly decayed, but enough remains for the conventional iconography to be distinguished. The hair is very short, the face and body emaciated but not skeletal. The eyes are open, and the right hand pulls a portion of the shroud over the genitals. Cohen quotes the inscription:

Quisquis eris qui transieris, sta, plege, plora,
Sum quod eris, fueram quod es, pro me precor ora,

Cohen, 41n., 46n., 66n., 72-73.

Pevsner, *Staffordshire*, 186.

Richardson MS.

Stebbing Shaw, *The History and Antiquities of Staffordshire* (London, 1798), I, pl.25.

St John the Evangelist, Digswell, Hertfordshire.

The shrouded effigies of Thomas Robinson and his wife Mary Peryent no longer survive as more than indents in Digswell church sanctuary, near to the tomb of William Robert (No.34). The conventional inscription on a plate is still extant, however, mounted under the brass to John Peryent, and the shields are mounted on the Roberts brass.

Mill Stevenson, 184.

St Dunstan, Hunsdon, Hertfordshire.

The London Series F shroud brass to Margaret Shelley is mounted on the north wall of the chancel of her parish church. The effigy, which is almost 3 feet in length, is of a woman in a shroud, quarter-turned to the left. She has long hair, but it is not, as is usually the case, in front of her shoulders, but is apparently held in place by a narrow band. The top and bottom knots of the shroud are missing, and it is held up across the figure's front by her praying hands. Above the effigy is a rather damaged mercy-seat Trinity. A fragment of the scroll coming from the effigy's mouth survives, incised, *...s spero ...vidit*

domini. There is also a standard inscription plate underneath the effigy, broken off at the right hand corner, recording that Margaret Shelley was wife to John Shelley, citizen and merchant of London. She died on 24 March 1495. The wording indicates that this is her tomb alone, and that there was no intention that it should also commemorate her husband.

Emmerson, private correspondence,
Macklin 212,
Mill Stevenson, 188.

44. *William Leynthall* 1497 Plate 39
St Peter, Hasely Great, Oxfordshire.

In the south aisle of the parish church of Great Hasely is the London Series F shroud brass commemorating William Leynthall. The effigy used to be accompanied by groups of three sons and three daughters. The scroll issuing from the effigy's mouth survives in part and reads, *O bone Jesu... Jesu miserere mei.* Under the effigy is an inscription plate bearing a Latin *memento mori* verse:

*Quisquis eris qui transieris sta prospice plora
Sum quod eris fueram quod sis pro me precor ora
Hic jacet Willielmus Leynthall de quondam dominus de
Lachforde qui obiit 28^o die mensis Junii
A^o Domini MCCCClxxxvii, cuius anime propiciet Dei.*

Emmerson, private correspondence,
Mill Stevenson, 407,
T.W. Weare, *Some Remarks on the Church of Great Hasely, Oxfordshire* (Oxford, 1848) ,
84.

St Mary, Ashby Folville, Leicestershire.

Ralph Woodforde's monument takes the form of an incised slab, the first such with a shrouded effigy in England to bear positive identification, although incised slabs showing shrouded effigies were common in northern Europe by the time this one was laid down. The slab, on the north side of the chancel of Ashy Folville church, measures 7 feet 4 inches by 3 feet 6 inches. The shrouded effigy on it is 4 feet 5 inches long and is flanked by two crosses, each 4 feet 8½ inches long. The effigy is that of a well-built man in an open shroud which he holds across his genitals with his left hand. The shroud is knotted at the top and the figure's left hand hangs by its side, palm forward. The antiquarian Nichols observed that the figure had no head, but Greenhill has clarified this by suggesting that the cartoon was drawn on the slab in pitch and the face perhaps never incised. In time the pitch would have worn off and, it is suggested, the head was incised in the nineteenth century. The effigy's feet rest on a crouching greyhound, whose head is turned to look up over its shoulder. The figure is flanked by crosses, the right one fleury, the arms of the other having foliated ends. Each rises from a pedestal and across each stem is a scroll inscribed, *Disce mori*.

Above the effigy's head is a large scroll inscribed as follows:

*Credo quod redemptor meus
vivit et novissimo die de
terra surrecturus sum. Et in
carne mea videbo deum
salvatorum (sic) meum.*

There is also a marginal inscription in bad latin which reads,

*Hic iacet Radulphus Wodford armiger consanguenius et
heres Roberti Wodford militis videlicet filius Thome
filii et heredis predicti Roberti Wodford & Elizabeth
una filiarum de Williemi Villers armigeri uxor
predicti Radulphi qui quidem Radulphus obiit iiii die
marii anno domini MCCCCLxxxviii predicta Elizabeth
obiit ix die augusti anno domini MCCCCLxxi quorum
animabus propicietur deus, Amen.*

The shields on the slab are those of Folville and Woodford. The workmanship of the entire composition is fine, causing Greenhill to consider this to be the finest figure on an incised slab in England. It was probably laid down in Woodford's lifetime.

Greenhill, I, 287; II, 26 and pl. 151a.
F.A. Greenhill, *The Incised Slabs of Leicestershire and Rutland* (Leicester, 1958), 27-28.
Pevsner, *Leicestershire and Rutland*, 55.

St Mary, Longworth, Berkshire

The London Series F brass shows Richard Yate and his wife Joan in their shrouds. It also included groups of seven sons, five in shrouds, of which two are lost, and two in ordinary dress; and eight daughters, four of which are shrouded. The brass is now mounted on the south wall of the choir. The two main figures are 2 feet 3 inches high and are quarter turned to face each other, their hands clasped in prayer, their shrouds knotted top and bottom. The engraving seems crude, the feet being particularly unconvincing and large. The inscription below them is in English:

Her lyeth Richard Yate and Johane his wyf the which
Richard decessed the XII / day of marche the yere of
our lord MCCCClxxxviii & the said Johane decessed the
vii / day of marche the yere of our lord MV^c on whose
Soules God have mercy amen.

Emmerson, private correspondence,
Mill Stevenson, 24,
Morley, "Shroud Brasses in Berkshire", 34-39.

St Michael, Aylsham, Norfolk.

The 19 inch brasses of the Howards as skeletons in their shrouds is local Norwich work. They are virtually identical mirror images of each other. The faces are grinning skulls, and although the upper chest is shown to be fleshed, the spine and pelvis and shown below, with the shrouds meeting in front at the lower pelvis, concealing the remainder of the figures. The hands, also skeletal, are crossed in front of the chest. The shrouds are knotted at the top and loose at the bottom. The effigies are crude and lively rather than pathetic in spirit. Beneath them is an inscription plate in Latin of the conventional type, asking for prayers for their souls.

Emmerson, private correspondence,
Macklin, 212,
Mill Stevenson, 320,

Supplementary List

The following supplementary list gives basic details of English cadaver tombs in chronological order up to the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558.

48. *Thomas Chylton* 1501

Newington-next-Hythe, Kent.

This brass shows Chylton in his shroud and his wife, Thomasine in ordinary dress, with two sons and one daughter.

Mill Stevenson, 248.

49. *Henry Williams* 1501

Stanford-on-Avon, Northamptonshire.

A memorial in stained glass, commemorating Williams, shows a figure of Death as a skeleton standing in a grave and aiming a bow and arrow at a male figure in academic dress who is kneeling in prayer. Now in the tracery of the easternmost window in the north wall of the chancel, this roundel of glass was originally one of many in the chancel windows where there was also an inscription asking for prayers for Williams. He was buried in the churchyard.

Richard Marks, "Henry Williams and his 'Ymage of Deth' Roundel at Stanford on Avon, Northamptonshire", *The Antiquaries Journal*, 54(2) (1974), 272-74.

50. *William Gibson*

1501

Watlington, Oxfordshire.

Gibson and his wife are shown in shrouds, 1 foot 11 inches high on this brass. The original inscription was lost and replaced in 1914, when the brass was transferred to a mural board.

Macklin, 213.

Mill Stevenson, 424,

51. *Henry Heydon*

1504

West Wickham House, Kent.

A window in the house of this Norfolk gentleman, whose family seat was Baconsthorpe, shows him rising shrouded, as if at the Last Judgement, and is inscribed, "Remember not our sins, nor the sins of our fathers". The window would appear to be commemorative in intention.

D.O.E. Official Handbook to Baconsthorpe Castle.

52. *William Dussyng*

1505

Kirby Bedon, Norfolk.

Both William Dussyng and his wife Katherine died on 10 February, 1505 and are commemorated by this small brass which shows them both in shrouds.

Macklin, 213.

Mill Stevenson, 343,

53. *Thomas Tyard*

1505

Bawburgh, Norfolk.

A 2 foot long shroud effigy commemorating the vicar of St Mary and St Walstan, Bawburgh.

Macklin, 213,
Mill Stevenson, 322,

54. *William Lenthorpe*

1506

Marston Montaine, Bedfordshire.

A rubbing of this brass held by the Society of Antiquaries in London, shows Lenthorpe in a shroud. All that now remains are two shields, Reynes impaling Mordaunt and Leventhorpe impaling Reynes, on the side of an altar tomb.

Mill Stevenson, 9.

55. *Thomas Wymer*

1507

Aylshan, Norfolk.

A shroud effigy in brass, 2 feet 6 inches long, commemorates this local worsted weaver who presented the screen and the font to this church, both of which are still extant.

Macklin, 213,
Mill Stevenson, 320,

56. *William Sylke*

1508

Exeter Cathedral, Devon.

A very badly damaged stone cadaver effigy in its own chantry chapel in the north transept commemorates Sylke, precentor of the cathedral from 1499-1508. An inscription reads, *Sum quod eris, fueram quod es, pro me, precor, ora.*

Cohen, 67n., 193,
Cook, *Medieval Chuntries and Chantry Chapels*, 105,
Stone, 76, pl. 83,
Richardson MS.

57. *Nicholas Wadham*

1508

Ilton, Somerset.

A small brass figure of a man in a shroud and one shield.

Mill Stevenson, 436,
Pevsner, *South and West Somerset*, 210,

58. *John Symondes*

1508

Cley, Norfolk.

A very fine shroud brass shows Symondes and his wife Agnes as large figures in voluminous shrouds, with four sons and four daughters in ordinary dress. There are nine scrolls, some reversed, and two inscribed, "now thus".

Macklin, 213,
Mill Stevenson, 328,

59. *John Yate*

1509

Longworth, Berkshire.

All that remains of this brass, presumably related to No.46 above, is the top of a shroud, eight daughters (four in shrouds), and part of a scroll reading, *Nunc xpe te petimus.*

Mill Stevenson, 24,
Morley, "Shroud Brasses of Berkshire", 33.

60. *William Wetherden*

1513

Bodiam, Sussex.

A small shrouded effigy to this vicar and benefactor of the church, *qui quidem non literatus uxorem duxit, qua mortua, se dedit studio liberali et sacerdotii ordinem suscepit.*

Macklin, 213,
Mill Stevenson, 503.

61. *Henry Scolows*

1515

St Miles, Coslany, Norwich, Norfolk.

A shroud brass showing Scolows and his wife in shrouds. There are also merchants' marks and evangelists' symbols. He was an alderman of Norwich.

Macklin, 213,
Mill Stevenson, 256.

62. *Henry Fayrey*

1516

Dunstable, Bedfordshire.

A brass which Mill Stevenson reported to be in the Guildhall Museum, London. It shows a man and a woman in their shrouds, hands apart, the tops of the shrouds missing. The sets of four daughters and five sons have become separated from the two main effigies.

Mill Stevenson, 5,719,827.

63. *William Feteplace*

1516

Plate 43

Childrey, Berkshire.

Brasses to the founders of the Feteplace chantry chapel show them as little fat figures, rising shrouded from their tombs at the Last Judgement. There are also two shields. The brasses are mounted murally on the back wall of a tabernacle. Elizabeth Feteplace was daughter of Joan Walrond or Strangbon (No. 28), whose shroud brass is in the same chapel.

Mill Stevenson, 18.
Morley, "Shroud Brasses of Berkshire", 33.

64. *Robert Alee*

1518

Dunstable, Bedfordshire.

In the church remain the brasses to four of Alee's daughters and a mutilated inscription. He used to be accompanied by two wives, three sons and seven daughters in all. Effigies

of the man and one wife in their shrouds are preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Mill Stevenson, 5,

65. *John Goodrington*

1518

Plate 44

Appleton, Berkshire.

This brass shows a truly emaciated figure in a shroud. The inscription relates that after his death, his wife Dorothy, "toke relygon in pe monastery of syon".

Macklin, 214,

Mill Stevenson, 14,

Morley, "Shroud Brasses of Berkshire", 33.

66. *Ralph Hamsterley*

1518

Oddington, Oxfordshire.

This much illustrated brass is too often presented as typical of the cadaver genre; it is in fact unique amongst survivals in England. On it, this rector and fellow of Merton College, Oxford, is shown in his shroud, but all parts of his body which are not covered by the shroud are alive with snakes: one crawls into each eye socket, another is held between the teeth, four crawl through a hole in the abdominal cavity and the legs and feet are pierced at regular intervals. The engraving of the effigy which measures 2 feet 3 inches is very fine and detailed. An inscription accompanied the effigy and reads:

*Vermibus hic donor
Et sic ostendere conor
Quod sicut hic ponor
Ponitur omnis honor,*

Macklin, 214,
Mill Stevenson, 410,
Stone, 214 (pl.),

67. *John Colet* [LOST]

1519

St Paul's Cathedral, London.

No trace survives of this double-decker tomb, although Apperson notes that it is "beneath the cathedral" and Gough knew of parts of it in the crypt. Cohen quotes the inscription,

*Istuc recidit gloria carnis
Morere mundo ut vivas deo
Love and lyve,*

An engraving of the tomb, also published by Cohen, shows a frontal bust of Colet in doctoral robes within a scallop shell on the top, flanked by two tablets giving biographical details of his life. Below is a skeleton on a rolled up mat. On the back board behind the skeleton the inscription is placed between two shields. Columns rise on either side of the tomb, surmounted by skulls, and the Virgin in Majesty sits above the bust. This is a very early date for such neo-classical motifs to be applied to the cadaver tomb.

Apperson, "Monumental Skeletons", 217.
Cohen, 125-28, pl. 78.

Horncastle, Lincolnshire

This curious memorial is a double representation, but in brass. On the wall is a small plate which Macklin considers to be by a goldsmith or engraver of copper plates for books. On this, Dymoke is shown in armour, kneeling on a cushion. There is also an inscription and coat of arms. On the pavement below he appears again, in his shroud, the head now missing, with two scrolls and an inscription in six leonine verses. According to Mill Stevenson, the upper effigy was once accompanied by two sons, now lost, and three daughters. The whole is partly palimpsest with the figure of a man playing the violin on the reverse, probably Flemish in origin.

Macklin, 214.
Mill Stevenson, 286.

69. The same.

A very worn stone cadaver effigy is also said to commemorate Lionel Dymoke.

Pevsner, *Lincolnshire*, .

Flamborough, N. Yorkshire.

All that remains of this tomb is a slab bearing a long inscription in verse, possibly once the end of a mensa, and the ribcage section of a cadaver effigy. Under the ribs there is a lump of stone the size of a fist, considered by Cohen to be a toad, like that on the "Wakeman Cenotaph" at Tewkesbury (No.92), or the tomb to James Rice in Waterford Cathedral (see appendix). In this case, however, the appearance of the lump is more suggestive of a heart, held in the effigy's hands, which has precedents in brass (Nos 4 and 12 above). It is not clear from these fragments whether they belong to the same tomb, but the refrain in the long verse inscription, which tells of Constable's military exploits, might suggest they do:

But for all that as ye se he lieth under this stone.

Constable is, of course, the name of an old local family, not, as Cohen suggests, the commemorated man's rank.

Cohen, 75n., 78n.

Long Melford, Suffolk.

There is now only an indent remaining for this brass which is described in the *Chorography of Suffolk*. The brasses showed a man and woman in their winding sheets, Roger Martyn

and Alice his wife, and one shield bearing the Martyn arms. The inscription asked for prayers for their souls, describing Roger as *armigeri*, and leaving blank his date of death.

MacCulloch, ed., *Chorography of Suffolk*, 97.

72. *Thomas Cowell* 1520

Southfleet, Kent.

A minute shroud brass, only 6 inches long.

Macklin 214,
Mill Stevenson, 259.

73. *Katherine Incent* 1520

Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire

A shroud brass to the wife of Robert Incent. Their son, John Incent LL.D. was benefactor of the chapel of St John, Berkhamstead.

Macklin, 214,
Mill Stevenson, 181.

74. *Hugh Asheton* 1522

St John's College Chapel, Cambridge.

A double-decker tomb in the ante-chapel, commemorates the archdeacon. The upper effigy lies on a tomb chest, under which a panelled four-centred arch reveals a cadaver effigy.

There is also an inscription asking for prayers in what Cohen alleges is a cenotaph and chantry.

Cohen, 46n., 67n., 193.
Pevsner, *Cambridgeshire* 154.

75. *George Sydenham*

1524

Salisbury Cathedral, Wiltshire.

In the west part of the north chancel aisle, a large (6 feet, 1 inch) crudely carved cadaver effigy on a half rolled-up mat. There is no tomb chest. The effigy is similar in detail to fifteenth-century models, but the shroud is very small. The mat is a later feature more commonly found with skeletons. The tomb lies under an arch made up of triple trefoil arches, behind an iron grating. Sydenham was archdeacon of Sarum, 1503-1524, chaplain to both Henry VII and VIII.

Cohen, 193.
Pevsner, *Wiltshire*, 374.

76. *Sub-Dean Johnson*

1527

Derby Cathedral, Derbyshire.

The attribution of this very decayed fragment of a timber cadaver effigy in the south aisle seems to be generally

accepted. It was apparently part of a double tomb of which small mourner-figures survive intact.

Cohen, *41n.*, 193.
Pevsner, *Derbyshire*, 113.
Richardson MS.

77. *Henry Willughby* 1528 Plate 45

Wollaton, Nottinghamshire.

A double-decker tomb to the grandson of Richard Willughby (No. 21). On the top deck, the armoured effigy is flanked by his four wives, made half-size to fit. The tomb-chest has openwork arches between which are statuettes of mourners. Behind them lies the cadaver, visible from both sides, as the whole tomb lies between the south chancel chapel and the chancel itself. All the faces are damaged. There is a simple canopy.

Cohen, 193.
Pevsner, *Nottinghamshire*, 208.

78. *Richard Fox* 1528

Winchester Cathedral, Hampshire.

A single cadaver effigy is contained within what Cook considers to be one of the "most imposing" chantry chapels in the country. It is a structure of four bays divided by octagonal shafts. Pedestals in the parapet support the bishop's emblem, carved in the round, the pelican feeding her young. The elevation is in two stories. The north

front of the chapel is open to the saint's chapel, but the effigy itself is in an arched recess in the second compartment from the east. There is lavish use of heraldry. The effigy has beside it the mitre and crozier, symbols of the bishop's office.

Cohen, 41n., 67n., 87, 193.
Cook, *Medieval Chantries and Chantry Chapels*, 93, 13, 14.
Crossley, 109, 133; pl. 87, 126.
Pevsner, *Hampshire*, 679.

79. *John Hall*

1529

Shorne, Kent.

This is a palimpsest on the back of the brass to Edmund Page, d. 1550. It shows an engraving of Christ in Judgement on a rainbow with a sword at his head and a starry sky behind. In the foreground is a grassy mound on which is a shrouded figure, scrolls and the shield of the staple of Calais. In the right hand lower corner is the kneeling figure of a lady and a scroll. There is also a portion of a shield (Hall quartering Mortimer). A smaller piece has English verses to John Hall and his wife Katherine, parents of the chronicler, Edward Hall. John desired to be buried in the hospital of St Thomas of Acres, London: this plate must have been part of the spoils of that hospital, granted to the Mercers' company in 1541.

Mill Stevenson, 258.

80. *Margaret Svanders*

1529

All Saints, Fulham, London.

A Flemish brass to the wife of Gerard Hornebolt, the painter. She was a native of Ghent. It is a lozenge-shaped plate with a demi-figure in a shroud on it, flanked by angels. There is an inscription below.

Macklin, 214,
Mill Stevenson, 299.

81. *Francis Yonge*

1533

Edmond, Shropshire.

A brass shows Yonge of Caynton in a shroud with his wife, Anne, who is in ordinary dress. Also shown are nine sons, five daughters, two shields of arms and one of the Passion. The figures are 2 feet, 6 inches long.

Macklin, 214,
Mill Stevenson, 428.

82. *Roger Rockley*

1534

Plate 46

Worsborough, West Yorkshire.

This is a crudely painted wooden double-decker tomb. The structure resembles bunk-beds, the top deck being supported by four corner-posts. Rockley is shown in armour on the top, his hands clasped in prayer. Below, the near skeletal

cadaver grins from its shroud, its hands crossed in front of the genitals.

Cohen, 193 (misnamed).
Pevsner, *Yorkshire, West Riding*, 559.

83. *John Claimond*

1537

Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

The first president of Bishop Fox (No.78)'s foundation, is commemorated in a brass, showing an emaciated cadaver in a shroud. Mill Stevenson considers that the brass was engraved c.1530. It bears twelve lines of Latin poetry and a mutilated marginal inscription. The verses were renewed in 1676, but the original plate survives on the wall of the ante-chapel.

Macklin, 214.
Mill Stevenson, 411.

84. *William Bradschawe*

1537

Wendover, Buckinghamshire.

Three of the nine children on this brass are shown in their shrouds, evidently having predeceased their parents. The entire family is shown kneeling, the father in civil dress, and is accompanied by a long genealogical table.

Mill Stevenson, 52.

85. *Elizabeth Rok*

1540

Penn, Buckinghamshire.

A brass of a female effigy in a shroud.

Macklin 214,
Mill Stevenson, 47.

86. *William Parkhouse*

1540

Exeter Cathedral, Devon.

Parkhouse is commemorated by a cadaver effigy in a recess in the wall of the north chancel aisle. The drapery of the shroud is very moulded, the lines of bones and sinews highly stylised, nonetheless the iconography is broadly that of most stone cadaver effigies. The top of the recess is finished in an arch of pendant vaulting.

Cohen, 193,
Crossley, 8,7,112,
Pevsner, *Devon*, 146.

87. *William Weston*

1540

St James, Clerkenwell, London.

The surviving stone cadaver effigy appears to be a fragment of a large canopied tomb, apparently of marble with twisted shafts. Richardson notes that the upper part of the tomb is supported by two counter-twisted columns. Sir William was the last Lord Prior of the Order of St John of Jerusalem.

The effigy conforms to the conventional iconography, with a finely carved face.

Pevsner, *London*,
Richardson MS,

88. *John Knighton*

1545

Bayford, Hertfordshire.

This is a palimpsest brass on the back of a figure in armour. It shows a portion of a large shrouded figure, believed by Mill Stevenson to have been the brass to Knighton and his wife.

Mill Stevenson, 180.

89. *Dame Catherine Sampson*

1546

Loddon, Norfolk.

This brass commemorates Dame Catherine with one of her husbands, either Sir Thomas Sampson, or John Blomeville. It shows two effigies in shrouds, one shield and the indents of three others.

Macklin, 214,
Mill Stevenson, 344.

Aldenham, Hertfordshire.

This is a small shroud brass commemorating a lady who died in childbed.

Macklin, 214.
Mill Stevenson, 178.

Shipton-under-Wychwood, Oxfordshire.

This rectangular brass plate, shows a recumbent effigy of a lady in a shroud, accompanied by twelve lines of English verse and one shield. It was engraved on the back of a confirmation of a grant, dated 1494, connected with the guild of St Mary, Aylesbury. Elizabeth Thame or Horne, to give her married name, is also commemorated on two brasses in Fairford Church, Gloucestershire, shown in ordinary dress with her husband. The verse here reads:

This picture presentythe to yore remembrance
The last semblytude of alle yore bewty and fame,
Also hit syngnefyethe the mortall chaunce
Of Elizabethe, daughtr and heyre of Thomas Tame,
Whiche sumtyme was the dere and louvyng wyffe
Of Edmunde Horne Esquyer dewryng all her liffe,
Whose mortall body now consumyd to duste,
Was layde here in grave as by nature ded hit muste,
In the yere of Chrystys incarnacyon
A thousande fyve hundryd forty and eyght,
The xv of August, her vertuus enclynacyon
[B]rought her to the place of the eternall lyght,

King, "Eight English Verses", 496.
Macklin, 215.
Mill Stevenson, 420.

Waddesdon, Buckinghamshire.

The shroud brass to the parson of this church also has an inscription of sixteen lines of English verse, which gives his name and date of death, claiming the he was,

Above the space of Forty yere,
Elect unto the First porcyon.

King, "Eight English Verses", 496,
Macklin, 214,
Mill Stevenson, 52.

Tewkesbury Abbey, Gloucestershire.

This tomb appears to have been designed as a double-decker cadaver tomb, but the only effigy is the cadaver itself, which is located currently on the top deck. The effigy is unusual in that in addition to the conventional iconography, it has various vermin sculpted all over it, including worms, a toad and a beetle. It rests on a slab, supported by a pierced screen in the pattern of three crosses with central bosses which used to represent the instruments of the passion. Above the body is a huge ogee arch, with a pendant below it, all heavily foliated.

Although the tomb is conventionally attributed to John Wakeman, he was not buried in Tewkesbury. When the Abbey of Tewkesbury of which he was abbot was dissolved, he became Bishop of Gloucester, and was ultimately buried at

Forthampton. If the cadaver tomb is connected with him, it is certainly a cenotaph. The opinion of many art historians, however, seems to be that the conventional attribution must be wrong, as the sculptural style and detailing of the Tewkesbury tomb belong to a period a hundred years before Wakeman's death. The connection of the tomb, if any, with Wakeman is very hard to verify, given the confused state of many of the Tewkesbury monuments. The tomb is undoubtedly very interesting purely from an iconographic point of view, and will be discussed at length below.

Apperson, "Monumental Skeletons", 218.
Cohen, 67n, 78n, 193.
Lawson, "Cadaver Effigies: the Portrait as Prediction", 521.
Massé, *Tewksbury and Deerhurst*, 95.
Pevsner, *Gloucestershire and the Vale and Forest of Dean*, 367.
Stone, 214.

94. *Paul Bush*

1554

Bristol Cathedral, Gloucestershire.

This cadaver tomb commemorates the first bishop of Bristol. The effigy lies under a flat canopy, supported by corner columns, on a table tomb. It is badly damaged, having no feet, but seems to have been crudely carved in the first place, as it is abnormally flat. The hair is tonsured and there is no shroud, only a loin-cloth. A crozier, its head broken off, lies beside the bishop, and his head rests on a

mitre on which there are still traces of paint. The sides of the tomb and canopy are covered with inscriptions.

Cohen, 41n., 193.
Lawson, "Cadaver Effigies", 522.
Richardson MS.

95. *Stephen Gardiner*

1555

Winchester Cathedral, Hampshire.

A chantry chapel built like a stone cage, contains the headless cadaver effigy which commemorates the bishop. Whereas the tracery is of the standard Perpendicular "Y" type of many contemporary chantries of this type, some of the upper elements are of early Renaissance design. The chapel was probably built around 1540. Gardiner was reinstated by Mary Tudor after he had crowned her. His own chantry was suppressed in his lifetime.

Cohen, 41n., 67n., 193.
Crossley, 115.
Cook, *Medieval Chantries and Chantry Chapels*, 63, 93.
Pevsner, *Hampshire*, 679-80.

96. *Edward Barnewell*

1557

Cransley, Northamptonshire.

This is a badly worn incised slab showing a skeleton. Although Barnewell did not die until 1603, this appears to have been laid down on the death of his first wife, Helen.

Greenhill, II, 26.
Pevsner, *Northamptonshire*, 165.

Salisbury Cathedral, Wiltshire.

Bennet was precentor of Salisbury and is commemorated by a single cadaver effigy on a table tomb in a recess surmounted by a four-centred panelled arch. The side of the chest is decorated with cusped quatrefoils in which there are five coats of arms. The effigy lies at the foot of a cross. A kneeling representation and inscription were once painted on the back wall of the recess. There are the remains of a painting of the Crucifixion above the effigy's feet on the wall. Above the entire tomb was carved, *Misericordes Domini, In Eternum Cantabo*. The effigy itself is rather crudely carved and lies on its open knotted shroud and rolled-up mat.

Cohen, 111, 193.
Pevsner, *Wiltshire*, 374.
Stone, 214.

Chicheley, Buckinghamshire.

Three tombs in this church have been attributed to Cave. There are two brasses, one a rectangular plate showing a skeleton recumbent in a shroud, with an inscription in Latin and English verse and a shield. This is mounted on the wall

near another brass of a man in armour with his family, which has been positively identified as Cave's.
Macklin, 215,
Mill Stevenson, 36.

99. The same.

Also in the parish church at Chicheley is a stone cadaver tomb which has been attributed to Cave. The effigy is laid on a banded sarcophagus and flanked by statuettes. The background above it is filled with the kneeling figures of his two sons and six daughters. It seems improbable that the same man should have three tombs, especially when he asks, in his very elaborate will, to be buried "without any sumptuous pompe". He requires a "grave stone of no greate value", although he does request a picture of death above his tomb.

K.A. Esdaile, "The Renaissance Monuments of Buckinghamshire", *Records of Buckinghamshire*, XV (1947-52), 32-45,
Richardson MS.PCC, Prob, 11/1, 7-8 Welles.

Undated Medieval Cadaver Tombs: alphabetical by surname.

100. *Abbot*, Hitchin, Hertfordshire:
shroud brass.
101. *Boyvill*, Burton, Northamptonshire:
shroud brass.
102. *Briggs*, Wiveton, Norfolk:
shrouded skeleton brass (c.1540).
103. *Cole*, Wilburton, Cambridgeshire:
lost skeleton brass.
104. *Cossale*, Cray, Kent:
lost shroud brass.
105. *Fitzherbert*, Norbury, Derbyshire:
female shroud incised slab.
106. *Folijambe*, Chesterfield, Derbyshire:
shrouded cadaver effigy and Death.
107. *Fyssher*, Wigston's Hospital, Leicester:
shroud brass.
108. *Grantham*, Wooburn, Buckinghamshire:
shroud brass, Trinity, English verse, shields etc.
109. *Hampton*, Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire:
shroud brass.
110. *Hobson*, Firenze, Norfolk:
shroud brass.
111. *Humfre*, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire:
palimpsest shroud brass.

112. *Legge*, Fransham Great, Norfolk:
shroud brass.
113. *Lockton*, Sawston, Cambridgeshire:
shroud brass.
114. *Myddleton*, Bietham, Cumbria:
female shrouded effigy on altar tomb.
115. *Oldfield*, Stifford, Essex:
shroud brass holding heart.
116. *Pareys*, Hildersham, Cambridgeshire:
shrouded skeleton brass.
117. *Pethyn*, Lytchett Maltravers, Dorset:
shroud brass.
118. *Reynes*, Clifton Reynes, Buckinghamshire:
shroud brass.

Unidentified Medieval Cadaver Tombs: alphabetical by
location.

119. Annesley, Nottinghamshire: alabaster cadaver.
120. Baldock, Hertfordshire: shroud brass.
121. Biddenham, Bedfordshire: shroud brass.
122. Brentwood, Essex: shroud brass, holding heart.
123. Cheam, Surrey: palimpsest shroud brass.
124. Denton, Suffolk: shroud tomb (Tudor).
125. Dursley, Gloucestershire: headless stone cadaver.
126. Erith, Kent: shroud brass.

127. Feniton, Devon: stone cadaver.
128. Fincham, Norfolk: shroud brass.
129. Handsworth, Warwickshire: sandstone double-decker.
- 130-32. Harefield, Middlesex: 3 palimpsest shroud brasses.
133. Hemingbrough, North Yorkshire: stone cadaver.
134. Hitchin, Hertfordshire: shroud brass.
135. Hughenden, Buckinghamshire: stone cadaver with soul
(Plate 48).
136. Keyston, Huntingdonshire: oak cadaver.
137. Lowestoft, Suffolk: skeleton brass.
138. Mosely, Surrey: shroud brass.
139. Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear: shroud incised slab.
140. North Curry, Somerset: stone cadaver on chest.
141. North Hill, Cornwall: shroud incised slab.
142. Peington, Devon: stone cadaver.
143. Sedgfield, Co. Durham: skeleton brass (Plate 49).
144. Southwark Cathedral, London: stone cadaver.
145. Stalbridge, Dorset: stone cadaver on chest.
146. Toddington, Bedfordshire: shroud brass (fragment).
147. Weybridge, Surrey: skeleton brass.
148. York Minster, York: stone cadaver*.
- In addition Mill Stevenson knew of six unidentified shroud
brasses in private hands (149-154).

*See Appendix 2.

Chapter III

THE CADAVER TOMB IN FIFTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND:

THEOLOGICAL AND LITERARY BACKGROUND

The surviving evidence for the use of the corpse image on tombs in England in the fifteenth century seems to indicate that its employment was both selective and diverse, and, accordingly, that no single explanation, whether empirical or philosophical, for its limited popularity is likely to be adequate. The cadaver tomb should, therefore, be treated as a matter of individual taste. Nonetheless, certain religious commonplaces characterise the society in which these tastes developed, matters of fundamental spiritual concern: the perceived function of any elaborate memorial for the dead demands examination in the whole context of the rites surrounding death, the beliefs which gave rise to them, and the literary reflections of those beliefs. There is still a place for the consideration of the cadaver tomb as genre in a spiritual context, but the diffuse nature of the surviving evidence also suggests that it should be set against mainstream late medieval spirituality rather than any new, esoteric or peripheral development in religious practices or beliefs.

In the rite of Sarum use, even the funeral of an ordinary lay person was an elaborate affair. If the deceased had been in holy orders, or was of high secular rank, the

procedure became positively theatrical'. Normally the body was first washed, then wrapped in a winding sheet. Thereafter it was laid on a bier and carried to church in a procession which generally included a boy bearing holy water, a cross-bearer, acolytes with tapers, a sexton ringing a hand bell, clerks and parish priest. Psalms were sung, and when the corpse reached its destination in the chancel or at the rood loft door, depending again upon rank, feet to the high altar, it was surrounded by family and mourners bearing tapers. Mass was said. Then the chief celebrant, before offering up the host, went into the churchyard and made the sign of the cross over the chosen site of the grave, sprinkling it with holy water. He then took a spade and marked out the length and breadth of the grave with it in the form of a cross, leaving the rest to the grave-digger. After the completion of mass, the burial service was said. The celebrant sprinkled the corpse with holy water, everyone said a paternoster, then the corpse was taken outside and all stood

1. It is not here appropriate to enter into lengthy descriptions of royal funeral ceremonies, which are well-documented, e.g.:
W.H St John Hope, "On the Funeral Effigies of the Kings and Queens of England, with special reference to those in the Abbey Church of Westminster", *Archaeologia*, 60:2 (1907), 518-65.
Ralph E. Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony in Renaissance France* (Geneva, 1960).
BL MS Additional 45131, Wriothsley Collections, f126v and following describes the funeral of Henry VII.
A connection between the French royal ceremony and the iconography of the double tomb has been suggested in Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, discussed in Ch. I above.

around while the grave was dug singing psalms. After a further collect, blessing and censuring, the corpse was lowered into the grave to another psalm. Then there was another collect and blessing before the priest laid a parchment scroll of absolution on the corpse's breast. There ensued more sprinkling and censuring, psalm and prayer, before the priest strewed the corpse with earth in the shape of the cross. The grave was filled up to the accompaniment of a further psalm and finally everyone processed back to church with more psalms, collects and prayers.'

Such complicated procedure attendant upon the funeral of an ordinary member of the laity was not a new departure; elaborate funerals and their correlative, elaborate or imposing tombs, played a part in church life from the beginnings of Western Christianity. Yet the fathers of that church paradoxically appear to have concurred in their tendency to disparage funeral pomp and other celebrations of the mortal remains, including the tomb. St Augustine's opinions are to be discovered scattered throughout his writings, but notably in the *De Cura Pro Mortuis Gerenda ad Paulinum*². The thrust of his opinion is unequivocally voiced in startlingly modern terms,

1. Daniel Rock, *The Church of Our Fathers as seen in St Osmund's Rite for the Cathedral of Salisbury*, 4 vols ed., G.W. Hart and W.H. Frere (London, 1905), II, 378-88.
2. Migne, *P.L.*, XL, cols 591-610.

Proinde ista omnia, id est, curatio funeris, conditio sepultura, pompa exsequiarum, magis sunt vivorum solatia, quam subsidia mortuorum. Si aliquid prodest impio sepultura pretiosa, oberit pro vilis aut nulla, Praclaras exsequias in conspectu hominum purpurato illi diviti turba exhibuit famulorum; sed multo clariores in conspectu Domini ulceroso illi pauperi ministerium praebuit Angelorum; quicum non extulerunt in marmoreum tumulum, sed in Abrahae gremium sustulerunt, (Luc. VI, 19-22), Cap. II, Col. 594.

In similar vein he goes on to discuss burial practice:

Quod si verum est, profecto etiam provisos sepeliendis corporibus apud memorias sanctorum locus, bonae affectionis humanae est erga funera suorum; quoniam si nonnulla religio est ut sepeliantur, non potest nulla esse quando ubi sepeliantur attenditur. Sed cum talia vivorum solatia requiruntur, quibus eorum pius insuavis animus appareat, non video quae sunt adjumenta mortuorum, nisi ad hoc ut dum recolunt ubi sint posita eorum quos diligunt corpora, eisdem sanctis illos tanquam patronis susceptos apud Dominum adjuvandos orando commendent. Quod quidem facere possent, etiamsi talibus locis eos humare non possent. Sed non ob aliud vel Memoriae vel Monumenta dicuntur ea quae insignita fiunt sepulcra mortuorum, nisi quia eos qui viventium oculis morte subtracti sunt, ne oblivione etiam cordibus subtrahantur, in memoriam revocant, et admonendo faciunt cogitari; nam et Memoriae nomen id apertissime ostendit, et Monumentum eo quod moneat mentem, id est, admoneat, nuncupatur...

Further,

Verum et si aliqua necessitas vel humari corpora, vel in talibus locis humari nulla data facultate permittat, non sunt praetermittendae supplicationes pro spiritibus mortuorum; quas faciendas pro omnibus in christiana et catholica societate defunctis etiam tacitis nominibus eorum sub generali commemoratione suscepit Ecclesia; ut quibus ad ista desunt parentes, aut filii, aut quicumque cognati vel amici, ab una eis exhibeantur pia matre communi. Si autem deessent istae supplicationes, quae fiunt recta fide ac pietate pro mortuis, puto quod nihil prodesset spiritibus eorum quamlibet in locis sanctis exanimata corpora ponerentur, (Cap. 4, Col. 596)

Similar attitudes are displayed in the *City of God*, where the body of the deceased is compared to a garment or ring, valued in as far as its owner was valued, but not sentient of itself except in so far as it will be required again at the final resurrection.¹ And in the *Confessions*, when St Augustine tells of the death of Monica, his mother, he applauds her for ignoring the fate of her body when she knew that death was close, in favour of making provision for prayers for her soul².

Centuries later, Peter Lombard³, in the fourth book of his influential *Sentences* corroborates St Augustine's view:

De pompis vero exequiarum, idem August. ita dicit; Pompa... mortuorum. Quia si aliquid prodest impio sepulcra pretiosa, oberit pio vilis, vel nulla. Praclarus exequias in conspectu hominum purparato illi diviti exhibuit turba famulorum; sed multo clariores in conspectu Domini, ulceroso illi pauperi ministerium exhibuit angelorum, qui eum extulerunt non in marmoreum tumulum, sed in Abrahæ gremium. Sit tamen cura mortuos sepeliendi, et sepulcra construendi, quia hæc in Scripturis sanctis inter bona opera deputata sunt; nec solum in corporibus patriarcharum aliorumque sanctorum, sed etiam in ipsius Domini corpore qui ista fecerunt, laudati sunt. Impleant igitur homines erga suos officia postremi muneris, et sui humani lenimenta moeroris. Verum illa quae adjuvant spiritus defunctorum, scilicet oblationes, orationes, multo observantius procurent.

1. R.V.G. Tasker, ed., *The City of God; St Augustine*, translated by J. Healey, (London, 1945), I, Ch. XII, *passim*.
2. Albert C. Outler, ed., *Augustine: Confessions and Enchiridion* (London, 1955), 200.
3. Migne, *P.L.*, CLXXXII, cols 948-49.

Both St Augustine and Peter Lombard clearly held that the rich, who have special provisions made at their demise, benefit no more from these than do the poor from the general prayers of the church. Exactly this view is to be found restated, in the period of the cadaver tomb itself, in the writings of Wycliffe and illustrated in the wills of those identified as "Lollard" Knights by Henry Knighton and Thomas Walsingham¹. The characteristic expression of the testaments of the knights are summarised by McFarlane as²,

- a) Extravagant emphasis upon the testator's own unworthiness,
- b) Strongly contemptuous language towards the body, and
- c) Strict injunctions against funeral pomp.

In practice, however, most late medieval Englishmen and Englishwomen never did wholeheartedly follow these ideals; and both funeral and tomb could be very grand affairs. Doubtless a fundamental social and psychological need underlies the enduring phenomenon of celebrating the no longer sentient corpse, connected as Augustine suggested with the psychological needs of the mourners themselves. Beyond that, however, there are more salient and specific explanations connected with two areas of doctrinal belief,

1. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights*, 207-20.
2. *Ibid.*, 210.

those concerning both the accepted geography of the afterlife and man's later need for his body at the final resurrection.

To take the last of these issues first, it is evident that a great deal of intellectual energy was expended throughout Latin Christendom in considering the finer points of bodily resurrection. Peter Lombard again expresses the major points of the debate succinctly¹,

art.2,..ita Deus, mirabiliter atque ineffabiliter artifex, de toto quo caro nostra extiterat eam mirabili celeritate restituet...

Even our missing hair and finger-nails will be suitably restored,

art.3Resurgent ergo sanctorum corpora sine ullo vitio, sine ulla deformitate, sicut sine ulla corruptione, onere, difficultate; in quibus tanta facilitas, quanta felicitas erit; propter quod et spiritualia dicta sunt, cum procul dubio corpora sint futura, non spiritus. Ex his apparet quod una erit aetas omnium resurgentium, scilicet juvenilis, staturo vero, diverso scilicet, quam quisque habuerat in juvenili aetate, vel erat habiturus, si ante est defunctus. Nec de substantia de qua hominis caro creatur, aliquid peribit; sed omnium particularum ante dispersum collectione redintegrabitur naturalis substantia corporis. Sanctorum quoque corpora sine omni vitio fulgida sicut sol, resurgent, praecisis cunctis deformitatibus quas hic habuerint.

art.4Si mali tunc habeant quas hic habuerint deformitates. De reprobis autem quaeri solet an cum deformitatibus hic habitis resurgant. Hoc autem August. non asserit, sed dubium relinquit, ita inquiens, in Ench. c.2:Quicumque ab illa perditionis massa quae per Adam facta est, non liberantur per Christum, resurgent quidem etiam ipsi, unusquisque cum sua carne, sed ut cum diabolo ejusque angelis puniantur. Utrum vero ipsi cum vitiis et

1. Migne, P.L., CLXXXII, col.946.

*deformatibus suorum corporum resurgant, quaecumque in
eis gesta sunt, inquirendo laborare quid opus est? Non
enim fatigare nos debet incerta eorum habitudo vel
pulchritudo, quorum erit certa et sempiterna damnatio.
Ecce non definit an tunc habeant deformatatis quas hic
habuerunt reproborum corpora,*

Without going into further ingenious arguments about the fate of abortions, deformed people, those eaten and digested by wild beasts and other problems, one can detect in this persistent debate that the most urgent anxiety about the disposition of the body related more to its future destiny than its present or past concerns. For instance the placing of the corpse in consecrated ground with the feet invariably pointing east was a way of ensuring that the deceased could rise on Judgement Day facing his or her maker, sometimes wearing shoes¹. Archaeologists discovered that the Norman rebuilders of Winchester Cathedral carefully lined up Saxon skulls in the graveyard facing east, each with a tidy representative share of available bones². The burial of persons of higher social status within the chancel of the church, as near the high altar as possible, may also be seen to reflect a desire that the lord be there to greet Christ on behalf of his feudally ordered community on the last day.³ By the same token, the treatment of the corpses of those guilty of treason, heresy and other unspeakable

1. R.C. Finucane, "Sacred Corpse, Profane Carrion: Social Ideals and Death Rituals in the Later Middle Ages", *Mirrors of Mortality: Studies in the Social History of Death*, ed. J. Whaley (London, 1981), 40-60, 43.
2. *Ibid.*, 46.
3. *Ibid.*, 43.

crimes of the order conceived to have a spiritual dimension, were designed to make their ultimate resurrection as difficult as possible. This was attained by the simple measure of burning the offender's bones, or by dismemberment of the body, the parts then being dispatched to various far-flung destinations¹. Wycliffe's bones were burnt and then thrown into the River Swift under the supervision of Richard Fleming, who was himself later commemorated in a cadaver tomb². Paradoxically, royalty too was sometimes dismembered, but care seems to have been taken in these instances to keep the entire skeleton together, this presumably being the enduring framework which was to be clothed with flesh anew.

If the funeral rite and the manner of entombment reflected beliefs in the later need for the body on the last day, the rite had a further function, which it shared specifically with the tomb as artefact, concerning the manner in which the soul of the deceased was believed to pass the intervening millenia. The concept of purgatory probably more than any other single factor is widely recognised to have influenced the specific nature and perceived function of the rites connected with death. In the passage quoted above

1. Ibid., 50-58.
2. *DNB* 1, 705.

from St Augustine's *De Cura Pro Mortuis*, it is clear that he urged the belief that the accident of material wealth, enabling the deceased to make elaborate provision for commemorative masses and the trappings designed to remind all and sundry to perform such rites in perpetuity, ought not to effect the passage of the soul through purgatory. By the time that cadaver tombs were being constructed, however, the single most evident motive for the construction of striking tombs and for the conduct of elaborate rituals was precisely in order to take full advantage of one's abilities to buy assistance with the purgatorial process. This ideological shift, undoubtedly gradual, is reflected in the writings of St Thomas Aquinas.

According to St Thomas, all which excites the attention of the onlookers, both at the funeral ceremony and the tomb, to offer prayers for the deceased is profitable to the soul. Similarly charitable bequests to the church represent posthumous alms-giving which is also of use. Consequently the rich are greatly advantaged over the poor if they husband their wealth wisely at death. The question is treated in some detail in the *Supplementum* to the *Summa Theologica*¹. He begins in quæstio 71 by considering the

1. *The Summa Theologica of St Thomas Aquinas: Third Part (Supplement) qq. LXIX - LXXXVI (20)*, trans., The Fathers of the English Dominican Province (London, 1921), 39 - 73. Since the summary of Aquinas's argument is drawn sequentially from this section, individual points are not fully footnoted, but the reference according to question and article is entered in the body of the text.

manner in which man obtains the state of bliss. In this he presents the standard Augustinian balance between merit and prayer, merit relying upon justice, prayer upon mercy (art. 1), It is in the latter that the actions of others can avail specifically, although all meritorious actions benefit all Christians to some degree as all are members of the one body of the church. On the subject of whether the dead can be assisted by the works of the living (art.2), St Thomas asserts that although the living cannot overturn a state of unhappiness altogether in the dead, they can assist the diminution of punishment. What's more, (art.4) such suffrages, since they are acts of meritorious charity, are of profit still more to the doer. Those who are in hell (art.5) cannot have their punishment diminished by the prayers of the living, as it is eternal, but suffrages offered on their behalf can reduce anguish at that punishment, as they derive comfort from the compassion of another Christian soul. The legendary pardoning of Trajan through the prayers of St Gregory is carefully established to have been an exceptional and miraculous case of resuscitation deriving from the exceptional merit of the latter. According to similar principles, the prayers of the living cannot avail the unbaptised in limbo, as this would involve a change of state (art.7), nor the saints in heaven, for they do not need them anyway (art.8).

St Thomas is emphatic on one point, however, which is the degree to which the burial service is of profit to the dead (art.11). Fundamentally, any devotional act is pleasing to God. Augustine argued too that the ancients cared for their dead, so the benefit of funeral observances has time-honoured efficaciousness. The burial of the dead is also reckoned among the acts of mercy, the authority for this is not in the primary text in Matthew XV, 34-41, but in Tobias, the accepted source of the seventh act of mercy. According to St Thomas, clearly no act of mercy would have been sanctioned were it futile.

In response to Augustine's assertion, however, that the burial service does not avail salvation, he is particularly adamant:

I answer that, We have recourse to burial for the sake of both the living and the dead, For the sake of the living, lest their eyes be revolted by the disfigurement of the corpse, and their bodies be infected by the stench, and this as regards the body. But it profits the living also spiritually inasmuch as our belief in the resurrection is confirmed thereby. It profits the dead insofar as one bears the dead in mind and prays for them through looking on their burial place, wherefore a monument takes its name from remembrance, for a monument is something that recalls the mind (*monens mentem*), as Augustine observes...It was, however, a pagan error that burial was profitable to the dead by procuring rest for his soul; for they believed that the soul could not be at rest until the body was buried, which is altogether ridiculous and absurd.

That moreover, burial in a sacred place profits the dead does not result from the action done, but rather from the action itself of the doer; when, to wit, the dead person himself, or another, arranges for his body to be buried in a sacred place, and commends him to the patronage of some saint, by whose prayers we must believe he is assisted, as well as to the suffrages of those who serve the holy place, and pray more frequently and more specially for those who are buried in their midst. But such things as are done for the display of the obsequies are profitable to the living, as being a consolation to them; and yet they can also profit the dead, not directly but indirectly, in so far as men are aroused to pity thereby and consequently to pray, or in so far as the outlay on the burial brings either assistance to the poor or adornment to the church; for it is in this sense that the burial of the dead is reckoned among the works of mercy.

This being established, Aquinas grapples with some of the finer points. Because charity makes all goods common (art.12), suffrages avail a person full of charity regardless of whether they are offered for him. But as they derive initial value only from their being intentionally applied to another Christian soul, they must chiefly avail the person for whom they are offered in the first instance,

Nothing hinders the rich from being in some respects better off than the poor, for instance as regards the expiation of their punishment (my italics). But this is as nothing in comparison with the kingdom of heaven, where the poor are shown to be better off...

Moreover, (art.13) although charity is not diminished by being offered for many instead of one, charity not being quantifiable, but infinite, the value of suffrage offered for one in particular avails him more, being undivided. Finally it is reasoned that those who partake of special as well as general suffrages are availed more than they would

be by general suffrages alone; but though the rich man receives assistance from more sources than the poor, a person for whom special suffrages are offered obtains a more speedy *but not a more complete* release, because each will finally be released from all punishment. What of any surplus suffrages offered? Inevitably God's mercy will grant these to others, for whom none have been offered, should they need them.

With Aquinas, then the intellectual stage is set for the elaborate funeral and tomb. Also, and more particularly, the cadaver effigy might almost be interpreted as a logical extension of much of what Aquinas advocated. Not only does it reconcile the desire for a striking tomb with a certain spiritual sensitivity to the necessary humility; it also, in its demonstrable, if subsidiary, function, as a *memento mori* represents one of those acts of charity about which St Thomas writes. It represents, therefore, the optimum formula for the assistance of the soul of the deceased - by its charitable function it attracts merit, by its visually striking and affective properties it attracts the prayers of others. Compositionally complex, it manages to be an expression of spiritual humility, yet it still represents a socially fitting manner of commemorating a noble or prelate, equally important to the pseudo-political decorum of the

maintenance of public order, which was, of course, conceived as theocentric.

In what follows, a variety of examples will be introduced to explain the complex iconography of the varied group of tombs which are generally given the common classification "cadaver". It is, however, important at this stage to establish that the range of design is not incompatible with scholastic orthodoxy. Moreover, when this type of design first made its appearance in England, it was not only at a comparatively late stage of the west European fashion for the macabre, but seems to have been unconnected with more extreme forms of reformist asceticism; it was most often used by those of orthodox leaning and secular interest, from whose influence it seems to have spread without adverse or controversial response. Its appearance in post-plague Europe need not be completely discounted, but the post-plague vogue for the macabre may judiciously be reduced to the status of catalyst in the emergence of a range of tomb designs whose complex iconographic possibilities give fitting expression to orthodox, mainstream theological thought.

The suggestion that there is no one consistent iconography of the corpse tomb, but a varied and complex semiotic range, combines with respectable patristic justification for such monuments to cast suspicion on any study which insists on seeing the tombs as part of some exclusively late-medieval explosion of macabre imagery. In the field of comparative study across the border between visual and literary media, such treatments have proved peculiarly seductive, but are part of a concept of the "spirit-of-the-age" which does not bear too close inspection. In reconstructing the intellectual context of the cadaver tomb in England, prior to exploring the social context in which it was adopted, it does not, therefore, seem appropriate to rehearse a survey of the *ars moriendi* and related *memento mori* material. The very existence of the cadaver tomb has been invoked to substantiate the "literature of mortality" and *vice versa* too often in the past.

Leaving aside for the present the dubious proposition that the cadaver tomb was didactic in intent in any case, an inspection of the so-called related literature shows that its development too not only predates the Black Death and religious discontent of the fourteenth century, but manifested itself in the early Middle English period in forms which were to remain largely unchanged into the fifteenth century.

At the end of the thirteenth century many manuscripts contain the short lyric which reminds its reader that',

Nis non so strong, ne sterk, ne kene
pat may ago depes wyper blench
Yung and olde, briht and schene
All he ryuep on o streng.

The narrator goes on to remind man that he is "wurmes fode", comparing the turning of joy to woe to "feyr weder turnep ofte into reyne". The dating of lyric verse is always difficult, but when such material occurs in major compendia like the fourteenth century Thornton and Vernon Manuscripts², it may safely be assumed that their origin is earlier.

Rosemary Woolf in her study of the English lyrics on death³, found direct transmission from a variety of ancient sources into vernacular verse. For the lyric verses which use the diagnostic signs of approaching death for an admonitory purpose, she suggested a medical source in Anglo-Latin texts of the eleventh and twelfth centuries based on the *Prognosticon* of Hippocrates⁴:

1. J. Hall, ed., *Early Middle English*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1920), I, 29.
2. G.G. Perry, ed., *Religious Pieces in Prose and Verse from R. Thornton's MS*, EETS, o.s. 26 (1867), e.g. 80; C. Horstmann and F.J. Furnivall, eds., *Minor Poems of the Vernon MS*, 2 vols, EETS, o.s. 98 and 117 (1892 and 1901), e.g., II, 443.
3. Rosemary Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1968), III, "Lyrics on Death", 67-113.
4. *Ibid.*, 79.

To the Middle Ages this would almost certainly not have seemed a substantial rerooting of the subject; there would be no reason why symptoms, scientifically observed by a physician, should not also serve as a moral warning,

Similarly, of the lyrics which deal in the smallness and poverty of the grave contrasted with the luxuries of this world, she said¹,

The theme itself is an ancient one, and can be found in the homilies of the Eastern Church, where most of the death themes begin,

The English vernacular homiletic tradition itself presents a complementary impression of a continuum. Dramatising the voice from the tomb, one twelfth century homilist wrote²,

...ic was swylc þu nu eart 7 3yt þu wurd erst swilc ic
nu eom...Geseoh mine ban 7 mi dust 7 forlat pine yfele
lustas,

Again, the horrors of the tomb were set against the joys of the heavenly kingdom in order to induce penance in the audience.

The more specialised *ars moriendi* also derive from pre-medieval sources, in that the very liturgy of the burial service has always contained elements laying emphasis on the balance between physical and spiritual death. The evolution

1. Ibid., 82.
2. A.D. Belfour, ed., *Twelfth Century Homilies in MS Bodley 343*, I, EETS, o.s. 137 (1962), 124-35.

of Christian didactic material which aims to instruct on how in this life to prepare for the eternal life is not a surprising accretion':

The mediaval instruction for a priest attending a dying person naturally aims at awaking in him a disposition of conformity to the will of God, and maintaining in him a penitential spirit.

Accounts survived of the exemplary deaths of the early saints as models for how to make a good death. The late medieval *ars moriendi* manuals, both Latin and vernacular, are commonly taken to derive from the section, "Coment on aprent a bien morir" in the late thirteenth-century *Le Somme le Roi* or *Le Somme des Vices et des Vertus*, which was translated as the *Ayenbite of Inwit*. These in their turn derive from the earlier *Mirreour du Monde*². When English writers contemporary with the first appearance of the cadaver tomb treated similar materials, therefore, they were drawing on established vernacular traditions, within the framework of Christian orthodoxy.

The construction of especially contemporary justifications for fifteenth-century uses of mortality themes are possibly redundant: specialist studies, as opposed to those dealing

1. F.M. Comper, ed., *The Book of the Craft of Dying and other Early English Tracts concerning Death* (London, 1917), xvii.
2. Sister Mary Catherine D' Connor, *The Art of Dying Well; The Development of the Ars Moriendi* (New York, 1966), 17-18n.

in the history of the ideas of an epoche, have again and again suggested that all such material gradually evolved in the manner of tropes and glosses to mainstream spiritual teaching. Equally, it is not surprising that similar materials adapted but retained their interest throughout the early humanist period. The *Daily Exercise and Experience of Death* of Richard Whitford, Brigittine monk at Syon and friend of Sir Thomas More, has only recently come to scholarly attention¹. In it, the author diverges from the Augustinian commonplaces which characterise the earlier treatises to attend to the natural responses of humans facing death, but it broadly belongs to the same family of writings. More loosely connected, but nonetheless relevant, is the treatise on *The Four Last Things*² by Thomas More himself, in which man's condition is seen,

...as condemned folk and remediles, in this prison of the yerth we driue forth a while, some bounden to a poste, some wandring abrode, some in the dungeon, some in the vpper ward, some bylding them bowers and making palaces in the prison, some weping, some laughing, some laboring, some playing, some singing, some chidinge, some fighting, no man almoste remembringe in what case he standeth, till that sodeynlye nothyng lesse loking for, yong, old, pore and ryche, mery and sad, prince, page, pope and pore soul priest, now one, now other, sometimes a gret rable at once, without order, without respect of age or of estate, all striped

1. M.A.M. Collins, "A Little Known 'Art of Dying' by a Brigittine of Syon; *A Daily Exercise and Experience of Death* by Richard Whitford", *Dies Illa: Death in the Middle Ages*, Vinaver Studies in French I, ed., Jane H.M. Taylor (Manchester, 1984), 179-193.
2. William Rastell, ed., *The Workes of Sir Thomas More Knyght, Sometyme Lorde Chauncellor of England, Wrytten by Him in the Englysh Tonge* (London, 1557), 75; Alistair Fox, *Thomas More: History and Providence* (Oxford, 1982), 101.

stark naked and shifted out in a shete, bee put to deth
in diuers wise in some corner of the same prison, and
euen ther thrown in an hole, and ether wormes eat him
vnderground or crowes aboue,

Even if this work is seen as the most spiritually reactionary of the author's output¹, its very existence stands as an important testimony to the tenacity and ubiquity of the Christian "literature of death". In short, a survey of the whole generality of such literature in the Middle Ages can be of little usefulness in explaining the apparently sudden appearance of the cadaver tomb. If it is to be understood at all in terms of intellectual history, a far greater degree of specificity is necessary.

There is one literary work which bears a sufficiently intimate physical relationship with one type of cadaver tomb to qualify as more than a coheir of some altogether nebulous "spirit of the age". This is the poem, *Disputacion Betwyx the Body and Worms*² and an analysis of the poem greatly extends the range of possible iconographic interpretation of the tombs. The manuscript in which the poem occurs is itself often cited as an example of the fifteenth century vogue for the macabre. In addition to the illustration related to the double tomb which occurs on f32v, the MS also contains illustrated materials about the

1. Ibid., 4, 104-07.

2. London, B.L. MS Additional 37049, f.32.

ages of man, f28v - 29r, a craft of dying, f38v - 43v, and an item in which the three estates are shown contemplating their tombs, f35v - 36r. Another mortality illustration on f.87r of the MS shows a tomb of an emperor, moved aside to reveal the corpse beneath it¹,

The drawing illustrates a story ascribed to the *Speculum Historiale* of Vincent of Beauvais, where the son of the emperor on being reproached by his father's steward, and being warned that as his father now is so will he be; has his father's tomb opened and conducts a dialogue with the corpse, the moral of which is expressed in the couplet:

Fader sum tyme what was thou?
Swylk son I was as thou nowe.

In their full context, however, these amount to the due proportion given to the subject of death in a manual of popular spirituality, which also contains accounts of the Fall of man, trees of sins and virtues, contemplative items on Christ's Passion and other stock materials. The manuscript is of Carthusian origin and hence ascetic in focus: sin and death were the common evocative heritage of all. That the MS is peppered with crude but lively illustrations of corpses does not make it in itself peculiarly morbid in context.

The conclusion that the MS actually illustrates a double tomb does not quite hold up, although the visual effect of

1. Francis Wormald, "Some Popular Miniatures and Their Rich Relations", *Miscellanea Pro Arte; Festschrift für Hermann Schnitzler* (Düsseldorf, 1975), 279-85, 284.

the illustration in question is clearly similar¹. A lady lies in a red robe, on a mensa tomb with crenellation round about. Below her there is a series of shields on the side of the tomb, and below that a series of open arches. The image of the verminous cadaver, however, is not placed like the lower effigy on a double tomb would be, that is behind the arches, but is below the whole tomb - more like a glimpse into the grave itself. That this is what is represented is corroborated by the description of the tomb in the poem (f33r):

Bysyde me I sawe a towmbe or sepulture
fful freshly forgyd depycte & depynthe
Compassed & made be newe coniecture
Of sondre armes pgr many a prynte
pe epytaf to loke was I not faynte
In gylt copyr with gold by schewing pan
With a freshe fygure fyne of a woman
Wele a tyred in pe most newe gyse
With long lokkes of pis disceysyng
In a slower I slept...

In other words, the narrator sees no lower effigy - the verminous corpse apparently on the lower deck in the illustration is the figure of his imagination in the ensuing dream.

The poem's main argument concerns pain that the dead body suffers from worms, the destruction of beauty in the tomb. The body of a noble lady of high birth is helplessly exposed

1. See Plate 50.

to worms. She calls on the worthies who protected her in life to look to her now, but the common fate of all, including the worthies, is pointed out to her. The worthies are compared with another catalogue of the messengers of the worms, the vermin which infested her in lifetime, including fleas and lice. All are placed within a dream vision setting, the narrator coming upon the tomb which triggers his dream whilst wandering round the countryside, escaping the plague and looking for somewhere to hear mass on a holy day. At first glance, the poem seems then to establish a highly conventional quest setting for a spiritual experience, with elements familiar from, for instance, both *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. It also, in taking the form of a debate within the dream, invites comparison with the common contemporary moralised debates between the body and the soul, one of which is also included in the MS at f82 *et seq.* The comparison should, however be made with caution, as it is the way in which this debate differs from the other that is of particular interest. It is also this area which accords well with the fashion of the cadaver tomb.

Unlike the situation in body and soul debates, the soul does not enter the discussion. The body in question here is not an abstract personification of the flesh, but is the

corpse of an individual with a personal past. As one commentator has expressed it¹,

...the body is also seen as an image and an expression of a uniquely unified personality and not as the traditional dualistic separation of body and soul.

Thus the poem's end is not concerned with the manner in which the body can jeopardise the soul, but with the individual's cautious expectation of eternal felicity. She learns in the course of the debate the way in which an initially horrifying proposition - the destruction by worms - has a rightness within God's providential plan. Thus the nature of the spiritual lesson lies in being reconciled with the worms, achieving harmony with the agents of bodily destruction²:

From this vantage point the deeper meaning of the role of the worms becomes clear, too. They can be understood in several ways; literally, as lowly and repulsive agents of physical destruction; allegorically, as sophisticated dialecticians who explain the nature of things and the meaning of life and death; morally as pangs of conscience, the workings of mind and soul meditating on the individual's fate; and anagogically, as symbols of the resurrection of the body and of eternal felicity.

The poem from the start calls on the dreamer and his audience or reader to consider what they are and how they relate to eternal realities.

1. Klaus Janofsky, "A View into the Grave: 'A Disputacion betwyx pe Body and Wormes' in British Museum MS Add. 37049", *Taius*, 1 (1974), 137-59, 140.
2. *Ibid.*, 144.

Because the poem ends in resolution and serene acceptance, it is significantly at odds with the satirically barbed *memento mori* which employs visual shock and horror to inspire repentance. Here the vermin derive their force in the composition not only from their realistic power to revolt; the poet/artist must be given credit for aiming at something more than a crudely emotional reaction. The mood is one of contemplation directed at the individual's acceptance of his or her true nature. As with the poem, so too, perhaps, with the tomb; the assumption that the representation of physical decomposition has an emotional range restricted to the horrifying is a product of a psychology more recent than that which corresponded with medieval spirituality. After all, a contemplative detachment which sees the grave as an intermediary resting place on the way to eternal bliss requires nothing more spiritually exotic than a literal belief in the words of the Office of the Dead:

I believe that my Redeemer liveth, and that in the last
day I shall rise from the earth. And in my flesh I
shall see my Saviour...

Man, the narrator, the passer-by, is just a pilgrim, the end of his pilgrimage the place in which the body waits for the final Resurrection, the tomb. The perspective on earthly life ideally achieved by such contemplation is precisely that which enables the individual to adopt the dismissive attitude to earthly power apparently attractive to certain Englishmen who were not of an ascetic or lunatic fringe.

Indeed, as will be seen later in this thesis, there is a preponderance of ecclesiastical administrators and their associates amongst the English cadaver tomb "trend setters". Although prominent in their respective fields and doubtless amongst the *more fashionable* in their taste in funerary monuments, none of those in question can be connected with Wycliffite or radical elements in the church. The fact that the epoche of the tombs is co-æval with that of later Lollardy is best treated as a coincidence. The inclination in the "Lollard will" to include a "macabre loathing of the flesh" is to be associated with these tombs only at a very superficial level.

It seems most likely that those who imported a particular tomb design did so for personal reasons, either because of the appeal of its iconography alone, or because they in some way identified their own situation with the commemorated, lending the iconography a memorable piquancy for them. On the other hand, an empirical, philosophically cynical approach to the sudden vogue for these tombs, still does not obviate the need to examine the ways in which the design, once received visually or socially, lodged itself in the intellectual apparatus of the

1. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights*, 213.

recipients as an eloquent and appropriate form of memorial. On the subject of the supposed late medieval vogue for the iconography under consideration, Francis Rapp¹ has put forward a more moderate view. In summary, he argues that the social, political and ecclesiastical climate of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, including plague but also the Hundred Years War, ecclesiastical schism and heresy, led to pressure for religious reform manifested by an upsurge in the production of visual aids to popular belief. It is tempting to place the moderate English ecclesiastical administrators, notably Archbishop Chichele, within this diluted "réveil", but the immediate post-conciliar period did not enjoy a monopoly on the desire to create a more competent pastoral clergy. Given certain elements of mainstream theological pedagogy, such as its teaching about penance and the nature of the afterlife, it is not necessary to introduce specific accidents of human history to explain the gradual growth in a variety of aesthetic materials to support the intellectual system. That the innovators should be men of intellect, self-conscious paternalist educators, spiritually utterly orthodox, is entirely appropriate in context. There is no need to see their innovation as event-dependent.

1. Francis Rapp, "La Réforme Religieuse et la Méditation de la Mort à la Fin du Moyen Âge", *La Mort au Moyen Âge*, Publications de la Société Savante d'Alsace (Strasbourg, 1975), 53-66.

Henry Chichele, the first reliably dated founder of a chantry chapel and double tomb is a case in point, as indeed is his follower, Bishop Thomas Bekynton, who forty years later, erected a similar tomb to himself in Wells Cathedral and daily contemplated it for the remainder of his life. Fortunately both prelates are relatively easy to place within the currents of intellectual life of their time. The spiritual values they espoused are relatively easy to recapture, as both shared an educational heritage which was one which profoundly influenced much of English public life in the late fourteenth and throughout the fifteenth centuries. Chichele and Bekynton were both Wykehamists, educated first at Winchester College and then at New College Oxford¹.

Indeed the hallmarks of the Wykehamist made him the perfect candidate for the cadaver tomb. The mixture of simple piety, and an accompanying abhorrence of speculative theology; a profound sense of administrative duty to the state from a position within the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and thereby, a deep involvement with political and diplomatic affairs leading to foreign travel, and a passionate belief in the importance of education, concretely expressed by the founding of educational institutions², all

1. See 199-212, 306-13, below.

2. Guy Fitch Lytle, "Wykehamist Culture" in *Pre-Reformation England*, , *Winchester College Sixth Centenary Essays*, ed., Roger Cusance (Oxford, 1982), 129-66, provides a useful and cautious synopsis of the dominant characteristics and personalities.

are relevant. It has been argued that all these characteristics led the Wykehamist to be England's proto-humanist, but again that label may be another red herring; the values and lifestyle of Henry Chichele may be as readily modelled on an orthodox fourteenth-century ideal such as is embodied in Walter Hilton's *Treatise on the Mixed Life* as upon any "new learning". Wykehamism as defined by Lytle may more safely be designated a personality cult inspired by its founder than a self-conscious philosophy.

Henry Chichele's long life was the living embodiment of this set of values². He combined a pragmatic approach to affairs of state with the unshaking application of a value system based on religious orthodoxy and loyalty. In the latter

1. Dorothy Jones, ed., "The Book that is called Mixed Life, which is drawn out between Active Life and Life Contemplative", *Minor Works of Walter Hilton* (London, 1929), Introduction and 1 - 72.

The third life that is mixed belongeth especially to men of Holy Church - as to prelates and other curates which have cure and sovereignty over other men for to teach and for to rule them..Also it belongeth generally to some temporal men, the which have sovereignty with much wealth of worldly goods, and have also as it were lordship over other men for to govern and sustain them, (16-17)

Manuscripts of this modest but very influential work proliferated during the century and a half after its composition. One manuscript, Lambeth MS 472, was owned by John Killum, grocer of London, who died in 1416 - one of his executors was Henry Chichele's brother Robert (xiii). It was particularly popular matter for transcripts in Carthusian communities. Hilton's prose style is thought to have influenced Sir Thomas More's *Four Last Things* (ix).

2. Jacob, *Archbishop Henry Chichele*, *passim*. The details of Chichele's biography will be dealt with in Chapter IV, 199-212 below.

area the major crisis of his life arose when his loyalty to king and country collided with that to the papal see. In the former, however, he combined an eagerness to see the faith disseminated by adequately educated clerics with a firm distaste for Lollardy. That so self-effacing and orthodox a man should have chosen to be innovative, even ostentatious in the matter of his funerary monument, and should have been copied by Bekynton, to a large degree cast of the same mould, testifies to a reading of the iconography of the cadaver which is adequately supported by Thomist thought. It becomes increasingly likely that the cadaver tomb was innovative not in the ideas expressed, but only in its particularly apt manner of plastic expression.

The view that the iconography of the cadaver was simply a new way to clothe and present what were essentially old ideas, central to mainstream scholastic theology, can be supported and refined by reference to a work of literature written by a Wykehamist, for a Wykehamist, the *Liber Apologeticus de Omni Statu Humanae Naturae*¹. This is a Latin play which was written by Thomas Chaundler, around

1. Cambridge, Trinity College MS R. 41. 5, contains, in addition to the play, assorted writings focussing upon the virtues of Wykeham, of Bekynton, of the see of Bath and Wells, and also includes four letters from Chaundler to Bekynton. See M.R. James, *The Chaundler Manuscripts* (London, 1916); Doris Enright-Clark Shoukri, ed. and trans., *Thomas Chaundler, Liber Apologeticus de Omni Statu Humanae Naturae; A Defence of Human Nature in Every State* (London and New York, 1974). Page references for quotations refer to this edition.

1460, for his mentor, Bishop Thomas Bekynton. Though a whole generation younger than Chichele, Bekynton being roughly equidistant in age between the two, Chaundler followed a characteristic career pattern, originating from comparatively modest family, and rising to be Chancellor of Oxford University and Notary of the Apostolic See. His writings which have survived testify not only to the cohesion of the Wykehamists as a self-defining intellectual group; but also, in the unctuousness of their sentiment directed at Bekynton, to the manner in which for a man of no family, the maintenance of this efficient "old-school network" was of paramount importance. Under the florid Latinity, which is simply the accepted social style, lies an ambitious man flattering his most important contact.

An analysis of the patterns of thought behind the *Liber Apologeticus* bears out this view as well as throwing some more light upon the intellectual climate into which the cadaver tomb was received. Unfortunately the design of Chaundler's own tomb in Hereford Cathedral does not survive, although the inscription was recorded, in Latin, sparse and utterly orthodox¹. Not at all the type of literature

1. Ibid., I, quoting Browne Willis, *Survey of Cathedrals*, II (London, 1742), 534;

*Orate Pro Anima prenobilis nuper cancellarii
Universitatis Oxoniensis ac huius ecclesie decani, qui
obiit in Crastino omnium Sanctorum circiter horam
quartam versus mane, Anno domini millesimo CCCCLXXXX^o
cuius animi propicietur Deus, Amen, Fiat, Fiat.*

generally suggested as related to the cadaver tomb, upon analysis the *Liber Apologeticus* serves admirably well nonetheless to sum up its iconographic range, its appeal to a certain group and its conceptual orthodoxy. The 1420's were as good a time as any for its introduction to England.

The play is represented as an *apologia* for the human race in every state, combining the figural account of one man's journey from birth to death, with an account of the Creation, Fall and Redemption of mankind. The first act relates the Creation and Fall of man. God argues that man has been made from the slime of the earth, *ex limo terre*, because it was the purely spiritual nature of the angels which caused the pride through which they fell. The more aware a man is of the vile matter from which his body is made, the humbler his heart is likely to be. But man has the image of God stamped in his face. His brain is to lie at the top of the body, bearing his reasoned faculties, cooler and closer to God, but this is to be tempered by the heat of his heart. Into this form God then breathed a rational soul in the image of the Trinity, comprising memory or mind; understanding, that is self-knowledge; and will, the will to love God. Thus far the description of the manner in which man acquired his body and his psychological makeup is absolutely orthodox, the tri-partite division of the soul deriving from the *De Trinitate* in which Augustine

discusses the manner in which man is made in the image of God.

Man thus created is then presented with a mantle of immortality, a sceptre of original justice and an orb designating his lordship over all created things. The sceptre is designed to keep the lower bodily forces under the rule of reason. The act then reaches its climax as God confers on his prepared creature freedom of will, *istinc uita, illinc mors, et benedictio et maledictio proponuntur*. It is at this juncture also that man is supplied with his two help-mates, Reason and Sensuality, that division of the soul into its rational and sensible parts deriving ultimately from Aristotle, but specifically Thomist in their later and separate creation. Reason presents man with a mirror whereas Sensuality profers a trifle, the forbidden fruit, repeating the words of the serpent in Eden, promising man that he will be Godlike. As a result, Reason is violently cast out and Sensuality is elevated. As man falls, he feels a continuous battle within himself, and tries to invoke his sceptre to find that it is bent and that his sphere has rolled away. The mirror of Reason which he still holds shows in it to his horrified eyes the corruptness of his flesh. What he then perceives is described specifically as an image of death,

*Heu, horrenda mihi nimis, imago mortis appareo
experiorque modo quid sit bonum et malum, bonum per
amissionem et malum per carnis rebellionem... Aperti
sunt oculi mei et nuditatem meam non tam considero quam*

*vehementer etiam erubescō,, mortis nunc mihi imaginem
et idolum confusionis, 80*

Man at the end of the act takes himself off to hide amongst the wild beasts, ashamed of his nakedness.

As a dramatist, Chaundler is of little distinction, but the orderly intellectual quality of his work is evident in this first act. If a cycle of Mystery Plays traces the pattern of man's Fall and Redemption as historical narrative, whereas the moral interlude may be said to demonstrate the same pattern figurally, here Chaundler combines the two approaches to the problem of the human condition by simply drawing on orthodox theological sources. He presents the quintessential psychological pattern of the Fall, and/or uses the history psychologically to apply to all men in all places. As allegorical drama, this act has much in common with the morality play known as "Wisdom Who Is Christ", except that, in that play, the action of Fall and Redemption is undertaken by the faculties from within the soul, Mind, Will and Understanding. In Chaundler's play, an additional dimension is given to the paradoxical psychological makeup of man in that he has a literal physical reality. The paradox of his nature is presented from the outset as extending into the physiological realm. Indeed, as Reason and Sensuality are externalised as

1. Mark Eccles (ed.), *The Macro Plays*, EETS o.s. 262 (1969).

distinct "characters" within the drama, it is man's physiological nature which dominates. In this respect, the play has something in common with the *Disputacioun* of BL MS Additional 37049. The flesh of man is presented even before the Fall as being base yet having the image of God stamped on its face. On falling, he sees in the glass of Reason the vileness of his flesh which he is instantly moved to cover up. What is more, he perceives this as *imago mortis*.

The play, by using a perfectly orthodox reading of the nature of the Fall, serves to remind us that the image of the naked body as an object of shame and humility, of transience, is the heritage of Adam. What bodily death does, therefore, is to expose in the individual his fallen legacy, the corrupt and mutable form which lies behind all earthly office. Interestingly figural robes of office are conferred upon man in his immortal state in the play. By extension, the robes of earthly office as displayed on the double tomb are a valueless mark of pride, an absurd attempt to conceal that vile nakedness which ultimately cannot endure'.

1. The tension between status in heaven and on earth, seen in terms of regal office, is arrestingly reminiscent of the corpse figure of "le roi mort" on the tomb of René of Anjou (see Chapter VII below), for there too the king is shown as decaying corpse, still in crown and robe with his orb and sceptre broken at his feet.

The coloured grisaille drawings which accompany this first scene in Chaundler's MS add support to the iconography of mortality'. On folio 3r, Man is shown enthroned in his mantle of immortality looking at Reason on his right, setting the mirror in his breast. On his left, Sensuality is putting an apple in his hand, covering her eyes. Then on f3v Man is shown seated naked on a bench with Sensuality beside him, Reason having been wounded. Not only has the mantle of immortality fallen off, but Man, like the cadaver effigy rudely displayed in death, robbed of its former robes, covers his genitals with his right hand. In his left he holds the mirror of Reason and looks into it. The orb and sceptre lie at his feet. The caption for this drawing reads,

*Dum iniqua peruersa voluntas Racionis sententiam interpretatur lesa ragione Sensualitas eleuatur, Immortalitatis pallium amittitur, Nam Sensualitatis motus principio delectantes admissi inclinant ad consensum, Delectatio vero cum consensu actum malum gignunt, actus malus tristitiam parit.*⁴².

In the second act, Chaundler draws extensively on Peter Lombard and Boethius to construct a debate between Man and God on the nature of freedom and the origin of evil. Man is then given animal skins with which to hide his nakedness,

1. See Plates 51a, b.

the sceptre of original justice is replaced by a scourge with which the recalcitrant flesh can be disciplined in future, the sphere with a spade with which he is to work out the rest of his mortal days until bodily death, when he will return to the dust from which he was made in the first place. Thus far, then, Man's fall is defined in terms of a separation from his Creator, a spiritual death, and the corresponding assumption of a nature associated only with the lower half of his makeup, the flesh made from the slime of the earth.

Man delivers a long monologue in which he laments this state, fearing above all everlasting death and separation from his maker. At this point it is clear that what the audience is being presented with is the central paradox of the Fallen state. Man fears the uncertainty of death, but it brings him grief and joy: grief at the loss of his immortality, but joy at the prospect that bodily death will remove him from the woes of this world. For him, bodily life is equated with spiritual death and bodily death with the possibility of spiritual regeneration.

*Sed grauius adhuc animum affligit timor et meditatio
mortis eiusdemque incertus dies. Astne hoc quod moriar
aut tristari aut gaudere oportet? Dolebo itaque quod
immortalitatis locum amiserim sed quod ab hiis miseris
per mortem eripiar aliquando delectabor, 102.*

The circumstances of the protagonist now are open to interpretation on more than one level. In addition to the literal replaying of the story of Adam, there is a clear tropological level to the action in which the man estranged from God by his concern with the world is granted the scourge and spade, the instruments of penance: he will then experience the mixture of fear and hope attendant on the possibility of his return to God's favour.

The third act opens with a dramatisation of the debate of the four Daughters of God, an allegorical interpretation of the nature of the Redemption. The debate, immensely popular in contemporary vernacular literature¹, is ideally suited to Chaundler's purposes as it traditionally treads that border territory between literal historical narrative, and allegory which is the self-conscious sphere of the *Liber Apologeticus*. It economically prepares for man's confrontation with God as flesh incarnate.

God then expounds the doctrine of the Redemption through the parable of the Samaritan and an allegorically interpreted amalgam of Christ's miracles and ministry in which Chaundler is drawing heavily upon Hugh of St Victor's *Allegoria in Evangelia*², Lib. III, Cap. V. He will revive

1. For example, Robert Grosseteste, *Le Chasteau d'Amours*; William Langland, *Piers Plowman* [B Text], Passus XVIII; *The Parliament of Heaven*, N-Town Plays; Nicholas Udall, *Respublica*; and Lydgate's pageant of welcome for Margaret of Anjou.
2. Migne, *P.L.*, CLXXV, col.805.

man, spiritually dead, whether he died in his house like Jairus's daughter, a figure of death induced by inner thoughts; or whether he died at the gate of the city, like the widow's son, a figure of sins of public action; or whether, like Lazarus the figure of the habitual sinner, he died,

in sepulchro quadriduanum fetidum, per malam consuetudinem, ... Omnes risuscito et ad uitam reuoco, si uelint ad me conuerti, 136.

Chaundler here, following Hugh of St Victor, moves, therefore, from presenting physical and spiritual death in the paradoxical relationship established in his presentation of the Fall, to conceiving of them as figurally equivalent. The relationship is self-evident Hugh's contrived presentation of the argument (Lib. IV, Cap.X)¹:

Tres mortui, tria genera designant peccatorum. Mortui namque sunt in domo (Luc VIII), iuuenem in agro (Luc VII) Lazarum in monumento (Joan XI). Tres mortui, tria genera designant peccatorum. Mortui namque sunt in domo, qui sine demonstratione operis conceptam nequitiam adhuc in corde servant. In agro mortui sunt, qui culpam per consensum conceptam in sensum propatulo per operationem demonstrant. In monumento mortui sunt qui, dum prava consuetudine foedati, per infamiam suam etiam alios depravant. Resuscitatio mortuorum; justificatio est peccatorum. Et tanto leuius resuscitatur quis que per gratiam, quanto minus mortificatus est per culpam. Tantoque minori purgatur poenitentiae satisfactione, quanto minori deprivatus exstitit iniquitate. Unde Dominus, paucis arbitris adhibitis, solo verbo puellam in domo jacentem recenter mortuam suscitasse legitur. Resuscitando vero Lazarum

1. Ibid, col.812, quoted by Shoukri, p.187, n.35.

*in monumento quadriduanum fremisso, turbatus fuisse,
lacrymasse, et voce magna clamasse, perhibetur; non
quod Domino tam facilis non fuerit resuscitatio Lazari
quam puellae, sed quod Domini facta aliarum rerum sunt
exemplo,*

Far from presenting his audience with a disjuncture of argument here, as might first seem to be the case, the playwright incorporates into the play's argument elements which indicate, in a self-consciously academic manner, the dynamic potential of contemporary mortality images. Literally presented, bodily death, *anticipates* spiritual regeneration - the release from the prison of the fallen existence. Figurally, however, the corpse can *represent* the spiritual state. Corruption and infestation attendant upon putrefaction become visually emblematic of the casual sins which the individual unavoidably adds to the heritage of Adam.

This double and opposed intellectual vision of the single concrete image is highly relevant to the discussion of the iconography of the cadaver tomb in general. The play suggests, in the first place, a view of physical decay which is essentially contemplative. The corpse image need not be cautionary, but can come to represent those elements of the individual from which the spirit will eventually be thankfully released. The upper image of earthly office and the lower image of the frail and ignominious flesh are a double vision of the nature of the burdens which are the

heritage of Fallen man. One is reminded of the terms of Chichele's touching letter, recorded in Bekynton's correspondence, in which he asks to be released from the burdens of earthly office in order to prepare for his own death'. Yet in the same play, the corruption of the flesh does take on a cautionary complexion against an equivalent spiritual decay. This second reading is closer to the conventional didactic *memento mori* which, in the case of the tombs, sees the single and double effigy as having the common function of using the corpse as a reminder of the fate of man's temporal self, the futility and spiritual hazard involved in elevating earthly rank to any level of importance. In this reading, the upper or idealised image on the double tomb presents an intellectually supportive image of transient earthly glory through a dramatic visual opposition.

It is probably misleading, however, to present such distinct possible readings of the tombs in question. Chaundler's play rather suggests harmonised if co-existently contradictory readings of the tomb according to whether the corpse is viewed literally or allegorically. It is, after all, a literary critic's commonplace to observe the

1. George Williams, ed., *Official Correspondence of Thomas Bekynton* (Rolls Series 1872), 148. See further 306-13 below.

characteristic medieval separability between two opposed readings held in tension, neither invalidating the other.

After God has expounded the Redemption, He gives man the four Cardinal Virtues, Justice, Prudence, Fortitude and Temperance to protect his weakness. The stage is set for the physical death of Man, in which again the contemplative, rather than the didactic approach dominates, although again the choice is not as clear-cut as Chaundler's most recent editor has suggested. The difference is one of emphasis rather than kind and more modal than philosophical. Although he deals in an inward and psychological relationship of man with God, the logic of his argument concerns the obliteration of the individual impulse as strongly as does that of the public and estates pattern of, for instance, the *Danse Macabre*.

In the last act, then, the Virtues debate the use of Fear of Death, which is conceived in broadly penitential terms. The sequence of illustrations from folio 7a to 8b¹ makes the movement explicit. First Fear of Death's visit shows a grotesque but comic figure who delivers a letter to man. The letter contains the stock *memento mori* admonition to man:

1. See Plates 52a, b; 53a, b.

*Nequaquam enim esse poterit quin post annum sis quam
ante annum fueris et cras quam hodie, et hodie quam
heri, et paulo post quam nunc, et nunc quam apulo ante,
morti propinquior...* 146

Life is nothing but a *cursus ad mortem*. The Virtues debate the usefulness of Fear of Death. Predictably, Fortitude and Prudence agree that since death is certain and the hour uncertain, fear is spiritually efficacious. Temperance, on the other hand, contends that the mind is repelled by despair of eternal hope. The argument moves strongly if cautiously, therefore, in the direction of perceiving the limited usefulness of fear and its possible spiritual corrosiveness. The debate anticipates the arrival of Charity with another letter, in which man is told to concentrate on Heaven and the place there prepared for him. Fear of Death is cast out. What is established is, therefore, the orthodox doctrine of preparation for death which was the standard fare of the *ars moriendi* in which an attitude of cautious optimism is fostered in order that excessive confidence in eternal life (pride) is not entirely supplanted by despair of eternal life (also pride).

The following illustrations show Death itself, the standard skeleton, inserting a dart into Man who is turned away to face an angel proffering a crown. Here he is dressed like Christ as the "man of sorrows". Thereafter he is shown with his garments of heavenly majesty restored, trampling the skeletal death figure under foot and being crowned by an

armoured figure. This last illustration is accompanied by the caption,

*Fortitudo vel ipsa Caritas que fortis est conculatata
deuictataque morte hominem coronat in Regno hominis
eterno,, 44.*

The entire action of act four again draws heavily on a section of Hugh of St Victor's *De Anima*, Lib. IV, Cap XIII-XIV¹, the debate between *Memoria Mortis* and *Timor*, as Shoukri points out, quoting the section which ends,

*De beatitudinis animae, et ferculis vitae aeternae,
descriptioque vitutem per quas ad eas pervenitur. In
easiquidem coelesti patria est vita sine morte,
juventus sine senectute, sanitas sine infirmitate,
requies sine labore, gaudium sine tristitia, pax sine
discordia, delectatio sine fastidio, lux sine tenebris,
pulchritudo sine turpitudine, agilitas sine
ponderositate, fortitudo sine imbecillitate, libertas
sine servitute, voluptas sine anxietate, longaeuitas
sine vitae termino, sapientia sine insipientia,
amicitia sine inimicitia, concordia sine discordia,
honor sine dedecore, securitas sine timore.*

The *Liber Apologeticus*, therefore, promotes a complex but orthodox treatment of mortality which looks back to scholastic philosophy and psychology and to related mystic and ascetic writings. It is also irresistably reminiscent of vernacular writings concerning mortality of the type

1. Migne, *P.L.*, CLXXVII, cols 185-89.

emanating particularly from Carthusian and Brigittine establishments throughout the period.

But the view expressed of man's relationship with his God, his life on earth and his attitude to the end of that life is perfectly in keeping with the intelligent, moderate attitudes of those brought up on the Wykehamist principles to which Chaundler and his patron Bekynton were themselves exposed. It can be demonstrated that it is within these circles, rather than in Lollard or peculiarly reformist circles that the cadaver tomb also gained vogue, continuing in its popularity with public men later, including John Colet, who corresponded with Erasmus on the efficacy of fear of death¹.

It is in writings like Chaundler's, rather than in those morbid little macaronic lyrics with their dreary little refrain, *Timor mortis conturbat me*, that we can find sufficient intellectual substance of a kind to demonstrate the quite subtle iconography of the much-maligned "macabre" cadaver tomb. Nor are these ideas novel to the fifteenth century any more than the men who favoured the tombs were the theological radicals of their day.

1. R.J. Schoeck and B.M. Corrigan, eds, *The Collected Works of Erasmus*, I, (Toronto, 1974), 108-11. A brief series of letters discusses the nature of Christ's Agony in the Garden. See further Chapter VII below.

Chapter IV

THE CADAVER TOMB TO 1460:

THE CLERGY AND THE LAITY

The fifteenth century does not in itself witness the intellectual genesis of the cadaver tomb design; it arose out of the spiritual continuum of the late Middle Ages, a period of recurrent social instability, religious faction, war and plague. It is, therefore, part of a natural process of aesthetic diversification. Nevertheless, it remains the product of an array of choice-making individuals, each of whom presumably consciously selected such a monument either for themselves or for a close friend or relative. Although the rise of the cadaver tomb in Britain may not be easy to associate with a contemporary intellectual "movement", definable context need not be entirely elusive.

More than half a century has passed since the late K.B. McFarlane¹ argued that medieval biography is impossible. Yet only by the adoption of an approach which involves studying individual careers can one escape from the conventional "spirit-of-the-age" explanation of the cadaver tomb. Those who are commemorated in this way are already set apart by that fact. They are not otherwise an obviously coherent group, for they comprise ecclesiasts and laymen, "old" and "new" nobility, men and women. In short, the ability to afford to erect the monument appears to be the only social constraint. The very variety of types, and presumably

1. K.B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), ix (Introduction by J.P. Cooper,).

prices, of tomb incorporating the cadaver motif testifies to its socially wide appeal. Individuals will be considered in the following chapters according to their place in contemporary affairs, but with no attempt to make implausible connections between them. The reasons for the importation of the cadaver tomb in all its manifestations into Britain may be as various as its exponents are numerous.

Something has already been said about the intellectual milieu of the owner of the earliest extant and confidently datable cadaver tomb in Britain, Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in 1443. The tomb was already in place when a young goldsmith called Bernard clung to its railings in search of sanctuary from the city authorities on 5 February 1428¹, and a date of 1427 is hence commonly accepted for the tomb.

Although a full biographical study of Henry Chichele was produced in 1967 by the late Professor Ernest Jacob², a brief sketch of the major events in his career is necessary here for the purposes of comparison with later less well-documented tomb owners. Special attention will be paid to

1. Jacob, *Archbishop Henry Chichele*, 93. Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, 15, includes the misreading "1424" in Jacob's, "Chichele and Canterbury" (1948), 386-95, 388.
2. Jacob, *Archbishop Henry Chichele*.

episodes in the years immediately before the erection of the tomb, and particularly to the character of other benefactions which may enhance the understanding of how the archbishop understood the nature of his chosen memorial.

Henry Chichele was born in the early 1360's in Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, and maintained a close connection with his birthplace throughout his life, founding a college there in 1422. Higham Ferrers was an important centre within the Duchy of Lancaster, its manor holding a central place in the Lancastrian estate system. One need not accept the concept of a "Lancastrian experiment" in order to observe the ascendancy in national affairs during the early fifteenth century of men who were native inhabitants of the Duchy. This was the natural result of the Duke of Lancaster becoming king of England in 1399. Lancastrian patronage was to prove essential to Chichele, not a low-born tenant of the manor of Higham Ferrers, but from the middle ranks of society. Comparison may be drawn with Thomas Langley, bishop of Durham, 1406-37, whose career began with the patronage of John of Gaunt and a Cambridge education¹. Chichele's father was a burgess and one time mayor of Higham Ferrers. From this position two paths to advancement lay open, either through trade contacts or, in common with

1. R.L. Storey, *Thomas Langley and the Bishopric of Durham 1406-37* (London, 1961), *passim*.

younger sons of better families, through education and the church. The former route was taken by Robert and William Chichele, Henry's brothers, who took advantage of a maternal grandfather who was a draper and jeweller in London, to rise respectively to the rank of Lord Mayor, and master of the grocers and sheriff'. Henry adopted the latter path which took him to Winchester College and New College, Oxford.

It was thus the combination of his Duchy origins, city connections and Wykehamist education which not only assured Henry Chichele a successful career, but probably shaped many of the dominant characteristics of that career. By 1413 Chichele had achieved a position from which promotion was probable, given a fair wind. His early advancement in the church is impressive, as he is observed rapidly collecting benefices, learning diocesan administration at Salisbury whilst still a young man, and applying it during his tenure of the impoverished see of St David's, in 1408-1414². His ecclesiastical advancement was matched by political successes. Clearly an able canon lawyer, Chichele was sought after to act on diplomatic missions for the crown and to attend general councils of the church. The two functions should not be artificially separated; to contemporary eyes schism in the church and war in Europe were inextricably

1. Jacob, *Chichele* (1967), 1-2.
2. *Ibid.*, Chapter 1, *passim*.

linked. Henry Chichele's earliest public appointment was on a mission to Innocent VII in July 1405, followed in October of the same year with an appointment as commissioner to treat for peace with France¹.

With such relevant experience and credentials Chichele could not avoid being a favourite for the vacant see of Canterbury. He had been a member of Henry IV's council in the last years, when it was under the direction of the Prince of Wales, later Henry V. Perhaps he held attractions for this new Lancastrian monarch in lacking "background", having no patrician ties of blood which might conflict with the demands of the crown. What is more his family credentials tended to suggest a fundamental loyalty to the monarch in his capacity as Duke of Lancaster. His connections with the city of London may also have aided his career, giving his potential range of influence a broader base than that of a member of a long established landed family. He was a "new" man, a very able one, and one who, once promoted, was likely to repay a debt of loyalty for reasons of dependence if no other.

The strengths of Chichele's career as Archbishop between 1414 and 1443 amply bear out the probable reasons why he

1. Rymer, *Foedera*, viii, 446, 452.

became primate in the first place. He was indeed utterly loyal to Henry V and continued to display a nostalgia for the events and characters of the King's brief reign long after it had passed. His abilities as lawyer continued to bear fruit in a long diplomatic career, and his connections with the University of Oxford helped to smooth relations with the ecclesiastical and secular establishment during the post-Wycliffite period in its history. Finally, his burgess origins probably contributed in a large extent to what his biographer has noted to be the Archbishop's successes as diocesan, especially in his relations with the city and abbey of Canterbury, as visitor of the diocese and as president of his provincial council'. Despite the seductive nature of Professor Jacob's writing, it would be dangerous to assert that we can "know" Chichele from an assemblage of events in which he participated. On the other hand, the combination of orthodoxy and innovation which appears to be the hallmark of the cadaver tomb, was apparently not uncharacteristic of the archbishop's career.

In such an active career, many influences could have triggered Chichele's choice of tomb, particularly during his many journeys to continental Europe. The year of its erection, however, does seem to coincide with a period of

1. Ibid., chapters 5 and 7; and "Chichele and Canterbury" (1948), *passim*; J.R. Lander, *Conflict and Stability in Fifteenth Century England* (London, 1969), 125-29 gives a good general synopsis of the tensions in such a role at this particular period.

peculiar difficulty in more than one area of the archbishop's concerns, possibly not only leading him to contemplate his final release from the considerable burdens of office, but to meditate upon the nature of that office and to seek a way to give it fitting plastic expression. From the beginning of the 1420's Chichele's relationship with the papal curia had been deteriorating, as his ecclesiastical and secular loyalties came increasingly into conflict'. He had taken the side of Henry V over the matter of Beaufort's controversial cardinalate, awarded as it blatantly was in contravention of the Statute of Provisors and with the express intention of bringing England under increased papal influence. The new pope, Martin V, was not long in finding an opportunity to retaliate and did so when Chichele gave further evidence of a displeasing tendency towards autonomous action in 1420.

In this instance the occasion was the celebration of the jubilee of St Thomas Becket, held every fifty years, for which in the past the issue of full indulgences for the remission of sin had become customary. Martin V now refused to issue the indulgence. Although Archbishop Chichele was

1. Jacob, *Chichele* (1963), chapter 4.

in France with the king at the time, the jubilee went ahead and an indulgence was offered. There was a delay of three years while Martin V tried to pull England into line, but in 1423, the year of his own Roman jubilee celebrations, he had the Becket jubilee investigated, and wrote to Jacques évêque and Simon de Teramo criticising Chichele and Prior Wodenesburgh for *inaudita presumpcione et sacrilega audacia commotos*. Their action was *quam periculosum quamque scandalosum in fide, animarum salute, quamque excessiva*¹.

Matters then proceeded to escalate. With Henry V dead, Martin V and Beaufort took their respective opportunities. For Bedford, all was negotiable in order to secure his best advantage. The Statute of Provisors became the focus in a whole network of concessions and manoeuvres. Richard Fleming², translated from Lincoln to York by Martin V and ignominiously back to Lincoln, was a victim of the situation. Matters came to a head for Chichele after 1426, in which year he was forced to welcome back to London Beaufort, finally raised to the cardinalate. In the same year, Prosper Colonna, a boy of sixteen, was finally granted possession of the archdeaconry of Chichele's own diocese, after a delay of two years. The archbishop was losing ground.

1. Raymond Foreville, *Le jubilé de S. Thomas Becket du 13^e au 15^e siècle (1220-1470)* (Paris, 1957), 181.
2. See below , 213 *et seq.*

The period for treading a moderate path was over and Chichele found Pope Martin V all too receptive to rumours of his anti-papalism. In 1427 he was suspended from his legatine powers. Despite, or perhaps because of, the great demonstration of grass-roots support for Chichele which this action elicited from his own university and many prelates in England, as well as the Duke of Bedford himself, the pope insisted that Chichele personally appeal to Parliament for the repeal of the Statute of Provisors as tangible evidence of first loyalties. This Chichele did, only to be publicly humiliated by parliament which refused to act.

It is in fact unlikely that Chichele was at any stage acting against the dictates of his conscience. The Statute, although it guarded against certain abuses, could also be used against churchmen like Chichele who did not come from the kind of background which would give them advancement without direct papal intervention. In his early career, much of his success derived from judicious pluralism at papal discretion. In 1426/27 his twin loyalties to state and curia placed him in an unenviable position.

To make matters worse, the period coincided with one of a crisis in town and gown relations in Canterbury¹. There was

1, Jacob, "Chichele and Canterbury" (1948), *passim*.

protracted wrangling over a number of contentious issues. These problems were none the less acrimonious for their triviality and required the intervention of the already hard-pressed archbishop. He at least was able to demonstrate that he had not entirely lost his touch as diplomat and resolved matters finally to the satisfaction of both parties, if not permanently.

Thus the mid 1420's was a period when Chichele may well have felt the burden of his office weighing heavily upon him and so been naturally moved to prepare for his final release. He erected a tomb which declares the transitoriness of worldly glory, which anticipates the shedding of the flesh, but which also looks back with pride and nostalgia to the previous decade and the glories of Agincourt. Chichele must have felt the untimely death of Henry V as hard as any of those near him, and not simply at the public level. In 1428 he was to lose another close associate in Prior Wodenesburgh, at a time when he was apparently too ill to preach. Whether this was a sudden illness or a chronic complaint, the evidence suggests that Henry Chichele, himself now over sixty, had already been moved for a variety of reasons to contemplate his own end. He was, however, destined to survive in office for a further fifteen years. Some of the events of those remaining years serve to

corroborate this picture of the circumstances which surround his choice of tomb.

Before turning to the events of those last years, however, we may place the tomb in its architectural setting by considering it in relation to Chichele's other major benefaction to the cathedral fabric, the south porch and south-west tower above it. Philip Blake has argued convincingly¹ that this whole construction serves as a celebration of Agincourt and the Lancastrian crown. Freshly completed a full decade prior to the tomb, it makes a poignant companion piece: the armorial shields on both appear to have been the same, but the tomb adds the counterpart to that nostalgia in offering an image of transience in the cadaver effigy itself. Furthermore²,

...if the porch was thus commemorative why not also the entire S.W. tower above it? Archbishop Chichele contributed towards it £475, a very large sum, but no reason has yet been advanced for building it, especially at that particular time. Henry IV was buried in the Cathedral but Henry V was not, and it seems highly appropriate, therefore, that following his death in August 1422, in the prime of life, a tower should have been raised at Canterbury to the Glory of God and the honour of Lancaster in augmentation of the earlier Agincourt memorial. Henry Chichele was just the man so to have raised it,

1. P.H. Blake, "Canterbury and the Battle of Agincourt", *The Kentish Gazette* (14 February, 1964), 10; the details of Chichele's benefaction are described in Francis Woodman, *The Architectural History of Canterbury Cathedral* (London, 1981), 173-76.
2. P.H. Blake, "Canterbury and Agincourt", 10.

When Chichele came to found All Souls' College in Oxford, much later in life, he clearly still looked back to the reign of Henry V. The college is the second of his two foundations, both of which testify to the Wykehamist ideas of education on which had been nurtured. In 1437, he founded St Bernard's College, a¹,

congruum et notabile mansum collegiale in honore gloriosissime Virginis Marie, sanctique Bernardi in vico vulgariter nuncupato Northgatestrete,

to enable Cistercian students to reside at Oxford University without being forced to compromise their rule. In the words of the royal licence²:

nullum habent locum habitacionis sibi vel eorum ordini dispositum infra dictam, Universitatem, in quo simul poterunt commorari, quamobrem hospitantur et manent ab invicem separatim atque disperei in diversis hospiciis sive locis dicte Universitatis, non valentes ob hoc communiter et cum ea devocione et diligencia exequi debitum divinorum officiorum et perimplere laudabiles observancias et consuetudines ipsius ordinis, sicuti deberent, vellent et possent, si in uno convenienti sibi que congruo loco simul commorarentur...

All Souls was established as a College specialising in philosophy, theology and law. The College was also, however, designed to be a chantry for Henry V and all who fell in the French war. The preamble to its statutes, formulated in the last year of the archbishop's life, is

1. W.H. Stevenson and E. Salter, *The Early History of St John's College, Oxford*, Oxford Historical Society N.S. 1 (1939), 14-19, 69.
2. *Ibid.*, 67.

quoted by Jacob to illustrate Chichele's continuing nostalgia':

...remembering the splendid honour wherewith both services, clergy and laity, competing with one another in pious emulation, had for long even in our own times made the famous kingdom of England rightly formidable to its adversaries and among foreign nations renowned for its distinction and peculiar glory,

The seventeenth-century glass in the Old Library of the College², still testifies to the same blend of allegiance which was at times so hard for the archbishop to sustain: there, cheek by jowl with the saints and fathers of the church, were depicted the three first Lancastrian monarchs as part of a line stretching back to King Arthur. Only one of the bishops represented was not of Canterbury, and that was John of Beverley¹ to whom Chichele offered special homage because of his alleged intercession at Agincourt. Indeed Chichele had already altered the liturgy³ in the interests of propagating the image of Henry V as *miles christi*, to allow for the inclusion of certain saints of national and military importance:

1. Jacob, *Chichele*, 16 and chapter 6 *passim*. Chichele's educational benefactions are also discussed in Helen Jewell, "English Bishops as Educational Benefactors in the Later Fifteenth Century", Barrie Dobson, ed., *The Church, Politics and Patronage in the Fifteenth Century* (Gloucester, 1984), 146-67.
2. F.E. Hutchinson, *Medieval Glass at All Souls College* (London, 1949), 13-17, 38-48.
3. Jeremy Catto, "Religious Change under Henry V", G.L. Harriss, ed., *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship* (Oxford, 1985), 97-115, especially 107-08.

St George, patron of the Garter, promoted to a double feast to be observed by the laity in November 1415, for his protection of the *gentis Angligenae armata militia*; SS Chad, David and Winifred, local saints of the Canterbury province now "nationalized" at the second attempt; above all, perhaps, St John of Beverley, the saint especially adopted by the house of Lancaster, for whom SS Crispin and Crispinian had to make way on October 25, the anniversary of Agincourt.

His glazing scheme, therefore, simply reflects the way in which, in the case of Chichele, nationalism and devotion persistently assert their inseparability.

This is not to argue that Chichele subsided entirely in his old age into a soft-headed nostalgia for a bygone age. His benefactions were forward-looking in their purpose as he continued to campaign for a better educated priesthood. Nonetheless, it seems that his attitude to his own useful life was increasingly retrospective, not unusual in a man whose troubles seem to have been crowded into the latter part of an exceptionally long life. His final letter¹ to Pope Eugenius IV testifies that if he had not had enough of the cares of the world by 1427, even allowing for commonplace rhetoric, he had done so by 1442. Its phraseology makes it an eloquent companion piece to the tomb and worth quoting at length:

Post humiliores quas ulla creaturarum domino suo prestare poterit obedientias, ac terræ oscula ante pedes; Dimittite me, beatissime pater, "ut plangam paululum dolorem meum, antequam vadam," et "recogitem annos meos in amaritudine animæ meæ." Non irascatur,

1. G. Williams, ed., *Thomas Bekynton; Official Correspondence*, I, 145-47.

quæso, Sanctitas vestra si, "cum pulvis et cinis sum, domino meo loquar"... Pater benignissime, postea quam plusculum quam sex annos in administratione Menevensis Ecclesiæ consummavi, viginti jam et octo sunt anni quod sanctam sedem Cantuariensis ecclesiæ, licet minister indignus, prout ex alto mihi datum est, rexi; et nunc octogenarius aut circiter, vigesimum nonum ministerii dictæ metropolitice sedis annum ingredior; multis quidem oneribus et curis, quæ sæculo meo humeris meis portavi, fractus atque fatigatus, Laus Deo viventi, qui in hanc usque annosam ætatem vivere mihi dederit; in qua me possim in sinum meum colligere; in qua, spreto omnibus mundi curis, meipsum intueri curareque possim. Imperfectum meum satis jam vident oculi mei. Onustus quidem, grandævus, infirmus, atque supra modum debilis ego nunc sum... Pro salute igitur et salva deinceps custodia ovilis mei, imo vestri; pro salute mea in quiete animæ deinceps meæ; hanc mihi gratiam ex benignitate vestra provolutis genibus posco; hanc humillime deprecor et votis omnibus concupisco; ut Beatitudo vestra, senii quo premor impotentique ac invaliditudinis meæ miserta, non amplius ad id quod utiliter, quod commode, subire nequeo onus, alligatum me teneat. Det ipsa mihi miseratio vestra in sacras manus apostolicas liberam cedendi licentiam; det spatium respirandi; det tempus, ut primo exorsus sum, "ut plangam paululum dolorem meum antequam vadam et recogitem annos meos." Revolvam "numerum dierum meorum ut sciam quid desit mihi." Paucitas quidem dierum meorum finietur brevi, "Remitte mihi," igitur, pater sanctissime, ut "refrigerer priusquam abeam et amplius non ero"...

He goes on to claim that it is time to make room for a younger man, recommending Bishop Stafford as his successor.

The letter, though stylised, stands as a poignant personal expression of one man's perception of his spiritual and emotional condition. As such, it corroborates the evidence offered by the events of his life and that other eloquent personal statement, his tomb. Henry VI, in the letter which accompanied and supported Chichele's request, expressed more cheerful sentiments, particularly',

*In adversum vero, utile ac summe laudabile et pacificum
semper regimen quo, a primo limine ingressus sui, jam
viginti et octo sunt anni, provinciam suam rexit, nos
movet...*

He begs that competent provisions be made for Chichele from the revenues of the see, but the archbishop emeritus had only a year in which to enjoy them, before he was finally laid to rest in the fine double tomb which he had had prepared to receive his mortal remains such a long time before.

Richard Fleming was the Bishop of Lincoln (1420-31) who founded Lincoln College Oxford prior to Chichele's foundation of All Souls', and who was caught up in the crisis over the Statute of Provisors in the mid 1420's. Fleming, therefore, must have known his archbishop, Chichele, well. At the same time, however, he serves as a good illustration of the dangers of attributing cadaver tombs to any very specific intellectual tradition. Fleming's early career is marked by a display of distinctly Lollard sympathy, yet he is also remembered as the prelate who was responsible for having John Wyclif's bones exhumed from Lutterworth churchyard, burnt, and cast in the River Swift².

1. Ibid., 148,
2. *DNB*, I, 705,

Fleming is generally believed to have been born around 1378 of "good family" in the West Riding of Yorkshire according to most sources, and possibly in the village of Crofton¹. He had acquired an M.A. in Oxford by 1403, for he appears in the records of University College, Oxford in 1405-06, where he rented a room until 1408-09, during which time he was a Proctor of the University² in 1407-08. Ecclesiastical preferments came to him from an early age, the first being his appointment as rector of Slaidburn, Yorkshire, in 1403³. He was instituted to the church of Gosbarton in Lincolnshire in July 1404 as "clerk", was collated to the prebend of South Newbald in York Minster on 22 July 1406, and became rector of Boston, Lincolnshire in November 1408⁴.

It was in 1407, during Fleming's term of office as university proctor, that Archbishop Arundel made his visitation of Oxford to seek out heresies. What Fleming's publicly expressed opinions were at this date is unclear, but it is certainly the case that in 1409 he made a proposition in a public disputation in the faculty of theology⁵ which was reported to have contained Wycliffite

1. A. Hamilton Thompson, ed., *Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln*, I, *Injunctions and Other Documents from the Registers of Richard Fleming and William Gray, Bishops of Lincoln, Canterbury and York* Society 17 (1914-15), xiii.
2. A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500*, 3 vols (Oxford, 1958), II, 697-98.
3. Ibid.
4. Thompson, *Visitations*, I, xiii.
5. Emden, *Oxford*, II, 697.

elements. Contrary to what was once believed, it is unlikely that Fleming was one of the members of the committee of twelve established in 1409 by the convocation of Canterbury as a watch-dog for heresies, as he is known to have appealed to the congregation of regents and non-regents against referral to precisely that committee. When he failed to be given satisfaction, he petitioned the king'. The king's intervention allowed that the matter be dropped, but not before Fleming had been scolded in a manner which has surprised all commentators for its severity especially given the rank of the addressee. He is named as one among²,

*Certæ persone dictæ universitatis, quibus digna non
esset cathedra, attamen graduata, quæ ut puerilia
rudimenta non transcendunt, vix adhuc ab adolescentiæ
cunabulis exeuntes,..*

Whether out of true penance at the error of his ways, or with a cool eye to the main chance in his own ambition for ecclesiastical promotion, this apparently marks the end of Richard Fleming's contribution to that particular intellectual controversy. In future he was to be at the centre of disputes within the church of a different order.

There followed, however, a decade of relative peace and stability in his career. At Oxford he appears to have

1. Ibid. Thompson, *Visitations*, I, xiv, n.2, supported by Emden, points out the error in the *DNB* account.
2. *DNB*, 705.

turned his attentions to theological disputation¹. He was also amassing benefices: in 1414 or 1415 he may have obtained the prebend of Cropredy in Lincolnshire, succeeding John Catryk, who succeeded in turn Chichele in the see of St David's. Briefly in 1414 he held St Michael's, Oxford. In 1415 he relinquished Newbald in favour of the prebend of Langtoft in York Minster. He was concurrently rector of both Fishtoft (from 1415) and Boston until 1419². On 15 December 1415, during the settlement of a dispute between the abbot and convent of Croyland and some men of Milton and Weston over the commons of those towns, he is referred to as, "professor of theology, rector of the parish church of Boston and canon of the cathedral churches of York and Lincoln"³. He was also, during the same period, appointed by Pope John XXIII as a commissioner assigned to punish Joan, prioress of Wintney, who was alleged to have, "several times committed incest and had offspring" and "greatly destroyed and dilapidated the goods of the monastery"⁴.

More crucial to Fleming's promotion in papal eyes, however, was his selection to attend the Council of Constance during its latter sessions. While there, he preached four sermons,

- 1, Ibid,
- 2, Thompson, *Visitations*, xiv,
- 3, *CPR 1413-16*, 375,
- 4, *CPL 1404-15*, 485, March, 1415,

on 6 January, 21 June, 9 September and 2 October, 1417¹. Clearly he remained overseas into 1418, for in February of that year Martin V granted him safe-conduct for him to go to England as "papal chamberlain"². In 1419, he was elevated to the see of Lincoln when Repington took the unusual step of retiring. In the ensuing four years before the next major crisis in his career, Fleming was active both abroad and in the vast and often troublesome diocese of Lincoln.

Fleming's elevation was by papal provision, and he was in the unusual situation of being consecrated in Florence in April 1420³. He was abroad again in the winter of 1421-22, this time in Germany, as envoy to Emperor Sigismund: a little later he may have been present at the deathbed of Henry V at Vincennes in August 1422⁴. In early 1423, he went to the Council of Pavia, later transferred to Siena. There, as president of the English Nation, he was urged by Martin V ⁵ to do all he could in the cause of peace and to keep the pope informed, "not only of what is done in the council but also of what is attempted to be done". Perhaps Fleming's relationship with the pope made him unpopular, for

1. Emden, *Oxford II*, 698.

2. *Ibid*; *CPL 1417-31*, 5.

3. Emden, *Oxford II*, 698; Thompson, *Visitations*, xiv; *CPR, 1416-22*, 278, 379-80, includes provision that Fleming should grant Repington 500 marks per annum from his lordships for life.

4. Thompson, *Visitations*, xv.

5. *CPL, 1417-31*, 27.

there is a further letter from Martin V, dated July, 1423, which speaks eloquently of the position in which he then found himself',

The pope has received his letters by William, dean of York, and assures him that his detractors have rather increased than diminished the pope's goodwill towards him. However much people may talk, the pope believes what he chooses...

All was not peaceful for Fleming the diocesan either, and his tenure of the episcopacy is marked by protracted attempts to conciliate between the warring factions of dean and chapter. In 1421, for example, he produced an additional statute to assist in the interpretation of existing statutes over which the two parties had fallen out. The award was pronounced in the presence of Henry V and delivered at Lincoln on 15 April, before being sealed by the bishop in London on 27 May and confirmed by letters patent thereafter². Dean John MacWorth was constantly at odds with the Lincoln chapter about which matters related to their common and which to their separate jurisdiction. The confirmation states that in 15 April 1421, the dean appeared in the presence of the king, all canons residentiary and representatives of the chapter being present. The bishop

1. Ibid., 34-35.

2. Henry Bradshaw and Christopher Wordsworth, eds, *Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral*, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1892 & 1897), I, 6, 147; *CPR*, 1416-22, 404-06.

declared his arbitration, which included new rules about decanal visitation. Yet complaints about MacWorth's conduct, his pluralism, failure to attend to obits, even his habitual lateness for mass¹, appear to have continued unabated.

Fleming inherited a notoriously sprawling diocese and a perhaps impossible dean. His task would have been very difficult even if he had not had other distractions; as it was the testimony of his successor to the see demonstrates that Fleming² did not succeed in resolving the difficulties of the diocese²:

Cum iampridem nonnullis litibus, controversijs ac discordijs inter decanos Ecclesie Lincoln' predecessores meos ad subsequenter me Johannem Decanum predictum ex una parte, confratres suos et meos Capitulum eiusdem ecclesie ex altera, in Romana curia, et alibi in iudicio et extra iudicium, sumptuosis quam plurimum agitatis, per laudum et arbitrium venerabilis patris Ricardi nuper Episcopi Lincoln' predecessoris vestri vigore compromissi in ipsum venerabilem patrem hinc inde facti sopitis; alie graues et scandalose inter me Decanum et Capitulum ipsum illo procurante qui a principio sue ruine vnitatem ecclesie rescindere, et caritatem vulnerare inuidio felle indies conatur...

Some reward for an uncomfortable episcopacy appeared to be gained, however, when Martin V acknowledged Fleming's support of the curia by translating him to the see of York by direct papal provision, in February 1424. Archbishop

1. Bradshaw and Wordsworth, *Statutes of Lincoln*, II, clxiii-iv.
2. *Ibid.*, II, 199.

Bowet had died on 30 October, 1423¹. Unfortunately for Fleming, this caused a storm to break over his head. His provision post-dated by one month the chapter of York's election of Philip Morgan, bishop of Worcester, an appointment to which royal assent had already been granted. Fleming was, therefore, in contravention of the Statute of Provisors, which had caused Chichele so much trouble and public embarrassment². A long dispute ensued, the spirit of which is well reflected in the following entry in the fine rolls for May 1424³:

Order to the escheator in the county of Lincoln, by and with the advice and assent of the king's council, to cause the temporalities of the bishopric of Lincoln in his bailiwick to be seized into the king's hands ... as the king is informed that the pope has translated Richard late bishop of Lincoln ... to the metropolitan church of York ... and that the said Richard has fully consented to the translation, so that the church of Lincoln is void and the temporalities of the bishopric by reason of the voidance pertain to the king.

The objections of the king and privy council ultimately proved irresistible, and Fleming was duly and ignominiously retranslated to Lincoln on 3 August 1426 which he held until his death in 1431⁴. The disputed archbishopric went ultimately to neither original candidate but to John Kemp, bishop of London. The resolution of the problem is marked

1. Thompson, *Visitations*, xv.
2. See 206-07 above.
3. *CFR*, 1422-30, 75.
4. Emden, *Oxford*, II, 698; *Proceedings and Orders of the Privy Council*, III, 181.

in the patent rolls by a mandate of 3 August, 1426 to the escheator of Lincolnshire to deliver the temporalities of the bishopric back to Richard Fleming¹. He was re-consecrated, on 22 September 1425, by Chichele at Higham Ferrers².

Fleming's political career was largely ended after his re-translation, at least in so far as further ecclesiastical advancement was concerned. He was not destined to live very much longer and the problems of the Lincoln diocese continued to be his major responsibility. In addition to his responsibility for the posthumous punishment of John Wyclif, his major remaining action was the instigation of the process of founding The College of Blessed Mary and All Saints, now known as Lincoln College, Oxford. Perhaps the only one of Fleming's initiatives to bear positive fruit, he did not live to see it completed. Licence for the foundation was granted by letters patent of 13 October, 1427, which enabled the new college to acquire lands³. Fleming's preface to the statutes of the new foundation show what his intentions were: perhaps in embarrassed memory of his own youth, he conceived of a college of able theologians with the express function of counter-acting heresy and

1. *CPR, 1422-29, 351; VCH Lincolnshire* (London, 1906), II, 44..
2. Thompson, *Visitations*, xv.
3. *CPR, 1422-29, 455,*

theological error¹. The college had little direct endowment from its founder beyond three Oxford churches and the site². He did, however, leave a large library to the college, all of theological works³.

The last recorded action of Fleming as bishop is his confirmation of the election of Elizabeth Pytte as abbess of Godstow on 28 November, 1430⁴. He died at Sleaford Castle on 25 January following. There is some evidence that he had been ill for some time, as in March 1428 he was granted an indult by the pope when he was apparently unable to fast, "on account of his weak constitution and a disease of the stomach"⁵.

At first sight one must regard Fleming's career as an outwardly successful one. He was obviously academically able and made a marked impression wherever he intervened. The long epitaph on his tomb, possibly written by himself, was later expanded into a *Metrificacio* in his praise by a Carthusian monk of Sheen⁶. In his episcopal register the names of three ecclesiastics who later chose the same type of memorial occur. There is a certificate granted to

1. Emden, *Oxford*, II, 698.
2. *DNB*, 705.
3. These books are listed by Emden, *Oxford*, II, 698.
4. *CPR*, 1429-36, 101.
5. *CPL*, 1427-47, 26.
6. Emden, *Oxford*, II, 698.

William Sylk, then canon of Dublin, later precentor of Exeter Cathedral where he is buried¹, the institution of Thomas Heywood, later dean of Lichfield, to a mediety of the church of St Denis, Kirkby Laythorpe². Finally there is the institution of William Sponne to the church of Towcester, where he was later buried inside a fine double tomb himself³. These acts are representative of nothing more than the routine transactions of the business of a large diocese; there is nothing to suggest that there was a personal relationship in any case. Yet a case can be made for Fleming being an influential man, more than once in the public eye and not one whose passing could go unremarked. It also goes without saying that he crossed paths both with Henry Chichele and with Newton and Haxey⁴.

The case for Fleming's own choice of a cadaver tomb may tentatively be attributed to a number of possible factors. There is evidence of an apparent conflict between his early theological views and a later orthodoxy. Perhaps *all* bishops at this period experienced marked vicissitudes in their careers which acted as constant reminders of the

1. N.H. Bennett, ed., *The Register of Richard Fleming, Bishop of Lincoln* (Lincoln, 1984), I, 28, no.170.
2. *Ibid.*, 54, no.376.
3. *Ibid.*, 74, no.524.
4. See Appendix 2.

fleeting nature of earthly glory, but the case for Richard Fleming seems more striking than many in this respect. The tomb was certainly constructed after the bishop's retranslation to Lincoln, so it must be closely contemporaneous with that of Chichele. In the late 1420's both men were caught in the cross-fire between papal curia and king, both were also in poor health, circumstances also conducive to the kind of complex statement in stone which these tombs suggest. Moreover, Fleming, even more than Chichele, had travelled extensively in Europe, where he could well have been influenced by plastic arts or painting which he saw on his travels.

Finally, Fleming's early espousal of Wycliffite ideas may have some bearing both on his own choice of tomb and on an indirect association between these tombs and Lollard ideology. As has been shown elsewhere¹, the cadaver tomb does not reflect the Lollard ideals of burial practice; rather the reverse, since the first is a sumptuous monument, while the latter demands no enduring memorial. Yet the figure of the cadaver incites precisely the revulsion from the flesh which the so-called Lollard will so eloquently expresses. K.B. McFarlane remained bemused by the use of "Lollard" formulae in Archbishop Arundel's will², in view

1. See 178 above.

2. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights*, 219.

particularly in areas of personal spirituality. The formulae in Arundel's will do not make him a closet Lollard, but may reflect some of his personal reactions in the course of his close association with the Lollard question. It is all too easy to see the champions of orthodoxy as narrow-minded and hide-bound, whereas in fact they all have impressive intellectual credentials testifying to their probable open-mindedness or at least spiritual sensitivity. Wyclif's writings had simply revitalised mortification of the flesh as an expression of devotion, and clearly not all manifestations of this were necessarily considered to be theologically controversial.

The names of the English laymen who first favoured the cadaver tomb shed no more light on the coherence of the group than do the clerics. Eight tombs which can be positively identified predate 1460. Two of these belong to members of two of the most prominent aristocratic families in the land. Although both are well documented, there is no conclusive evidence as to why they chose to be commemorated in the way they did.

John Fitzalan, Lord Maltravers and, disputedly, Earl of Arundel (d. 1435), was actually related to Isabel Beauchamp, née Despencer, Lady Abergavenny and Duchess of Warwick (d. 1439). Given the nature of the noble dynasties of which both were members, this is hardly surprising; the same could

be said of most aristocrats of the period. In this instance, however, the nature of the dominant personalities which form the links, as well as the political circumstances of the alliance, make it more significant than it might otherwise be held to be.

The John de Arundel buried under the double tomb in the Fitzalan chapel at Arundel, had little expectation of succeeding to the Arundel title: he was son of the second son of the third son. In order to understand his position within the family, it is necessary to begin with the events leading up to 1399. Richard Fitzalan, one of the three lords Appellant, was executed in 1397. His second surviving son and heir, Thomas, fled to the Continent with his uncle, Richard's brother, Thomas Arundel, owed archbishop of Canterbury¹. This earl, however, died of dysentery at Harfleur without progeny and the earldom passed by virtue of an entail to his cousin John, Lord Maltravers, son of the third brother of Earl Richard and Archbishop Thomas, another John, Marshal of England who drowned in 1397². The John who inherited by virtue of the entail was the father of John de Arundel of the tomb³. The mother was Elizabeth Despencer, sister to Thomas, Lord Despencer and briefly Duke of

1. Edward Maunde Thompson, ed., *Chronicon Adæ de Usk 1377-1421* (London, 1904), 25; *Complete Peerage*, I, 244-46.
2. M.A. Tierney, *The History and Antiquities of the Castle and Town of Arundel including the Biography of its Earls from the Conquest to the Present time*, 2 vols (London, 1834), I, 277-290; John Pym Yeatman, *The Early Genealogical History of the House of Arundel* (London, 1882), 323 *et seq.*
3. *CPR, 1416-22*, 39. The grant is dated 22 July, 1416.

Gloucester, executed in turn in 1400, in the company of John Holland, Duke of Exeter, who had, for a time held the Arundel honours. Thomas Lord Despencer was succeeded by his son Richard who died young and without progeny, so the inheritance passed to the daughter Isabel, later countess of Warwick¹. She and John de Arundel were, therefore, cousins through the Despencer line. Additionally, Isabel's mother-in-law, through her first husband, was Joan Despencer, sister of Thomas Earl of Arundel and wife of William Beauchamp. She was also, therefore, a cousin of John de Arundel. When John de Arundel inherited the Fitzalan patrimony from Earl Thomas, the Warenne lands inherited from his mother by Earl Richard were divided between Thomas's three sisters, of whom Joan was one owing to a settlement in fee tail². This inheritance was the foundation of a fortune which was to make her one of the most feared and influential dowagers of her day, "The English Jezabel".

The Arundels and the Despenchers were politically in direct opposition to each other at the change of dynasty, but on the other hand, they were two of the handful of aristocratic families who managed to hold their position through that change, partly because of sufficiently fortuitous fecundity,

1. William Dugdale, *The Baronage of England or An Historical Account of the Lives and most Memorable Actions of Our English Nobility* (London, 1675), 397; also see below more fully.
2. McFarlane, *Nobility*, 136.

but chiefly through having lands rendered immune from crown interference by entail, through jointure agreements and through intermarrying with one another. The thirteenth Earl of Arundel had divorced an Isabel Despencer in favour of Eleanor Plantagenet in 1345¹. Ultimately considerations such as these tied up much of the property in question with the king - the Lancastrian throne and the extensive Beaufort tribe - and the kingmaker - part of the prolific progeny of Ralph Nevill Earl of Westmoreland (1364-1425).

The conventional "family-tree" manner of presenting these connections diagrammatically tends to give a false importance to generations. It is much more important to stress that many of these men achieved prominence through rapid succession because men tended to have relatively short lives in times of political dissent and continuous war. Conversely, those women who achieved prominence often did so simply by living a relatively "normal" span. In short, Isabel Beauchamp, John de Arundel and, come to that, Joan, Lady Bergavenny, were actively engaged in public affairs circa 1430, and were, despite the difference in their ages, social contemporaries. It should also be remembered that another prominent contemporary was William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, important to this study because of the tomb of Alice Chaucer², whose third husband he was.

1. Yeatman, *Early Genealogical History of Arundel*, 324.

2. See 337-52 below.

Her life rivals that of Lady Joan on account of her ascendancy and longevity. She did not die until 1475, and will be considered later.

Countess Joan Beauchamp's spiritual predilections are pleasingly apposite in indicating the social milieu in which her two younger relations lived. Something has already been said about her uncle, Archbishop Thomas Arundel's, will and its relationship, at least in spiritual mood if not in anything more tangible, to the motivations behind the cadaver tomb; the same case could be made for the singular terms of Joan's own will. She was buried in the church of the Dominican friary in Hereford, so her tomb does not survive, but the will reflects that desire to combine the decorum of high estate with an expression of spiritual humility which so characterises the cadaver tomb. The will is in English and in other respects, as will later emerge, bears comparison with that of her daughter-in-law. It merits quotation at length':

In the name of the blessed Trynyte Fader and sone and Holy gost the Xth day of Janyver the yere of oure Lord a m' cccc xxx iiij I Johanne Beauchamp lady of Bergavenny as a weke daughter of holy chirche full in the crysten fayth and belyve, hool in mynde and body blessed be God, consideryng pat pe freel condicion of this wrecched and unstable lyef ys full of perels and the yende and conclusion therof ys not elles but deth fro the whiche no persone of none astate schal escape and therfor purposyng with the leve of God to dispose suche goodes as of hys grace he hath lent me in suche use as myght be most to his plesauns and profitz to my soule and all otheres pat I am bounden to I have

1. Jacob, ed., *The Register of Henry Chichele, 1414-43*, II, 534-39.

ordeyned and make my testament and last wylle in this forme. First I bequethe my soule to the mercy of my blessed savyour and maker Jesu Cryst thorough the besechyng of his blessed moder Mary and alle holy company in hevene, and my symple and wrecched body to be bured in the queer of þe Frere Prechours of Hereford in a newe tumber by my worthy lord and sumtyme husbond Sir Wylliam Beauchamp on whoos soule God have mercy. But I wol þat my body be kept unburyed in þe place where it happeneth me to dye unto the tyme my maigne be clethed in blak, my hers, my chare and other convenable purviaunce made and þanne to be caried unto þe place of my buryeng before rehersed with alle þe worship þat ought to be don unto a woman of myne estate, whiche God knowyth wele proceedeth not of no pompe or veynglory þat I am sette ynne for my body, but for a memorial and a remembraunce of my soule to my kyn, frendes, servauntes and alle other.

She proceeds to make lavish provision for the finer theatrical details of her funeral, a series of pious bequests and acts of charity. Her chantry provision is for twenty years, ordaining prayers for ,

my lord my fader, my lady my moder, my lord my husbond, my sone Richard erle of Worcestre, Sir Hugh Burnell knyght and alle my good doers and cristen soules and þat of þe most honest persones and good conversacion þat mowe be founden...

Of her two close associates actually commemorated in cadaver tombs, John de Arundel died first, in 1435. He was born at Lytchett Maltravers on 14 February 1407/8, to John the sixth Fitzalan earl and his wife Eleanor Berkeley¹. His

1. *DNB*, 94; *Complete Peerage*, I, 247; Tierney, *History of Arundel*, I, 292-303, all give biographical accounts of the ninth earl. His mother, being a Berkeley of Beverston, was kinswoman to Richard Beauchamp Earl of Warwick's first wife, Elizabeth Berkeley - see below.

father died in 1421, whereupon he became ward of the crown¹. He was knighted at the same time as the young king Henry VI in 1426, and summoned to parliament on attaining his majority in 1429, but it was 1433 before his petition to the earldom of Arundel, disputed by John Mowbray Duke of Norfolk, was allowed². He married twice. Firstly, purely as a contract between minors, he was allied to Constance Fanhope, whose mother was a daughter of John of Gaunt. Later he married Maud, widow of Sir Richard Stafford, who died eleven months after himself³.

It is, however, chiefly for his brief but brilliant career in the French wars that John de Arundel is remembered. He first became indentured to serve the crown in France in 1430, with a retinue of two knights, fifty-seven men-at-arms and 180 archers⁴. His part in the siege of Compiègne,

1. *CPR, 1422-29*, 139, 291, 383, 397, 462 all refer to actions of the crown taken on account of the minority, including a grant of the custody of several Arundel estates to William Ryman and John Persons in return for a loan to repay Henry V's debt to John earl of Huntingdon who was prisoner of the count of Vendôme (291).
2. The Dukes of Norfolk were descended from Elizabeth, sister of earl Thomas, who married first William Montacute, eldest son of the earl of Salisbury, and secondly Thomas Mowbray, duke of Norfolk.
3. In her very brief will (PCC, 21 Lufnam, Prob.11/3, 162b), Maud leaves everything to her son Humphrey, heir to the Arundel earldom, except for *neum librum gallicum*, which she bequeaths to her daughter Avise, who was by this time wife of James earl of Ormond, son of Joan Beauchamp. Maud was buried in the chapel of St Anne in the abbey of Abbotsbury.
4. Dugdale, *Baronage*, 322; Tierney, *History of Arundel*, i, 293.

at which Joan of Arc was captured¹, is recorded as his first major exploit. He then went to assist a Burgundian force in besieging Anglure, near Troyes, held by the French general Barbasan, before assisting in the defence of Beauvais². In December 1431, he was present at the coronation of Henry VI in Paris, where he apparently indulged some light relief from the exploits of the field by distinguishing himself in a grand tournament³. Thereafter, he was appointed captain of the castle of Rouen⁴, where, shortly afterwards he succeeded in defeating a troupe of the enemy within his own walls. Being awakened to find his own garrison in disarray, he escaped to the town, gathered support there, and besieged the invading force who were forced to surrender after twelve days.

These exploits probably constituted grounds for the successful revival of his claims to the Arundel earldom⁵; they certainly were instrumental in his being created Duke of Touraine. After a period engaged in the reconquest of fortresses in the Isle de France⁶ in 1432, 1433 saw him in command of a separate force in Normandy, detached now from Bedford's forces. He is recorded as "lieutenant of the king

1. William Hardy, ed., *Jehan de Waurin, Recueil des Cronique et Anchiennes Istories de la Grant Bretagne, à present nomme Engleterre, 1422-1431* (Rolls Series 39, 1879), 384; *DNB*, 94; Tierney, *History of Arundel*, 293.
2. Hardy, *Waurin, Cronique*, 396; *DNB*, 94.
3. Tierney, *History of Arundel*, I, 393.
4. *DNB*, 94.
5. Tierney, *History of Arundel*, I, 297.
6. *DNB*, 94.

and regent in the lower marches of Normandy"¹. He displayed his skill as a tactician in this campaign, notably in repelling an attempt to retake Caen². Other victories followed until he was ordered by Bedford back to the lower Somme, where the enemy was regaining ground. It was here, attempting to retake the old fortress of Gerberoy that he received the wound which was to prove ultimately fatal.

Arundel marched one night in May 1435 from Gournay to Gerberoy with the intention of retaking the fortress from which such damage was being done. He did not expect, however, to be attacked from the rear as well as from the town, with the result that the bulk of his forces were driven back to Gournais, isolating a small force under him. They were subjected to canon fire and Arundel was wounded in the leg. His force were eventually captured and he was taken to Beauvais where his leg was amputated. He died on 12 June, having refused medical care, it is said, so disgusted was he at his defeat³.

John de Arundel's short but impressive military career may appear to have little immediate connection with his tomb,

1. Ibid.
2. Tierney, *History of Arundel*, 1, 299.
3. Ibid., 300- 302; *DNB*, 94, quoting Basin.

unless one recalls that he did not engage in these exploits in splendid isolation, but as a member of an élite *comitatus* of English aristocrats, which again sets a tomb owner in a distinct social circle. In B.L. Harley MS 782 there is a long list of Bedford's retinue in France in 1435¹. The first four names on that list are:

Richard Beauchamp, erle of Warwyke, captayn of the
citie of Meaulx in Brie, lieutenant for the field in
the absence of the regent,
Thomas Montagu, erle of Salisbury, lieutenante for the
field under the same regent,
John, lord Maltravers, erle of Arondell, capitayn of
the castell and towne of Verneil in Perche,
William Poole, erle of Suffolke, capitayn of the
castell and citie of Avranches,

The third is Arundel, the first was married to Isabel Despencer, the second and fourth being successively husbands of Alice Chaucer. What constantly emerges is that the active life of the warrior, at least in the case of the other three, did not preclude an active interest in the fine arts and literature. Although their lives were not as evidently spiritual in their daily focus as those of the clerics already considered, a life of jeopardy in war, combined with a self-conscious cultural decorum in keeping with their rank, renders an interest in fine, elaborate and expressive tombs entirely plausible.

1. Joseph Stevenson, ed., *Letters and Papers Illustrative of the Wars of the English in France*, 2 vols (Rolls Series, 22, 23, 24, 1861), II, 435.

John de Arundel's body was eventually returned to England to occupy the space he had ordained before he left on his campaigns, when he made his will':

In Dei nomine Amen, Octavo die mensis Aprilis anno Domini millesimo cccc^{mo} xxx^{mo} ego Iohannes comes Arundell' et dominus de Mautravers compos mentis et sane memorie proponens partes regni Francie in obsequium domini nostri regis visitare et timens mortis incertum periculum iminere condo testamentum meum in in hunc modum. In primis lego animam meam Deo omnipotenti, Beate Marie matri sue et omnibus sanctis corpusque meum sepeliendum in collegio Sancte Trinitatis Arundell' in pariete inter chorum et altare capelle Beate Marie eiusdem collegii...

After a short list of pious bequests he goes on to leave a splendid array of beds and their hangings and of precious plate to his wife. To his mother, Eleanor, he leaves *unam zonam rubeamauro et gemmis preciosis ornatam*. Humphrey, his young son and heir receives more bedding and plate. Generous sums of money go to a handful of trusted servants and the residue to his executors, Morris Berkeley, knight, a maternal uncle, to John Hody and John Grendon, clerk, to be disposed for the good of his soul. Thomas Polton, bishop of Chichester was to oversee the execution of the will. There follows a long English codicil, in which he deals with complex matters of the apportionment of land amongst feoffees should he die before his "comyng ayen in to Ynglond".

1. Jacob, ed., *Register of Chichele*, II, 541-44.

Who actually oversaw the erection of the tomb and to what degree its design as well as its position was the personal choice of John de Arundel is not clear. It was long believed to be a cenotaph¹. Initially he was interred in the church of the Greyfriars at Beauvais, where he died. A Shropshire gentleman called Fulk Eyton, from "Schrawardyne", an Arundel estate, who was present with him in France, was instrumental in returning the body to the family. In his will he requests²,

that my Lord of Arundell, that now is, aggre and compoune with you, my seide Executours, for the bon of my Lord John his brother, that I broughte oute of France; for the which cariage of bon, and oute of the frenchemennys handes delyveraunce, he owith me a ml. marc and iiij c. and aftere myn Executours byn compounded with, I woll that the bon ben buried in the Collage of Arundell, after his intent; and so i to be praide fore, in the Collage of Arundell and almehouse, perpetually,

The exhumation in 1857 of a skeleton measuring over six feet in length, but with the bones of one leg missing, from a chamber within the original foundation wall on which the monument had been erected, proved conclusively that the remains finally attained their desired resting place.

1. Tierney, *History of Arundel*, II, 624.
2. Tierney, "Discovery of the Remains of John, 17th Earl of Arundel, (*obit.* 1435), 232-39, 235-36.

That the containing chamber for the corpse is integral to the tomb tends to suggest that it was erected when there was a realistic expectation of its receiving the corpse. If John himself did not erect it before he left for France, therefore, it is possible that it dates from a much later period, since Eyton's will was not proved until 1454¹. By this time, John's son and heir Humphrey, and his wife Maud were long dead. His mother, Eleanor, on the other hand, did not die until 1455, by that time being wife of Walter Lord Hungerford, an associate of the Chaucers, De la Poles and Moleyns².

The nineteenth earl and likeliest constructor of the tomb was William Arundel³, John's brother, who inherited the title from the young Humphrey. William was married to Joan Nevill, sister of Richard Nevill, earl of Warwick and "kingmaker", the son-in-law of Isabel Despencer. Having married Elizabeth, daughter of Isabel and Richard Earl of Worcester, grand-daughter of Joan Beauchamp. Elizabeth Beauchamp had brought to Richard Nevill all the Despencer, Bergavenny, Worcester and Warwick estates accumulated through her mother Isabel's marriages to the two Richard Beauchamp cousins. It is to Isabel Beauchamp that we now turn.

1. Tierney, "Discovery of the Remains", 235.
2. Tierney, *History of Arundel*, I, tables between 192 and 193; see 355-61 below.
3. *Ibid*, II, 626.

The formal biographical facts of a woman's life in the fourteenth century, however eminent her family, are far more difficult to establish than those of a man. Beyond the details of her parentage and her marriage, little may be known of her unless she survived all her near male relations to become a land-holder in her own right. She clearly even then had no place in national politics, no prowess in the field with which the picture may be fleshed out. In the case of Isabel Despencer, however, something of the milieu in which she moved can be pieced together. Certainly much can be established regarding her husbands, but they were so active in national politics and war that she was rarely in their company. More important in the attempt to reconstruct the pattern of influences in her life are the domestic affairs of the estate, the workings and movements of the household.

Firstly the formal details should be established. Isabel was daughter to Thomas Despencer, executed in 1400 for continuing to champion Richard II's cause. The death of her father would have had little personal effect on the daughter as she was born on St Anne's day in Cardiff in the seventh

month after his execution¹. She inherited all the Despencer lands when her brother died prematurely. Already an heiress in her own right, she married, in 1411, Richard Beauchamp, lord Bergavenny². She bore him one daughter, Elizabeth, on 16 December 1415, but he spent much of his short married life campaigning in France. His mother, Lady Joan Beauchamp, mentioned above, was probably a stronger influence and life-long associate from whom Isabel eventually inherited the Bergavenny title for herself.

Dugdale's account of the first husband's career makes the position plain³:

After which (1417), continuing for the most part there, and meriting well for his fidelity and valor, in those notable times of Action, he was by that Martial King (Henry V), in the eighth of his Reign, advanced to the title of Earl of Worcester...

But at length he was,

1. Standard biographical details are to be found in *Complete Peerage*, II, 427 ; but more fully expressed in Dugdale, *Baronage*, 397 (Despencer), 239-47 (Beauchamps).
2. *CCR* 1402-05, 436, indicates that Despencer dower lands were seized by the king when Isabel's mother, Constance, confessed to "great and notable causes", but were later returned to her (*CCR*, 1405-09, 207). The crown retained as a consequence of the execution, all lands held in fee simple. Lands held in fee tail, however, although initially in the king's hands and custody of Edward duke of York (*CCR*, 1413-19, 228, 241, 314), owing to the nonage of the heir, were later returned to the family. Fortunately, a large proportion of Despencer lands were entailed or held by Constance or Thomas's mother Elizabeth in dower or jointure and all these eventually passed to Isabel after inquisitions made in Chancery in 1414, *CCR*, 1413-19, 133-34. Consequently the inheritance was not much diminished by the forfeiture.
3. Dugdale, *Baronage*, 242.

...unhappily wounded on his side at Newsenbury in France, by a stone from a Sling; which putting a period to his life, he was buried at Tewksbury, at the end of the Quire...

The first husband does not feature prominently in home affairs at all. The *St Albans Chronicle* does, however, tell of how the Lollard knight, Sir John Oldcastle, sent him a heretical and seditious message in 1417, when the king was at Harfleur. Oldcastle was at this time living under an uneasy condition of amnesty in his Herefordshire manor¹:

Eo tempore velut ex conducto et tanquam prodicionis prefate consciencia lollardi stimulatī ceperunt caudes erigere, blasphemias in regem evomere, effari pompatice minas sparsim per scedulas scriptas in hostijs ecclesiarum et alijs multis locis figere, Quorum omnium summa fuit et finalis intencio regis eversio, fidei orthodoxe subversio, ecclesie sancte destructio, In regem nempne, post iter arreptum transmarinum, multa vomuere convicia talibus se cohortantes, 'Iam,' inquit, 'princeps presbiterorum abiit, iam hostis noster abcessit, iam nobis arrisit tempus acceptabile quo nostras impune licebit iniurias vindicare,' Sicque semet consolantes invicem scripserunt multa milia in sua vota venisse, Intera campiductor et caput eorum Johannes Oldkastill', cum latuisset iuxta Malverniam et audisset quod rex Anglie transfretasset versus Harfieu concepta audacia de regis absentia ad dominum de Bergavenny misit verba superciliosa, comunans se in capite eius ulcisci velle sibi suisque illatas iniurias ab eodem.

Leaving aside the author's emphatic bias, it is still worth observing that lay magnates were subject to such

1. V.H. Galbraith, ed., *The St Albans Chronicle 1406-1420* (Oxford, 1937), 88.

propaganda, if only to highlight the spiritual dimension of their everyday lives.

After the death of her first husband, Isabel was an even more enticing marriage prospect, especially to Richard Beauchamp earl of Warwick, who, in addition to her own properties, acquired by entail those of her first husband, who was his own his first cousin. Because of the degree of affinity involved, special dispensation had to be obtained from the pope before the alliance could take place¹

There is an embarrassing richness of available source material on the life of Lord Richard Beauchamp himself. He was born in 1382, and, from the age of eighteen, achieved stature in national affairs at home and abroad². He inherited the earldom from his father in 1401. His early military career involved the quelling of Owen Glendower and success against the Percies at Shrewsbury in 1403. From 1408 onwards he seems to have spent a large amount of his time abroad, either on pilgrimage, at war or engaged in various embassies on behalf of the crown. The year October 1414 to October 1415 may be

1. William Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum* (London 1655), 158.
2. Dugdale, *Baronage*, 243-47 gives the fullest summary of his career; McFarlane, *Nobility*, 188-201, provides an excellent complementary analysis of his economic status and his role in national affairs; the *DNB* account is poor.

taken as an example. It began with his being sent to represent Henry V at the Emperor Sigismund's coronation at Aachen, proceeding from there to the Council of Constance where it was his special function to act as a channel of communication with the new emperor, with whom he was on good terms. He was then present at the siege of Harfleur before assuming personal command at Calais where he welcomed the king on his return from Agincourt¹.

By the time that Isabel married him in 1423, and at forty he was some fifteen years older than her first husband, he was the foremost lay magnate in England. The most admirably succinct biography, from which biographers since Dugdale have worked, survives in a late fifteenth century manuscript², in which his life is illustrated by a series of fifty-two line-drawings or "pageants", each accompanied by its own brief caption. If his legendary ancestor, Guy of Warwick, supplied the stuff of which romances were made, this life of Richard Beauchamp does not fall far short, if the biographer is to be believed, of the romance ideal. The manuscript shows scenes from early life, the birth (1r), and baptism (1v) at which Richard II and Richard Scrope are present; the knighting (2r) and then a pair of scenes of the

1. Frank Taylor and John Roskell, eds, *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, (Oxford, 1975), 129, n.6.
2. B.L. MS Cotton Julius E IV, Art. VI., folios 1 - 26v, upon which the account in Dugdale's *Baronage* is heavily reliant.

jousts at Joan of Navarre's coronation (2v-3r). The quelling of Glendower (3v) is accompanied by a portent, "a blasyng sterre called stellis comatis which after the saiying of clerkys signified greet deth and blodeshede" - clearly Halley's comet. The fourth folio shows Percy's rebellion.

The bulk of the manuscript is then given over to Richard Beauchamp's foreign travel, in particular his journey to the Holy Land, during which he called in on many major European figures and distinguished himself at jousts. He went via Paris, Lombardy and Venice. The biographer is at pains to point out that when he visited the king of France, "he so manerly behaved hym self in langage & norture that the kyng and his lordes with all other people gave hym greet lawde" (6v). He was welcomed by the patriarchs of Jerusalem (8v) and made an offering at Christ's sepulchre (9r). He then met the Soldan, whose lieutenant confided that he was a closet Christian (10r). He returned to England the way he came, and on arrival had to turn to and subdue heretics - here he is shown in the classic pose of the arming hero (12v).

Probably founded in actual events, these pageants have all the commonplace ingredients of the romance hero, especially in the blend of piety and warrior prowess in the hero, the conversion of pagans and the subduing of threats to order at

home. Thereafter, the earl's life is set against the background of the French wars. He was created Captain of Calais (13r) and hurried to France on hearing of an impending invasion. On arrival, this proved to be a false alarm, so the earl turned to creating a splendid display of chivalry instead (13v - 16r). As a mature royal adviser, he attended as a delegate at the Council of Constance. On his return to England, he won a great naval victory (18v), which account paved the way for the examination of his prowess in the French field, and in the winning of the princess Catherine's hand for Henry V (19-22v).

The final chapter of his life concerns his rôle as tutor to the young king Henry VI after the death of his father and his elevation as lieutenant of France and Normandy. Towards the very end of the manuscript, there is one highly dramatic pageant (25v) in which a storm at sea is illustrated, and how,

the noble Erle...let bynde hym self and his lady and
henry his son and heir after Duc of Warrewik to the
mast of the wessel...

The object was apparently to ensure that their drowned bodies would all be found and buried together, but they all miraculously survived. This item is the only indication anywhere in the manuscript that Richard Beauchamp even had a wife. The lady must be intended to be Isabel Despencer as she was the mother of Henry, later earl of Warwick. The

concluding illustration is a deathbed scene showing an emaciated figure receiving the last rites.

The relevance of this manuscript to this study is not so much the possibly semi-fictional events which it describes, as the impression it is at pains to create of its protagonist. It expresses eloquently the aristocratic ideal of which Richard Beauchamp is held up to be an example, with its combination of statesmanship, prowess in the field, piety and aesthetic cultivation. His own aspiration to these ideals may be observed in the decorum and conspicuous expenditure which was the hallmark of his lifestyle.

If the manuscript elevates and mythologises the life with hindsight, the contemporary account of Hue de Lannoi, Treasurer of the Boulennois, part of the embassy sent by the duke of Burgundy in 1438, is hardly less impressive¹. It speaks of a grave and cunning negotiator who held initiative in affairs of state. Immediately the ambassadors arrived in London they were taken to the house of Earl Richard²,

1. Stevenson, *Wars of the English in France*, 223-247.
2. *Ibid.*, 223.

*Le quel conte de Warewic nous rechat gracieusement, un
peu sombrement que aultre foit navoit fait,*

He told them that the king was away on a hunting expedition, but that he would let them know later whether they could see him. He later told them that they would have to go to Guildford to meet the king. When they arrived there, Warwick was there ahead of them and acted as master of ceremonies, the young king taking his cue from his tutor¹:

*Et après aucunes menues gracieuses paroles que eusmes
avec lui [Henry VI], nous fist retraire, et appella
tous les princes dessus nommez, qui autour de lui se
mirent a genoulz, et illec fist lire vos lettres, et
après quils eurent parle ensemble aucune espace,
feusmes rappelle, et nous fu dit par monseigneur le
conte de Warewic que les lettres que aviesmes apporte
depar vous contenoient creance, lequel le roy vouloit
estre exposée pardevant son grant conseil en sa ville
de Londres le Mardi, ou Merquedi, ensuivent,*

The conclusion of the affair demonstrated clearly that a group of English magnates was intent on obtaining a peace treaty, and that the chief initiative in this was shared between Warwick and Suffolk.

On the domestic front also, Richard Beauchamp had time and energy to spare for grand building programmes². He rebuilt the south tower of Warwick Castle and the stable there, as

1. Ibid., 225.

2. John H. Harvey, ed., *William Worcester, Itineraries* (Oxford, 1969), 218; McFarlane, *Nobility*, 196.

well as the castles of Elmley, Hanslope and Henley, to say nothing of chapels, manors and lodges. By his death, his landed income alone was reckoned to be in excess of £4,900 per annum, amassed from the careful accumulation of parcels of adjacent land, as well as from the two heiresses he married and ultimately as well as from his aunt, Joan Beauchamp, on whose death the Bergavenny lordship passed to him also¹. In addition he had a regular income in the form of retaining fees for his various royal appointments.

Fortunately a large collection of household accounts and valors survives from the Beauchamp estates, sources which again complement the "official" biographical manuscript. His estates system has been analysed by C.D. Ross, who concludes that despite the employment of able supervisors, receivers-general and lawyers²,

...the earl himself expected to be kept informed, even if he were overseas, and it is unlikely that any important decisions were made without reference to him. Both John Baysham and John Throckmorton crossed over to France to consult with him during 1421, and a constant stream of messengers, among them Warwick's secretary John Shirley, passed to and fro across the Channel to acquaint the earl of his affairs in England and to bring back his directions. In fact, the earl was no mere figurehead, no constitutional monarch; he retained full and active control in the administration of his great landed inheritance.

1. Ibid., 199-200.
2. C.D. Ross, "The Estates and Finances of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick", *Dugdale Society Occasional Papers*, 12 (1956), 3 - 22, 14.

The evidence of the household books will be returned to shortly, as it is there that most direct information about his wife's lifestyle may be discovered.

Dugdale prints an account for the sea voyage which was almost to lead to disaster. This goes some way toward illustrating Warwick's habitual acquisition of movable property'. It includes, "One coat for my Lords Body, beat with fine gold - £1.10s.", several items of livery, a streamer for the ship, forty yards long by eight yards wide, covered in the earl's device, the bear and ragged staff, the painting of which alone cost £1.6s.8d. The total bill on this occasion for trappings for his retinue was of the order of £20.

This pales into insignificance beside the sumptuous goods itemised in his will², including four golden images of himself, one each for four shrines, weighing twenty pounds apiece. McFarlane has calculated that by current gold prices, the material alone would have cost £1,200³. His chantry chapel, part of the surviving medieval part of the church of St Mary's, Warwick, is probably the most sumptuous memorial outside the immediate royal circle, and his famous

1. Dugdale, *Baronage*, 246.
2. PCC, Rous 147-48.
3. McFarlane, *Nobility*, 200.

copper-bronze effigy bears comparison with the best in Westminster Abbey. Here tomb and surrounding chapel may be regarded as one piece in iconographic terms. The warrior Earl, dressed in full armour, but bare-headed, his hands held up in a gesture of veneration, gazes directly at an image of the Virgin Mary in Majesty on the ceiling. The impression that is created of the effigy rising above the weepers towards a beatific vision of heaven, was supported by the original glazing scheme of saints and apostles. The tracery lights survive intact for the most part, filled with angels playing musical instruments, decorated with musical notation'. Again and again one is assailed by the impression of an immensely powerful magnate incessantly active in the cause of state and church: Richard Beauchamp, perhaps self-consciously approached the contemporary romance ideal, using his vast personal resources to orchestrate a life, and a death, which in many respects imitated that art.

It is particularly in his rôle as tutor to the young king Henry VI that he demonstrates his engagement in the arts. In recent years, it has been recognised increasingly that the laity were not as reliant as is often assumed upon the clergy in matters of literary education². Beauchamp was

1. Personal observations *in situ*.
2. Richard Firth Green, *Poets and Princepleasers; Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages* (Toronto, 1980), *passim*, especially 74-76.

enlisted by the Privy council to teach the young king, "nurture, lettrure, langage and oper manere of cunnyng", and the assumption that he was purely a social mentor is probably wide of the mark. McFarlane recognised this with regard to an entire class, when he wrote¹,

We are dealing with men not only of tested capacity in action, as their record in war and government shows, but also, in not a few cases, of quite remarkable versatility, accomplishments and taste.

The period saw an increase in translation of works of literature, not because they could not be read in the original, but because they could be read more easily and quickly in the vernacular. It also saw a parallel concerted literary effort in anti-French propaganda, if one considers the large amount of political verse which survives². The contemporary Burgundian court is noted for its conspicuous consumption of aesthetic goods, for its revival of nationalistic "chivalric" values³, but many of the attributes of that court can no less be identified in the court of Henry VI's minority.

John Shirley, the most prolific scribe, translator and publisher of the period was Richard Beauchamp's secretary⁴, but not only was he a patron of the arts, he and his circle

1. McFarlane, *Nobility*, 47.
2. V.J. Scattergood, *Politics and Poetry in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1971), *passim*.
3. Joseph L.A. Calmette (trans. D. Weightman), *The Golden Age of Burgundy; the Magnificent Dukes and their Court* (London, 1962), *passim*; Richard Vaughan, *Charles the Bold; Last Valois Duke of Burgundy* (London, 1973), 156-96.
4. Green, *Poets and Princepleasers*, 69.

were also practitioners in their own right. This could not be better illustrated than by the *balade*, recorded by Shirley', which Richard Beauchamp himself wrote and addressed to Isabel.

1. London, B.L. Additional MS 16165, f245v - 246v. For William de la Pole's comparable activities, see Chapter VII below.

Balade made of Isabelle Countesse of Warrwick and lady
dispenser by Richard Beauchamp Earlle of Warrewyk,

I can not half þe woo compleyne,
þat doþe my woful hert streyne
With bisy thought and grevous peyne,
Whan I not see
My feyre lady, whos beaute
So fully preented is in me,
þat I, for wo nadversite,
May not astert
From hir good lust; þat never thwert
I shal, howe sere þat me smert;
But right humbely, with lowly hert,
Hir ordenaunce
Obeye, and in hir governaunce
Set al mywelfare and plesaunce,
Abyding tyme of allegiaunce;
And never swerve,
Til þat þe dethe myn hert kerve,
For lever is me hir man to sterve,
þane any oþer for to serve,
For hir noblesse,
Hir flouryng youpe in lustynesse,
Growthed in vertuous humblesse,
Gansepe þat she cleped is maystresse,
I yow ensure,
Of al good chaunce and aventure
þat may be gyven by nature
Til any worldly creature,
Ffor she alloone
In vertue is, and þer hape noon
þus seyne, boþe sunne and evraychoon
þat dele wyth hir, and ever in oon
Preyse hir maner,
Hir womanhed, hir lusty chere,
So wold god, my lady dere,
At my request and my preyer,
Yow list to ruwe /

The picture of what life was really like for the wife of this paragon of the fifteenth century chivalric ideal is enhanced by the reading of two of his household books. The first¹ pertains to Richard Beauchamp's first wife, Elizabeth Berkeley. The second deals principally with the earl's household in Rouen in the 1420's, but contains some information about the manner in which, Isabel, the second lady of Warwick proceeded when she travelled².

251, n.1(cont.)

On me, hir man, pat hole and truwe
Haue been, and chaunged for no nuwe;
No never wol myn hert remuwe
From hir servyse,
And pat is myn hertis empryse;
Beseching hir pat on some wyse
She wol for my guerdon avyse,
And womanly,
Counsayled by pitous mercy,
Resceyve me, pat hevily
Endure pus and pytously,
In to hir grace,
And, whyles pat I haue lyves space,
Owt of myn hert to arrace
pe descomfort pat me manasse
Dope in my thought,
But of she per of nothing rought,
And I be lytyll worthe or nought,
Hir womanhed certes ought,
And gentylesse,
To ruwe upon myn hevynesse;
For hir to serve in stedfastnesse,
Myn hert and al my bysynesse
Have I gyve,
For ever more, whyles pat I lyve.

1. C.D. Ross, "The Household Accounts of Elizabeth Berkeley, Countess of Warwick, 1420-1", *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society*, 70 (1951), 81-105.
2. Warwick County Record Office MS, The Beauchamp Household Book; H.A. Crome and R.H. Hilton, "The Beauchamp Household Book", *Univerisity of Birmingham Historical Journal*, 2 (1950), 208-18.

What emerges clearly from both is that the English household of the earl was *de facto* that of the countess. Elizabeth Berkeley appears never to have left England in pursuit of her lord, but to have spent her time and his money commuting between their English estates. These progresses were very cumbersome, yet when expediency superseded decorum, the Countess could cover impressive distances in short time without her full retinue¹. The account of her journeying and her overnight courtesy visits to great houses and abbeys is sprinkled with illuminating details, such as the expences for leading Countess Elizabeth's pet bear as it followed her from place to place².

In addition to being entertained in sundry households, she had, whilst in residence, many visitors herself. These ranged from tradesmen and local clergy to strolling players and the officials in charge of her husband's estates. They include embroiderers and goldsmiths from London with whom she must have been placing commissions³. So although the countess's life was sheltered and provincial compared to her husband's experiences, she did not have to go to see the world as over the years the world would call on her. In

1. Ross, "Household Accounts of Elizabeth Berkeley", 87-88.
2. Ibid., 90.
3. Ibid., 93.

addition to personal female friends of noble blood¹, each with a substantial retinue, she entertained deans and bishops, a Master of Theology, a prioress and several friars². The opportunities for diverting conversation and for the acquisition of new aesthetic tastes are there aplenty.

When one considers that Countess Isabel, as well as living at home in the grand manner of her predecessor, also had the opportunity to travel abroad with her own retinue, the circumstances which led to her having singular views regarding her tomb open out still further. From the manuscript in Warwick Record Office known as The Beauchamp Household Book the details of two journeys undertaken by Isabel can be pieced together³. Firstly she went to spend Christmas with her husband in Paris in 1431, and then, after they had returned with her husband to Dover, she travelled from there to London alone whilst he went about his affairs.

The progress was a leisurely one and large sections of both journeys were made by river barge. That she was affected by what she encountered on her travels is perhaps testified to

1, Ibid., 94,

2, Ibid.

3, Crome and Hilton, "Beauchamp Household Book", 209-10,

by her leaving in her will benefactions to Worcester Cathedral Priory and Caversham church, both of which she visited.

This leads inevitably to the consideration of Isabel's will¹ where finally her choice of tomb may be placed in its aesthetic context. She was to be buried in Tewkesbury Abbey, in the place assigned for her. Her "grete templys with the Baleys" were to be sold for as much as they would raise, and the proceeds delivered to the Abbot and convent there so that "they groche no3t with my lyenge, and wyth suche thyng as y woll haue done a-bowt my body". There is an indication here that her requirements are going to be out of the ordinary. Certainly she is very specific:

And my Image to be made all naked, and no thyng on my hede but myn here cast bakwardys, and of the gretnes and of the fascyon lyke the mesure that Thomas Porchalyn hath yn a lyst, and at my hede Mary Mawdelen leyng my handes a-crosse, And seynt Iohn the Evangelyst on the ryght syde of my hede; and on the left syde, Seynt Anton, and at my fete a Skochen of myn Armes departyd with my lordys, and ij Greffons to bere hit vppe; And all a-bowt my tumber, to be made pore men a[n]d wemen In their pore array, with their bedys In their handes,

Clearly the "Image" was mounted on a conventional *mensa* tomb with bedesmen weepers around the base. Cohen² considers

1. Furnivall, *Fifty Earliest English Wills*, 116-19.
2. Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol*, 122, n.5.

that the effigy was the prototype for the later one of Marguerite of Austria, but the wording of the will, particularly the disposition of Mary Magdalen, suggests rather more the kind of affective point-of-death tableau which one might find more readily on a brass than sculpted in the round. Whatever the final execution of the tomb figure, clearly the testator is describing a picture of that order which has caught her fancy in Thomas Porchalyn's list. What exactly she was referring to is by no means clear-cut'. Porchalyn himself presents fewer problems, but his identity does not lead anywhere in particular when it comes to identifying what appears to be the only surviving order for a cadaver tomb. His appearances in crown and papal records concern one protracted incident in which his role is clearly that of the over-zealous estate official.

1. Crome and Hilton, "Beauchamp Household Book", 212. It has been suggested that Porchalyn had a wax model¹; but this is in no way supported by the will's wording. The obvious modern sense of "list" as "catalogue" ought to be treated with caution, as its earliest established usage is Shakespearian (*O, E, D*, sb.⁶). Its Middle English sense more clearly referred to the concrete artefact than the arrangement of writings or pictures upon it, as it meant either a border or selvage of cloth, or a long strip (sb.^{2,3}), sometimes with conspicuous markings on the surface (sb.⁴). The two senses are clearly connected, but the simple solution, that Porchalyn had a workshop pattern-book of some description is by no means the only possibility.

Porchaly'n's aggression was part of his attempt to execute the terms of his former mistress's will'. The reasons for his partisanship become clear, later in the same year, when he is recorded as receiving a papal indult² to choose confessors, he is named as "Thomas Porthaleyn, esquire, nobleman, of the diocese of Worcester...receiver-general of Henry, duke of Warwick and premier earl of England".

1. *CPL*, 1431-47, 241-44 : August 1442, the papal curia confirmed a grant of the advowson of the alien priory of Godchive in the march of Wales, Llandaff diocese, to the Abbot of Tewksbury for Isabel Beauchamp's chantry provision. A prior and two religious were to be maintained. Exemplification is given of the licence of Henry Beaufort, cardinal and bishop of Winchester, witnessed by, amongst others "Thomas Porthalan", apparently a clerk of the diocese of Worcester, for the appropriation of the said priory. The abbot and convent had petitioned the pope that their monastery had insufficient resources for its continuing survival. 472-75; 1445 the sequel - an answer to the petition of Prior Laurence of Godechive, complaining at his treatment. John Twynyng of the Benedictine monastery of St Peter, Gloucester, alleged that the priory belonged to him under pretext of letters obtained from Henry VI. With sundry lay accomplices he attempted to despoil the priory. He overcame the monks and had them arrested. The prior was removed by night to a neighbouring castle and chained by the foot until he undertook to hand over £500. The prior, however, refused to resign, and was returned to the abbey where he was forced to hide in the church and was threatened with violence. Twynyng had transferred his right to the abbey of Tewksbury, who also treated the resident religious badly. Thomas Herbert, Thomas Porcellame and David Mathieu with a multitude of armed men expelled the original monks and "thereby caused them to wander about England". Prior Laurence complains that

the said Thomas Porcellame and certain other laymen, whose names prior Laurence does not know, instigated by the Evil One, caused him to be twice arrested and imprisoned,

trying to induce him to resign. A commission was appointed to look into the allegations and to excommunicate the guilty of both parties, including Thomas Porcellame until they come to the apostolic see for absolution.

2. *Ibid.*, 518.

Porchalyn was apparently a major household official of the Beauchamps, probably precisely the type of whom McFarlane writes¹. He was presumably one of those trusted officials apprenticed to great houses, untrained in accountancy but reared in administrative matters; they could be loyal to a fault because of the unique administrative heritage of each individual estate. John Leventhorpe, receiver-general of the Dukes of Lancaster and father to the John Leventhorpe of the shroud brass, was typical of such men.

It is not, therefore, incongruous to see Porchalyn as an educated man, a private civil servant equally at home in command of an armed band or advising on the niceties of the disposal of excess wealth, all as part of the his office in the service of a major magnate. Although there is no evidence that he was a graduate, nor is it impossible that he was a cleric: John Verney, receiver-general to the Beauchamps in 1430-31, was in holy orders².

That he and other estate officials might be viewed as close confidants of the countess is also entirely likely: whereas the husband of a great lady often saw her only occasionally, she spent most of her time in the company of his officials.

1. McFarlane, *Nobility*, 140.
2. Ross, "The Estates and Finances of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick", 1-22, 8.

Ross notes that it seems to have been a matter of decorum that the supervisor of the Beauchamp estates should escort the countess to her husband's side on his return from the wars'. In the strictly legal sense she was, after all, his most valuable asset. Porchalyn was present on at least one of her journeys².

The remainder of Isabel's will testifies to her use of her wealth. She made elaborate provision for the melting down of gold chain, some broken gold, and two tablets set with gems, depicting St Katherine and St George; from these a crown was to be made for the image of the Virgin at Caversham, where there were reputed to be important relics. There are similar bequests to various shrines. Elizabeth Keston, who nursed her in her sickness, was to have eighty marks for her marriage to Norman Washbourne, who was to be constrained to marry her, and Elizabeth was to have a further twenty marks for herself. One hundred marks each was then left to persons mentioned by surname only, Colyer, Halfhide, Wiltshire and Basset, who were presumably members of her household. In addition to making provision for her chantry, which was to cause so much future trouble, she

1. Ibid., 9.
2. Crome and Hilton, "Beauchamp Household Book", 216.

charged her executors to make good any extortions and restore any land wrongfully held by her, "(whech god forbede and defende)". Porthalyn was not named among the executors, who were Sir William Mountfort, John Nansan, John Norreys and William Menston, but as the receiver-general of the estate, much of the execution of the will would have fallen to his duty.

It is, therefore, not in the least surprising that, in addition to the clerics and lay magnates who were amongst the first to choose cadaver tombs for themselves, there should be representatives of Porthalyn's class also. It is unhelpful to conceive of John Golafre and John Leventhorpe, a knight and an esquire respectively, as moving in a separate social milieu from those already considered. An examination of their careers shows them moving in the same circles, one as a knight of the shire for Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, friend of Thomas Chaucer and hence partisan of the Beaufort faction at court, the other a member of a wealthy and influential dynasty of Duchy of Lancaster officials.

John Golafre, d. 1441, of Fyfield, Berkshire, is the earliest non-aristocratic layman commemorated by a large-scale cadaver tomb. He died an old man, and was of an older generation than either John de Arundel or Isabel Beauchamp. As the preponderance of the later tombs were to be favoured not by the aristocracy but by persons of Golafre's rank in society, his allegiances and tastes are particularly important to establish. Golafre the private man cannot be retrieved, but there is ample evidence surrounding his public life.

The tombs of Golafre's parents do not survive as they were buried in the Dominican friary in Oxford. From them he inherited modest properties in Berkshire, but it was from his three marriages that Golafre acquired considerable additional property, if no direct heir. His first wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Edmund de la Pole and niece to Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk. After her death, Golafre married, in December 1403, Nicholea, widow of John Englefield. Finally, in the last seven years of his life, he was married to the widow of Sir Walter de la Pole¹. His double alliance with the De la Pole family is important as it connects him with that family's rising star, William, Duke of Suffolk, who was not only a close political ally of Chichele and Richard Beauchamp, but was husband to Alice Chaucer, grand-daughter to the poet, who also chose to be

1. J.S. Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422* (Manchester, 1954), 184.

commemorated in a cadaver tomb. She too lived to old age and hence will be discussed with a later group of tomb-owners. Golafre's three marriages brought him lands in Berkshire, Dorset, Hampshire, Wiltshire and Oxfordshire.'

Ties of blood, unless very immediate, are no more reliable than social rank as evidence of tangible political alliance in the period in question. In the case of John Golafre, however, they provide a useful foundation for the network of alliances which he built up over his lifetime. For instance, he had a cousin, also John Golafre, who was knight of the Chamber throughout the reign of Richard II. This John left a widow, Philippa, daughter of John lord Mohun. Her mother was Joan Burghersh, a cousin in turn of Sir John Burghersh, father to Maud, wife of Thomas Chaucer, a life-long political associate of the Beauforts and Alice's father. Although the connection is remote, it is given additional significance by the presence of the Mohun arms on Thomas Chaucer's tomb².

In 1397, the year of Philippa Mohun's remarriage to Edward, eldest son of the Duke of York, Golafre made his first

1. George Lipscomb, *The Nobility, Gentry and Clergy of the County of Buckingham*, I (London, 1847), 394 *et seq.*
2. E.A. Greening Lambourn, "The Arms on the Chaucer Tomb at Ewelme, with a note on the early manorial history of the parish", *Oxoniensia* 5 (1940), 78-93.

appearance as knight of the shire for Oxfordshire and was also appointed sheriff of the county'. He thus entered parliament in close association with the king's friends. Other privileges followed². Nevertheless, Golafre apparently did not become too entangled in the upheavals of 1399, coming through with nothing worse than the temporary loss of his sheriffdom³. He was knight of the shire, this time for Berkshire, in 1401⁴, and by the following year was entirely accommodated to the new dynasty. He was then appointed to a general commission in Oxfordshire for the prevention of the spread of seditious rumours about the new king⁵, in the company of Henry Beaufort and Thomas Chaucer.

Unlike the great lay dynasties, it was apparently easier for someone of Golafre's rank if he knew when to lie low, to move relatively smoothly from faction to faction, especially if he had connections which could be invoked to his advantage in either party. 1406 saw Golafre established

1. Roskell, *Commons of 1422*, 184, 185. The fact that the two posts were held simultaneously testifies to Golafre's influential connections.
2. *CPR, 1392-96*, 327 - verderer of Woodstock Park - *CPR, 1391-99*, 278 - wardship of the heir of Thomas Quartermain.
3. *CPR, 1399-1405*, 1-2.
4. Roskell, *Commons of 1422*, 184.
5. *CPR, 1401-05*, 128.

as J.P. for Berkshire¹, a post which he was to hold for the rest of his life, except for a brief period after 1417 when he was in Normandy. He was again knight of the shire for Berkshire in the difficult parliament which met in Gloucester in 1407². Golafre's part in the political divisions developing between the king and the followers of the Prince of Wales is not clear. It seems unlikely, however, that he failed to keep sympathy with the latter group which included Chichele, Beaufort and Thomas Chaucer. Golafre and Chaucer constantly appear together, Chaucer himself being a devoted follower of Beaufort, not least because their mothers had been sisters³. Certainly during the same session, Golafre acted with Chaucer and four other knights as a witness to a deed⁴.

It was not only in their parliamentary careers that Golafre and Chaucer were consistently connected together, but also as co-feoffees with joint interests in the Oxfordshire and Berkshire area⁵, where they also appear consistently as co-commissioners. Rudd also records that John Golafre acted as auditor to Thomas Chaucer at Woodstock: *Per visum et testimonium Johannis Golafre contralotulatoris ibidem*.

1. Roskell, *Commons of 1422*, 185.
2. *Ibid.*, 184.
3. Rudd, *Thomas Chaucer*, 33.
4. *CCR, 1405-09*, 350, 400.
5. *VCH, Berkshire*, II, 434; *CCR, 1405-09*, 400; Rudd, *Thomas Chaucer*, 21.

On 5 September, 1413, he was granted for life the offices of overseer of the royal manor and park of Woodstock¹. The connection was finally symbolised in the armorial glass recorded at Woodstock in a visitation of Oxfordshire of 1566, where there appeared the arms of Roet impaling Burghersh and Golafre, Chaucer impaling Burghersh, and a crest of a unicorn's head couped Argent issuing out of a coronet Or, and over it written Golafre². It seems safe to suppose that when Henry of Monmouth and his Beaufort friends were becoming more politically powerful, Golafre's sympathies lay firmly in that direction.

As in the case of the clerks whose tombs have been discussed above, Golafre's ecclesiastical interests were clearly orthodox. He four times appears on commissions appointed to arrest and imprison Lollards³. In 1414, he was again appointed sheriff of Oxfordshire and Berkshire⁴, and was, in the same year, appointed one of Thomas Chaucer's feoffees in the newly purchased estate of Donnington, which passed to Alice Chaucer, then aged twelve, the following year⁵.

1. *CCR*, 1413-19, 62.
2. *The Visitations of the County of Oxford, 1566, 74, 1634*, Harliean Society, 5 (1871), 53.
3. *CPR*, 1413-16, 178, 416; 1416-22, 140; 1429-36, 75, 81; *V.C.H. Berkshire*, II, 136.
4. Roskell, *Commons*, 185.
5. Rudd, *Thomas Chaucer*, 59.

Neither John Golafre nor his associate Chaucer were involved in Henry V's first expedition to France¹, although it seems probable that they both crossed the Channel in 1417². There is no record of Golafre's departure with the main expedition, but when the king was in Caen the following May, he appointed Golafre receiver-general for the Duchy of Normandy³. Thomas Chaucer, however, did take part in the invasion and, with Richard Beauchamp and others, was on the commission which treated for a truce on 1 October⁴. The evidence suggests that Golafre was active in France until 1420, when he was clearly back in England⁵.

As the years progressed, the intimate association between Golafre and the Chaucers was reinforced. Sometime before 1424, Alice Chaucer married Thomas Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, whose feoffee Golafre also was⁶. When Henry V's last parliament met on 2 May 1422, Chaucer was speaker and Golafre knight of the shire for Berkshire once more⁷. Shortly before parliament opened, both were acting together

1. *FRD Lists and Indexes*, IX, 108, indicates that Golafre was acting as sheriff of Berkshire at the time; Rudd, *Thomas Chaucer*, 24, notes that Chaucer fell ill before leaving England with his 11 men-at-arms and 36 archers.
2. Golafre features in no commissions for the peace for Berkshire issued in 1417.
3. Roskell, *Commons*, 185.
4. Rudd, *Thomas Chaucer*, 25.
5. *Ibid.*, 14; Roskell, *Commons*, 185.
6. *Complete Peerage*, XI, 395.
7. Roskell, *Commons*, 184, 193.

on a commission to treat for a loan to the crown¹. During the parliamentary session, Thomas Montacute successfully petitioned for the retrieval of the possessions lost by his family when his father John had been attainted in 1400². In 1422, Golafre was reconfirmed in all his former official capacities. He appears as Justice of the Peace for Berkshire³ and Member of Parliament⁴. He retained his annuities and his holding of Woodstock⁵, and, in 1424 he was appointed sheriff for Oxfordshire and Berkshire⁶. In January 1426, he was again knight of the shire for Berkshire⁷. There can be little doubt that Golafre was a supporter of Beaufort in the "parliament of battes": he was not only an associate of Thomas Chaucer, but co-feoffee with the Cardinal in the Montacute estates. The Montacute dowager Elizabeth, widow of the William who inherited after the attainder, and aunt to Thomas, was, in addition, a sister of Philippa Mohun, and thus related by marriage to Golafre himself. Letters patent of 20 May 1428, licensed Thomas Montacute and Alice Chaucer to grant the manors of

1. *CPR*, 1416-22, 385.
2. *Complete Peerage*, IX, 393n.
3. Roskell, *Commons*, 185.
4. *Ibid.*, 185, 193, 165, 167.
5. *CPR*, 1422-29, 71-73.
6. Roskell, *Commons*, 185.
7. *CPR*, 1422-29, 320.

Ringwood and Warblington in Hampshire, as well as £6 in rent from the manor of Christchurch, to feoffees who included Cardinal Beaufort, Bishop Langley, Walter Hungerford, John Golafre esquire and others'. In the November of that year, Montacute died. Chaucer and Golafre were elected to parliament again in 1429, Golafre for the last time².

The parliamentary session of 1429 saw the end of the protectorship and the coronation of Henry VI. Golafre acted on simultaneous commissions in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire to raise loans for the crown³. In 1431, he and Chaucer were again engaged on a commission of oyer and terminer⁴, this time with William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, who had recently become Alice Chaucer's third husband. In February 1434 Chaucer and Golafre served together on a commission for the last time⁵, for, on 18 November of that year Thomas Chaucer died⁶.

John Golafre continued to act on commissions of array⁷ and to raise funds for the crown. He must by now have been lending considerable funds himself, and he continued to collect

1. *CPR*, 1422-29, 474.
2. Roskell, *Commons*, 184, 165.
3. *CPR*, 1422-29, 481.
4. *CPR*, 1429-36, 218.
5. *CPR*, 1429-36, 354.
6. Rudd, *Thomas Chaucer*, 3.
7. *CPR*, 1429-36, 520-21.

honours'. Golafre was licensed with Thomas Hasely and John Cottesmore to fulfil Chaucer's will². Maud Chaucer, Thomas's widow, had died on 27 April 1437³. Golafre had also been involved in entailing De la Pole lands in Norfolk and Suffolk on William and Alice⁴. His own third marriage to Sir Walter de la Pole's daughter, testifies to the long-standing relationship he had with that family.

Appropriately, the last records of John Golafre's life concern his acts of charity. It is possible that he had already been responsible, with Thomas Chaucer, for the erection of a cross in Abingdon market place⁵. Certainly on 20 October 1441 a licence was granted to him, along with William de la Pole, Thomas Bekynton and six others, to found the guild of St Cross in the church of St Helen, Abingdon, for thirteen paupers and two chaplains⁶. It appears that in his will Golafre also provided for bridge repairs and other charitable acts⁷.

1. *CPR*, 1436-41, 30, 139.
2. *Ibid.*, 166.
3. Rudd, *Thomas Chaucer*, 3.
4. *CPR*, 1436-41, 1.
5. Rudd, *Thomas Chaucer*, 67.
6. *CPR*, 1441-46, 36-37.
7. *Wood's City of Oxford*, Oxford Historical Society, 18 (1890), 499.

He died on 23 February 1442¹. His feoffees were licensed to found a perpetual chantry of one chaplain at the altar of John the Baptist in Fyfield parish church, and an almshouse for five poor men, for which the chaplain was to act as warder². Golafre's third wife survived him, but he left no direct heir. The manors of Fyfield, East Hannay, Garford and Eaton were conveyed by trustees to Alice, Countess of Suffolk and her husband in 1448³. Fyfield was granted by their son, John de la Pole, to John earl of Lincoln, his eldest son. When he died at the battle of Stoke in 1487, the manor passed to the crown⁴.

Although it is not possible to penetrate the level of "human interest" in the biography of a man of Golafre's standing, nonetheless a very full formal account of his life may be constructed. Necessarily clues to his choice of tomb, an imposing double decker one in stone with a military effigy above and a cadaver below, are restricted to matters of family and political affiliation rather than evidence of his personal taste. Golafre's chief significance to the present study is as an important link in a network of allegiances spanning the whole period of the Lancastrian monarchs, from

1. Roskell, *Commons*, 186.
2. *CPR*, 1441-46, 53.
3. *VCH Berkshire*, IV, 345, 288, 357, 337.
4. *Ibid.*, 346.

Chichele and the coterie surrounding Henry V as Prince of Wales, to the circle of Beaufort, Thomas Chaucer and Suffolk, encompassing ties of blood and of customary service.

Between John Golafre's death and that of John Leventhorpe, there died the third cleric to be commemorated in a cadaver tomb. Virtually all that can be said of John Careway, who died in 1443 and was interred under a single stone cadaver effigy in a wall-niche in the church of St Vigor, Fulbourn, Cambridgeshire, is that he was rector of that church from 1429 until his death in the same year as Chichele's. He was, however, a Cambridge graduate, and the only recorded traces of his career are to be found at the university there, as a commoner at King's Hall in 1398-99 and 1405-06¹. He was a Bachelor of Canon Law by 1422, did not thereafter go on to distinguish himself nationally. He became rector of St Vigor's in 1429 and stayed there until he died. The connection between Cambridge University and the diocese of Ely seems to provide the only surviving explanation for his choice of tomb. Later members of the same family went on to distinguish themselves in the university, a namesake being one of the founding fellows of Queens' College in 1448².

1. A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1963), 123.
2. *CPR*, 1446-52, 143.

If the beginning of the fashion for cadaver tombs in England is to be linked in any way with the arrival of the Dukes of Lancaster on the English throne, that connection is greatly reinforced by the presence of a Leventhorpe amongst this group of tombs. John Leventhorpe the younger, of Sawbridgeworth, died in 1484, but his brass, now mounted murally in the nave of his parish church, has been dated on stylistic grounds to 1448, when his wife died¹.

The Leventhorpe family came originally from Yorkshire, John the father acquiring property in Sawbridgeworth in 1413-14². He was an important member of the Lancastrian court, being Henry Bolingbroke's first Receiver General of the Duchy of Lancaster³. Somerville thinks that he may have been responsible for drawing up the Cowcher Books of the Duchy⁴. He was an executor of both Henry IV and V together with Henry Chichele, Henry Beaufort, Walter Hungerford and Robert Babthorp⁵, the latter himself a likely candidate for the now anonymous cadaver effigy in the Babthorp chantry in Hemingbrough church⁶. He acquired the manor of Shinglehall, formerly the manor of the Mathans, when he came to

1. Emerson, "Monumental Brasses: London Design", 73.
2. E.F. Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century, 1399-1485* (Oxford, 1961), 602.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Jacob, ed., *The Register of Henry Chichele*, II, 421-31.
6. See Chapter II, No. 133.

Hertfordshire¹. He was M.P. for the county in 1413 and 1422, and died in 1433².

His own brass is also in the church of Sawbridgeworth and shows him and his wife, Katherine, daughter of John Hotost³. He is dressed in full armour with, about his neck a Lancastrian collar, not of the usual interlocking ss's type, but plain bands of blue and white componny which seem to have been much rarer, perhaps denoting some special distinction. Two of the original shields remain on the brass: they are *France modern* and *England quarterly*, and *England differenced with a label of three points, each charged with as many fleurs-de-lys*⁴. These are the arms of Henry Bolingbroke, further attesting John Leventhorpe the elder's position at the Lancastrian court. His will also survives, although his son's does not, and is most interesting because, despite the fact that he has such a splendid brass, the preamble to the will says⁵,

cadaver quoque meum ad sepeliendum ubicunque Deo placuerit et ex parte Dei prohibeo ne in die sepulture mei nec postea de bonis meis aliquod convivium fiat magnatibus et proceribus patrie sed recreentur et pascantur...

1. *V.C.H. Hertfordshire*, III, 340.
2. J.C. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, I, *Biographies of the Members of the Commons House 1439-1509* (Oxford, 1936), 537.
3. Personal observations of the brasses *in situ*; Cussons, *Hertfordshire*, 94-95.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Jacob, *Register of Henry Chichele*, II, 526-30.

It is not a "Lollard will", but it does display some of the characteristics which have been identified amongst those unconventional wills of the later Lollards.

That Leventhorpe senior remained an esquire all his life should not be allowed to detract from his evident wealth and power. Indeed, on 9 February, 1413¹, he was granted specific exemption from being put on assizes, juries and inquisitions, from being made sheriff, escheator, coroner, M.P., justice, constable, or from being compelled to take knighthood. John Leventhorpe the elder is clearly an example of the private official promoted civil servant of the crown, a "noble"-man like John Golafre or Thomas Chaucer.

John the son did not have such a distinguished career as his father; but he too held office in the Duchy, being receiver of the Duchy estates set apart for payment of royal wills². He too was an M.P., representing Horsham in 1453-54³. He appears in commissions in Hertfordshire from 1442 onwards, including the Lancastrian array of December 1459 and those commissions established under the re-adeption government⁴. He was, however, pardoned in 1462, He lived to be a very

1. *CPR*, 1408-13, 469.
2. Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century*, 602.
3. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 537.
4. *Ibid.*

old man, because, when he died, his son and heir, Thomas, was already sixty¹. In government records he appears on commissions and in land transactions with his Lancastrian associates, including William de la Pole² and that remarkable turncoat, John Say³. Say became a Yorkist during the 1460's and, indeed, is shown on his brass wearing the Yorkist collar of suns and roses; but he survived the readeption to regain his position as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster⁴. Prior to 1464 he had been Speaker of the House of Commons⁵. He mentions in his will both Edward IV and Henry VII⁶. The Say family were neighbours of the Leventhorpes, holding Sawbridgeworth Manor⁷.

If the likelihood that the brass was laid down in 1448, on the death of Joan Barrington, Leventhorpe's wife, the details of his later career are of limited relevance. Nonetheless, in the company of his father's proven eminence, they serve to place John Leventhorpe the younger in a political and social milieu compatible with that of those studied so far and many of those in the following pages.

1. *V.C.H. Hertfordshire*, III, 340.
2. e.g. *CPR*, 1446-52, 236.
3. e.g. *CPR*, 1452-61, 53, 253, 403, 408 etc.
4. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 747-48.
5. Roskell, *Commons*, passim.
6. *Ibid.*, 363.
7. *V.C.H. Hertfordshire*, III, 335.

One further name must now be added to the clerics amongst the earliest English owners of cadaver tombs, that of William Sponne, Archdeacon of Norwich, who died in 1447 and was buried in a now disastrously "restored" double-decker tomb in the parish church of St Laurence, Towcester. Thanks to the preservation of the William Sponne deeds among the muniments of Jesus College Cambridge¹, there is a comparative wealth of available biographical material on a man rather less prominent in ecclesiastical affairs than the others investigated so far. His is, therefore, perhaps the first case of conscious emulation: there are grounds for seeing all or any of the ~~two~~ tombs considered so far as his model.

The earliest record of Sponne's career is a deed which was in his possession and to which he was witness. It is a grant of the manor of Canewdon, dated 1410, made by John Wakeryng, clerk, to Thomas (Arundel) Archbishop of Canterbury and others². Wakeryng was, of course, archdeacon of Canterbury under Arundel and later became bishop of Norwich, as well as being Keeper of the Privy Seal under Henry V³ and a close associate of Chichele and Beaufort in

1. Cambridge, Jesus College Muniments, Private Papers; Archdeacon William Sponne, boxes 1-9; Jesus College Muniments, Steel Press Shelf 5; Documents once the Property of William Sponne LL.D., Archdeacon of Norfolk.
2. Jesus College, William Sponne, box 1, Documents concerning John Wakeryng, Bishop of Norwich,.
3. Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century*, 218-19.

the Council of Henry VI's minority, one of those intent on keeping Gloucester from assuming full political power¹. Sponne had clearly formed an early connection with Cardinal Beaufort, and his later ecclesiastical promotion may be attributable to the latter's patronage. The deed was clearly acquired by Sponne in his capacity as an executor of Wakeryng, whose will² requires that the manor of Canewdon be sold and the money given to pious uses. In the will, Sponne received a piece of plate, a horse and fifteen marks. Wakeryng's tomb in Norwich Cathedral bears no effigy.

Sponne was a graduate of Gonville Hall, Cambridge³, gaining his M.A. by 1423, his being licensed in Canon Law by 1431. His early life and family connections appear to have been in Leicester, as he owned the deeds to properties which he held jointly with one John Sponne, Rector of Aylleston, possibly an elder brother⁴. These included a messuage with garden in the southern suburbs of the city and a cottage in the High Street opposite the Friars Minor, acquired in 1417. John was dead by 1438, by which time William had amassed much property and several benefices.

1. Ibid., 432-33.
2. Jesus College, William Sponne, box 1.
3. Emden, *Cambridge*, 546.
4. Jesus College, William Sponne, box 2, Title Deeds of property of John Sponne

Sponne's first recorded institution was as rector of Sybbedon (Sibson), Leicestershire in 1408¹. In the same year, the pope licensed him to hold another incompatible benefice². He was admitted as rector of Hevingham, Norfolk in December 1416, and thereafter of Blofield in Norfolk, June 1418. In 1419 he was then elevated to three offices more or less simultaneously, to the position of chancellor to the Bishop of Norwich, to the mastership of the free hospital of Beck, and finally, in December, to the archdeaconry of Norfolk. He held both the latter positions until his death. He was admitted as rector of Towcester, Northants, on 6 June, 1422³.

After his elevation to the three last-mentioned benefices, Sponne can also be seen to have acquired property in keeping with his status. On 20 June, 1426, he acquired by gift with warranty from one John Smyth of Billingford, in his capacity of Master of Beck free chapel, three acres of arable land in Belawe fields⁴. Then, on 6 May 1428, he was granted a forty year lease of the manor of Byntre from Robert, Abbot of St Mary at Crick, at a rent of 100s. per annum⁵. Judging from

1. *CPR, 1405-08*, : *CPL, 1414-15*, 317,405,437.
2. Emden, *Cambridge*, 546.
3. *Ibid*.
4. Jesus College, William Sponne, box 4, Deeds of Various Properties.
5. *Ibid*.

the large collection of bonds which are also to be found among the deeds, some for substantial sums of money, Sponne was a relatively wealthy man by the 1430's¹. For example, one concerns a debt to Sponne of £80.00, owed by one Thomas Fippes of Northampton, with terms of repayment set out on the bond. The Patent Rolls corroborate, in pardons to various persons for failing to appear before the bench to answer Sponne, that he was a creditor of substance².

The most interesting body of material among the Jesus College archive, however, relates to Sponne's chantry foundation, his will and the very full set of documents concerning the execution of that will. Although the archive is styled, "William Sponne Deeds", the last two boxes, 8 and 9, relate to Sponne's chief executor, Thomas Lane, latterly a successor of Newton as Master of Peterhouse College. How they came to be preserved in Jesus College, not founded until later in the fifteenth century, is not clear. It would seem reasonable, however, to suggest that in fact the deeds represent a collection of Lane's, only a number of which he inherited as part of his job as executor to Sponne.

1. Jesus College, William Sponne, box 5, Bonds.
2. CPR, 1429-36, 227, 233, 456; 1441-46, 17, 386.

The others concerned his own estate and in turn were passed on to others in Cambridge after his death, arriving at Jesus perhaps one or two generations later. Hence the collection relates to Sponne only in so far as it demonstrates the important documents which he had kept during his lifetime, and those relating to business incomplete on his death. Most of those discussed so far come into the latter category, being concerned with property and financial matters. Sponne also, however, kept his licences of privilege in his capacity as archdeacon, including papal bulls and an indult¹ retained to reinforce his wide powers as diocesan visitor.

In addition, in the same collection, is Sponne's licence to have a portable altar, issued by John XXIII in October 1413, and a very sumptuously illuminated Letter of Confraternity from Nicholas de Paciencia, Abbot of the Monastery of St Mary's, Langley in Norfolk, of the Premonstratensian Order. This last, a most beautiful artefact in its own right, guaranteed Sponne all the benefits of confraternity and undertook that anniversaries of his death would be celebrated to assist him in purgatory and ensure heavenly happiness for his soul. It represents a small part of the elaborate and costly provision which William Sponne made for his immortal soul.

1. Jesus College, Steel Press Shelf 5, Documents once the Property of William Sponne, LL.D.; CPL, 1427-47, 205.

Two copies of Sponne's will have survived', one being a draft not factually different from the fair copy. Although the will contains many references to the funeral of the testator, at no point does it mention his tomb:

In dei nomine amen Quarto die Septembris Anno domini Millesimo CCCC quadragesimo septimo Ego Willielmus Sponne clericus sano mente commendo testamentum meum in hunc modum In primis lego animam meam deo beate marie & omnibus sanctis eius & corpus meum ad sepeliendum in ecclesia parochiali de Toucester Item lego cuilibet sacerdoti vestimenti ad exequies meas iiii Et cuilibet clerico honesto iij et pueris clericis jd ...

He went on to leave money for paupers, for candles, thirteen paupers carrying torches, wearing white robes, and all the provisions necessary for a moderately elaborate funeral, warning nonetheless about *excessime in edendo & bibendo*. Sponne emphasised then (*volo & specialiter desidero*) that one thousand masses should be said for his soul during the year after his death. His executors are to appoint two chaplains to pray for his soul, for the souls of John Wakeryng, Henry V, John Cheydon warden of the hanaper, John Springthorp, John Russell and Elizabeth his wife, and all the faithful departed. These were to take place for fifty years after his death.

1. Jesus College, William Sponne, box 7, Will and Probate. All further references relate to documents in this box unless otherwise stated.

William Sponne's other bequests are comprehensive in scope and generous in scale¹. He left money to the churches of Sibbesdon, Weldon, Bromsgrove, Coxton, Blofield, Hevingham, Totenhale and Penford, for the rebuilding of Kynnesbyr church as well as the upkeep of chapels and bridges in that parish. Towcester church received a special bequest for the ploughmen of the parish, and the churches and poor of the Archdeaconry of Norfolk received £40. Bequests were made to orders of friars in Norwich, Thetford, Cambridge and Northampton; to priors and canons at Lauda, Norwich, Daventry, Wymondham, Hykeling, Northwold Ashby Betelsden, Norwich and St Leonards; to abbots and monks at Crick and Langley; to prioresses and nuns at Sewardsey and Shopes; to vicars and clerks at Northwold, as well as abbess de la Pré there. Norwich Cathedral received a jewel worth £3.13.4. The confraternities of Bablake, Coventry; Holy Trinity, Bishop's Lynn, and St Mary, Northwold, were also recipients of monies. Bequests to private individuals included £10 and a silver orphrey to Master Thomas Lane, and four marks to Michael Woodcock of Tenham, *fr. mei super lixerie*. Finally £40 was left for the repaving of the town of Towcester. The executors appointed were Thomas Lane, John Clynt, Thomas Eborhale and Thomas Wale, draper of London.

1. Extracted from the very full and accurate unpublished catalogue of the deeds, held by the archivist of Jesus College. I am most grateful to the current archivist, Mr Mills, for his co-operation in letting me examine the archive.

Included with the two copies of the will are several documents dealing in some detail with its provisions. Letters of administration were relatively speedily acquired from William Alnwick, bishop of Lincoln and Alexander Prowet, commissary general of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Receipts for various bequests include one from the parish church of Kynnesbury for the repair of a chapel, one from the confraternity of Holy Trinity and another from the rector of Towcester for £20 for the repair of the rectory and chancel of the church. The rector of Towcester, Thomas Nynehyde, and his churchwardens also received a series of service books for the use of the church: a *Legenda Nova* worth 12 marks; two antiphonaries worth 24 marks; another old antiphonary, 10s.; two graduals, 4 marks; two processionaries, 10s. and a new pair of organs priced at 6 marks. On 28 September 1448, the accounts of the executors had been audited and they were discharged by Alnwick.

In January 1453/4, the executors were still busy with the will, as they had a deed drawn up separating the ensuing actions of Wale, the London draper, from those of the others. The implication is that there had been a rift between Lane and his fellow executors. Eborhale is nowhere mentioned in the deeds concerning the probate, so may have died before he could participate effectively.

Nowhere amongst this set of documents which is clearly exceptionally detailed, however, is there any mention of Sponne's tomb. The implication may be that he had it erected during his lifetime in the same manner as did Chichele, and perhaps even treated it as an object for personal contemplation. Two further pieces of evidence corroborate this view. First of all, there is cryptic but clear evidence of Sponne's residence in Towcester prior to his death. The box containing the will and probate documents also contains a grant of treasure-trove whereby William Beauchamp, steward of the royal Household, and John Norys, Esquire of the Body, on 30 November 1448, claimed goods of gold and silver found in Towcester parsonage, including some hidden inside a stone wall, because the owner was unknown. Four days later, however, the same officers of the crown released goods to Sponne's executors, implying that Sponne had inhabited the rectory and had hidden valuables in his residence.

Secondly, there survives a copy of a deed, dated 5 January 1451¹, which deals with gifts of lands to Sponne's chantry. In this, Thomas Lane asks for prayers for his soul and for the soul of Sponne from those to whom he has demised by charter a messuage called "le Tabard" and the lands pertaining to it in Towcester, Wodeburcott and Calcot.

1. Jesus College, William Sponne, box 6, Documents kept together because they are in the form of Rolls.

Those involved included, Master William Halle and Master Nicholas Germayn, clerks, the chaplains of the chantry called "Sponne's Chantry", founded by Master William Sponne. The feoffees named were to let the messuage at the dearest price that could be obtained and present their accounts to the rector, curate and steward of St Laurence, and to Robert Wale, during his lifetime, annually. The rent received (up to a value of £40) was to be kept in a chest with three locks.

Both the wording and the date of the roll, a bare four years after Sponne's death, might suggest that the fabric of the chantry at least was already in place. On the other hand, letters patent' of 17 November 1448, licensed the executors of William Sponne,

late archdeacon of Norfolk, who purposed to found a chantry of two chaplains to celebrate divine service daily at the altar of St Mary in the parish church of St Laurence, Toucestre, co, Northampton, but died before fulfilling his purpose, and on his deathbed prayed his said executors to fund the same with all speed - to found the same chantry...which chantry shall be called 'Sponneschauntrie'...

There seems no alternative but to conclude that Sponne's executors chose and ordered a tomb to their own tastes and

1. CPR, 1446-52, 204.

failed to retain any of the documentation relating to a rather costly and hasty operation. Such a view, however, leaves the problem of what happened to the body of the deceased archdeacon during the eleven months before the licence was granted, especially in view of the fact that it was, apparently and most unusually, integral to the tomb and not buried under it in the church floor¹,

When the church was renewed in 1835, it was thought necessary to lower the actual tomb of the archdeacon, and it was then discovered that the oblong sepulchre which contained the body was formed of rough slabs of limestone, strongly cemented together, with an opening loosely closed on the south side. The skeleton of the deceased was found in a perfect state of preservation, lying on a bed of fine white sand, and with no trace of any vestments or coffin,

The body may, of course, have been transferred to the tomb when it was ready, but the reportedly undisturbed nature of the skeleton and the absence of any containing garments or coffin argue strongly against this. Indeed the absence of the usual trappings of the corpse, without any hint of a provision requiring peculiar mortification of the dead flesh is inexplicable, however it is regarded.

1, *VCH, Northamptonshire*, I (1902), 411.

On the other hand, the will, the licence and the apparent preoccupations of the executors leave room for the argument that Sponne died having erected his tomb but without having made material future provision for the masses for his soul which actually constituted the foundation of a chantry. In that case the provision of the fabric and the payment for it constituted completed business before Sponne died, business for which he or his executors did not see the necessity of retaining bills and receipts. On balance, the existence of separate financial provisions needed to found a chantry as institution as opposed to a chantry chapel as structure, seems to provide a plausible reading of the surviving documentary evidence. It also suggests that Sponne's may be another case of a tomb erected in advance of death for the contemplation of its prospective occupant. One is left to speculate what other wishes Sponne uttered on his deathbed, which could explain so curious a disposition of his mortal remains.

All the remaining cadaver tombs which can be dated to the period prior to 1460 commemorate laymen. Among these, two small Kentish shroud brasses bear the earliest dates of death of any known English lay tombs of this type. Both commemorate women, **Joan Mareys** of Sheldwich in Kent, and **Joan Banne** of Gillingham, also in Kent, both of whom died in 1431 and who in all probability knew each other. The source of inspiration could be Chichele's tomb, but what seems more likely is that there was an intermediary model and a delay before the brasses were laid down.

Joan Mareys, judging from the length of time by which her husband outlived her, died young. She is said to have been the daughter of William Langley of Knolton¹, and was the wife of William Mareys who later married Joanna, daughter of Bartholomew Bourne of Sharsted, a widow. It is Joan's husband William Mareys who provides a possible explanation for this tomb, for he not only served as esquire of the body to Henry V, but is chiefly remembered for his part as executor of Cardinal Henry Beaufort's will. Hasted also noted that he was esquire to Henry Chichele². His appearances in public records almost entirely postdate his first wife's death and concern either his execution of Beaufort's will or his role as sheriff and J.P. for Kent.

1. Robertson, "Sheldwich Church", 288-302, 290 n.

2. Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, 454-55.

In the former role, he occurs in the Patent Rolls for 1452, receiving with the other executors a grant in payment of a loan of £2,000¹, just one part of the delicate resolution of Beaufort's immense and complex financial affairs². To a large extent, Beaufort's legacies to pious causes were left at the discretion of the executors, and it is in consequence of this that we find them, for instance, in 1455, being licensed to found an almshouse in fulfilment of his intention in the hospital of St Cross, Winchester³.

William Mareys, was, therefore, clearly a valued retainer within the inner *sanctum* of the Lancastrian court. His own will⁴ is remarkable only for its terseness, launching straight into his bequests,

This is the last will of William Marys as it folowith
after wretin ther is to witte ...

He makes no provision for his burial and appears to have left no direct heirs, as his property went to his brother

1. *CPR, 1446-51*, 561.

2. K.B. McFarlane, "At the Deathbed of Cardinal Beaufort", *Studies in Medieval History presented to F.M. Powicke*, ed. R.W. Hunt, W.A. Pantin and R.W. Southern (Oxford, 1948), 405-428, *passim*.

3. *CPR, 1452-61*, 233.

4. *PCC, 18 Stokton, Prob. 11/4*, 136v.

Thomas, a chaplain¹, and to John and Katherine Brumston, his second wife's children by her first marriage. He made provision for a chantry for his soul, those of Henry V and Beaufort. He left an estate, "in and of the marsh called Rawlondsmarsh", although, Hasted believed that he held the manor of Harbilton, near Harrietsham². He died in 1459 and Weever recorded a brass to William Mareys and the second Joan in Tenham church, long since obliterated³.

In his more local capacity as sheriff of Kent, William Mareys is found in the company of Richard Bamme⁴. Bamme frequently occurs on commissions in the county, sometimes with an unnamed sheriff who may have been Mareys⁵. Richard Bamme was husband to Joan Bamme whose shroud brass, now lost, was laid down in the church of St Mary Magdalen, Gillingham. She was daughter of John Martyn, a judge of the

1. *List of Early Chancery Proceedings*, I, PRO Lists and Indexes XII, 245/181, being a bond settled between Richard Nedam, mercer, of London and Thomas Mareys, chaplain, and Joan Mareys, widow, executors of William Mareys esq.
2. Hasted, *History of Kent*, V, 454
3. *Ibid.*, VII, 293. At 546, Hasted also mentions a brass at Preston, deanery of Ospringe, Kent, to William Mareys d.1470, esquire to Henry V, but this is clearly not the same man.
4. *CPR*, 1441-46, 199.
5. *CPR*, 1436-41, 89, 315, 369, 536; 1441-46, 198, 245, 61, 431, 472; 1446-51, 41, 318, 383; 1452-61, 129; *CFR*, 1445-52, 174.

common pleas, and mother to John Bamme¹. Despite his apparent connections within the county of Kent, Richard Bamme was primarily a Londoner. His father was Adam Bamme, goldsmith and lord mayor in 1391², Richard first appearing in public records styled "citizen of London"³. The father had connections with Dartford⁴, but Richard himself seems to have been the first to acquire property in Gillingham⁵.

In his will, dated 1452 and proved the same year⁶, he asks that he should be buried in the church of St George, in "puddynglane london", next to Adam Bamme his father, establishing there a chantry for himself, his parents and benefactors. But he then goes on to bequeath money to St Mary Magdalen, Gillingham, and instructs his executors to establish, *unum lapideum marmoruum ad ponendum super tumulum Johanne uxoris meo...valoris iiij li xiijs iiijd*. His executors are all Londoners. The residue goes for his mortuary and to pay his debts. There is no mention of the son.

1. Hasted, *History of Kent*, IV, 245.
2. *Ibid.*, 238; e.g. *CPR*, 1388-92, 281, 284, 349, 390, 478, 366, 423; 1392-96, 1396-99 several similar references; c.f. R. Bird, *The Turbulent London of Richard II* (London, 1949), 67-68, 70, 146-47.
3. *CPR*, 1429-36, 388, 131.
4. Hasted, *History of Kent*, II, 310, 336.
5. *Ibid.*, IV, 238.
6. PCC, 17 Rous, Prob. 11/1, 133r.

Consequently it can be established that, although little is known of the two ladies commemorated, these two tombs were laid down by families known to each other in the same county. That they also knew of Chichele's tomb is probable, though the intermediary source for the design may have been a London workshop: workshop B, having produced Chichele's inscription, was already producing shrouded figures on brasses. Both families too had London or court connections. A date later than the Leventhorpe brass is established for Joan Bamme, Joan Mareys's brass being a more interesting case. Undoubtedly William Mareys and John Leventhorpe moved in the same circles, and there are distinct design similarities between the two brasses, although they were produced by different workshops, especially in the unusual feature of having the figures hold hearts. The likely pattern of influence is that workshop B produced the Leventhorpe brass first, then workshop E produced Mareys and Bamme in quick succession. The possibility that the Mareys brass is earlier, even earliest of all, cannot, however, be entirely dismissed.

There are four remaining tombs bearing cadaver effigies which can be dated to the period before 1460. The Richard Notfelde, presumably "Nutfield", d. 1446, commemorated in the earliest extant skeleton brass in the church of St John the Baptist, Margate, Kent, has proved, unfortunately, impossible to identify. The other early skeleton,

commemorating Thomas Childes, and formerly in the church of St Laurence, Norwich, is also obscure, though for a different reason. H.O. Clark's notes taken from the late eighteenth-century notebooks of Rev. Thomas Sugden Talbot¹, quote the inscription, which was lost when Clark wrote, as reading,

*Hic iacet Thomas Childes quo'da' Clericus istius
eccl'ie qui obiit decimo septimo die mensis julii A°
d'ni M° CCCC° LII° cuius a'ie p'picietur de' ame'.*

The brass is currently located in the Norwich Castle Museum, without any inscription accompanying it. A will in the Norwich Consistory Court records², proved in 1457, and made by a Thomas Childes, survives, but he was clearly a layman.

In this will, dated 15 July, 1456, the testator commends his soul to the omnipotent Virgin Mary and requests burial in the church of St Laurence in Norwich. No tomb is specified. After leaving twenty pence to the church fabric, he leaves all his *vtensilia domus* to Matilda his wife. The executors, wife and son, are to use the residue of his estate to pay for his funeral and to pay off his debts. The document is short, written in Latin and opens with conventional

1. H.O. Clark, "An Eighteenth-Century Record of Norfolk Sepulchral Brasses", *Norfolk Archaeology*, 26 (1938), 85-102, 92.
2. N.C.C., 8, 31 Brosyard.

formulae but without stating the testator's occupation: nothing could be more unexceptional.

A Thomas Childes, also in the same period, rented a cottage and one acre to Richard Willius and Alice his wife¹ in Gaywood, Norfolk, at a rent of 2½d. The sum of available information does not, therefore, amount to much. There may well have been two Thomas Childes', who died within a decade of one another both requested burial in St Laurence's church, but one was a clerk and the other a layman, the clerk having the skeleton brass. It is regrettable that neither the Childes nor the Notfelde skeletons, the earliest examples of a distinct iconographic sub-group, emanating from two different workshops, can produce evidence of the variant's likely provenance.

Another obscure Norfolk brass of the same period must vie with the Leventhorpe brass as the finest shroud brass in the country. The difficulty once more lies not in the ascription of the brass to a named individual, John Brigge of Salle, but in determining which John Brigge is commemorated. Greenwood and Norris summarise:¹

1. H.L. Bradfer-Lawrence, "Gaywood Oragge, 1486-7", *Norfolk Archaeology*, 24 (1932), 146-183, 156.
2. Greenwood and Norris, *Brasses of Norfolk Churches*, 50.

...from stylistic evidence this was engraved in mid 15th cent., though the will of his son Thomas, dated and proved 1494, requests, "Alia petra manore pro tumulo Johis Brygg patris mei in ecclie de Salle 26s. 8d.", for which price a slab and simple inscr. only would have been provided, so perhaps No. V [the shroud] is for the great-grandfather and not the father of the testator, and was put down some years after his death, or represents some other John Briggs, for one is needed as the husband of Indent-14 which lies adjacent...

Indent-14 commemorates Chistina Briggs, "recently wife of John", and is thought to be of the same date as Indent-7, to Thomas Brigge and his two wives. He died in 1444 and was the grandfather of the testator¹. Complicating matters still further, a Brigge pedigree from a sixteenth century Visitation of Norfolk², demonstrates that there were many generations (undated) of Brigges of Salle, with a John or a Thomas in almost every one. The family intermarried with the Beaupres and the Talboys among other local families.

What is more, the names John and Thomas Brigge are sufficiently commonplace in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries to make tracing one member of a minor family impossible to achieve from crown records. A Thomas Brigge was, however, collector of taxes in King's Lynn at the turn of the century, and a William Brigge was also

1. Ibid.
2. *The Visitations of Norfolk, 1563, 1589 and 1613*, Harleian Society 32 (1869), 55-56.

collector of taxes in Norfolk on several occasions in the same period'. All other references are too geographically dispersed to refer plausibly to the same family. What may, therefore, be said of this brass is simply that it is early, fine London workmanship, and commissioned by a member of a North Norfolk minor manorial family, the first of many such in that county to favour the shroud brass design.

The final brass to fall in the period before 1460 is not one on which the principal effigy is a shrouded figure. Richard Manfield, d. 1455, is shown on his brass in Taplow parish church, Buckinghamshire, in civil dress, with his sister Isabel. Their half-brother, John, by their father's second wife, however, appears as a shrouded figure with crosses on the shroud at the head. The verse inscription², relates that all three died young, and John may have died at a very early age, making the shroud, therefore, a version of the chrysom. The brass is not, strictly speaking, of the same iconographic order as most of those considered here. It belongs, however, to a family connected to a remarkable degree with many of those others studied.

1. *CFR*, 1399-1405, 260, 116, 189, 285, 291.
2. King, "Eight English Verses", 495.

Robert Manfield, the probable grandfather of the three commemorated children, acquired the manor of Amerdon in Taplow from 1433¹. His son, their father, also Robert, was master of the mint in the reign of Henry VI². Both are commemorated on brasses now fragmentary and palimpsest in the same church. The brass to the first has an inscription, recut in the sixteenth century³,

*Conditur hic Miles Robertus nomine Manfelde
Aulicus effulgens Henrici tempore quinti
Qui varios subiit sumo pro rege labores
Dum Gallos et Normannos per bella Domabat
Armiger ac quartus H. pro tutamini sexti
Exitit electus dum mors in funera traxit.*

Robert the father is commemorated on a neighbouring slab. He appears frequently in state records, both in a local capacity, as J.P. and M.P. in Buckinghamshire, and in a series of court appointments during the 1440's, such as Marshal of the Household, Master of the Mint in the Tower of London and Calais, Usher of the Chamber, Victualler of Calais and Keeper of the Lions⁴.

On the same slab on which he is commemorated is also set an inscription to a third Robert, presumably the surviving brother of the shrouded figure. He died in 1500 and was

1. *V.C.H. Buckinghamshire*, III, 243.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*, 245.
4. *CFR*, 1436-41, 1441-46, *passim*; *CFR*, 1437-45, 140, 146, 215, 220; 1445-52, 1453-61, *passim*.

married to Jane Feteplace who died in 1512¹. There is a Feteplace shroud brass in Childrey, Berkshire, to her brother William, d.1516; and his wife Elizabeth², who was daughter of Joan Walrond, d. 1477, is commemorated in yet another shroud brass in Childrey³. The brass to John could have been the choice of either his father, who moved in the same court circles as many others who chose the design, or his brother, whose wife's family came to favour shroud brasses. The composition is unique. There are no other surviving shroud brasses with crosses on them, although there is a contemporary window in the Chapter House of York Minster, window N.2, in which the Virgin Mary's funeral is depicted. The Virgin is shown shrouded, with a cross on the shroud⁴.

Although there are connections between many of those who are commemorated in England's earliest cadaver tombs, there are almost as many points of contrast as there are similarities. As far as the clerks are concerned, and not forgetting the problematic Treasurer of York Minster⁵, there is the Cambridge connection. Here possibly Archbishop Thomas Arundel may act as some kind of link, not only with the

1. *V.C.H. Buckinghamshire*, III, 245.
2. See above Chapter II, no. 63.
3. See above Chapter II, no. 28.
4. Personal observation of the glass *in situ*.
5. See Appendix 2.

political upheaval which began the Lancastrian dynasty, but with a network of clerical and lay associates. The earliest lay cadaver tomb is that of his great-nephew. Yet his involvement in this study must remain marginal, despite his unconventional will. He was patrician, fiercely orthodox and died before there was apparently a single cadaver tomb in the country. On the other hand, and perhaps more influential, there is the Oxford and Wykehamist connection, Chichele as opposed to Arundel. Moreover Chichele and Fleming seem to reflect very different attitudes when church and Lancastrian state interests came into conflict. By the 1410's and 1420's, the dubious category of "Lancastrian" must in any case be further subdivided as between Beaufort supporters and detractors.

Perhaps the tendency to discover links with powerful promoters is of itself invalid; another way to regard these innovators is to recognise that none of them comes from an old established family - all are men who rose to be influential from relatively obscure origins, by their own abilities, but with the necessary patronage. The patron is, thus, bound to be monarch, pope, cardinal or archbishop whose star is in the ascendant. In that case the identity of a patron may not then be as important as the status of the tomb owner himself as an individual of "new blood". When the parallel dissemination of the cadaver tomb design

amongst the laity is added, the impression is one of even greater diffusion. There are a number of modest and remarkably early shroud brasses, which have not heretofore been much considered, alongside the famous early double tombs of aristocrats and prelates. Little can, therefore, be made of the earliest cadaver tomb owners as a social or political grouping. Yet, as the following chapter will show, the distribution of these early tombs begins to make a little more sense retrospectively when the slightly more cohesive groupings of the subsequent twenty years are studied. Between 1460 and 1480 the fashion for the cadaver tomb comes to seem more obviously socially and politically polarised.

Chapter V

THE CADAVER TOMB 1460-1480:

THE CLERGY AND THE LAITY

As far as we can discern from surviving examples, the cadaver tomb never achieved more than a limited popularity in England. It is easier to chart individual allegiances and connections between those commemorated in this way who died between 1460 and 1480, than it is in any other period studied. Those who died during this period were all active during the time when the so-called "Lancastrian" and "Yorkist" factions were in direct conflict for the throne. It is not intended to suggest here that the tombs in question belonged to those who actually joined battle in the "Wars of the Roses". Apart from anything else, the view that there was unbroken civil strife from 1460 until 1485 is fashionably dismissed as an historical myth, fuelled by Shakespeare and Tudor "golden age" propaganda'. Nevertheless, too many of those who will be considered in this chapter owed special allegiance to the king in his distinct capacity as Duke of Lancaster for the fact to be dismissed as pure coincidence.

More specifically, the network of loyalties already foreshadowed to some extent by Henry Chichele, John

Leventhorpe and particularly John Golafre, may be traced back to the Beauforts, retrospectively legitimized children of Catherine Swynford, née Roet, later third wife of John of Gaunt. Thomas Swynford, Catherine's son was accused, actually if implausibly, of the murder of Richard II by Adam of Usk. Catherine's sister, Philippa, was lady-in-waiting to Constanza of Castille, John of Gaunt's second wife, and was married to Geoffrey Chaucer the poet. Their son, also Thomas, held Queen Isabella in his capacity as Constable of Wallingford². The close allegiance between Chaucers, Swynfords, Beauforts and the Crown continued throughout the period of the Lancastrian dynasty and will continually reassert itself in this group of tomb owners. It may seem in what follows that there is an unnecessary burden of irrelevant detail; but often even a land transaction where certain names appear together as feoffees can be important in establishing a person as part of a social milieu.

1. John Gillingham, *The Wars of the Roses* (London, 1981), 1-14.
2. Florence R. Scott, "A New Look at *The Complaint of Chaucer to his Empty Purse*", *English Language Notes*, 2 (1964), 81-87. The discussion of the strength of the poet's case for requesting an annuity from Henry IV summarises the relationships in question.

Sampson Meverell died in 1462 and was buried in the parish church of Tideswell, Derbyshire. His tomb is an imposing one and probably was expensive, having a brass above and underneath a stone cadaver. Little can be discovered about the man from the public records and his will does not appear to survive. An entry in the Close Rolls of 1432¹, shows that he was son of John Meverell, lord of Throwley. On 20 May, John Meverell granted a moiety of the manor of Bishopston and the advowson of the church there to his son Sampson and his wife Isabel, John duke of Bedford, John Stafford bishop of Bath and Wells and with remainder to Sampson's younger brother, Richard. An inquisition *post mortem* was held for John Meverell in Staffordshire on 9 May 1443². After his father's death, Sampson appears on several commissions as J.P. for Derbyshire and Staffordshire³. Wedgwood does not include him as M.P. for either shire, although he is always referred to as "knight"⁴. He may have stood before 1435, but this seems unlikely as his father was still alive at that date.

Without the long and detailed epitaph on the tomb, this might be all that was known of Sampson Meverell. The

1. CCL, 1429-35, 183.
2. CFR, 1437-45, 233.
3. CPR, 1446-52, 595; 1452-61, 403, 559, 677.
4. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, begins 1435.

epitaph should be treated with caution as it is part of a nineteenth-century restoration: for instance there is an alleged connection with "Lord John Montagu", which cannot be correct on purely chronological grounds and must refer to Thomas Montagu, second husband of Alice Chaucer¹. Nevertheless, the epitaph presents an exceptionally detailed account of Meverell's career². That career allegedly began in the service of Michael Lord Audley and his wife, Elizabeth, before he joined the Montagu retinue. Montagu appointed him Captain of "Those Wor'pfull places in France". After Montagu's death, Meverell passed into the service of John duke of Bedford and was at eleven battles with him, as a result of which he was knighted. He also survived Bedford and was thereafter in the service of John Stafford, Archbishop of Canterbury, Henry Chichele's successor, where he remained until his death. The epitaph adds, cryptically, that this long career proves that "grace passeth cunning".

Richard Willughby, a near neighbour, later emulated the same combination of brass and stone cadaver³. Meverell also

1. See 337-52 below,
2. See above Chapter II, no. 15,
3. See above Chapter II, no. 21; 330-33 below,

appears in land disputes with another northern family, the Folijambes¹, one of whom was later commemorated retrospectively by the cadaver tomb in St Mary's and All Saints, Chesterfield. This tomb, however, is more likely to be connected with the Beresford tomb at Fenny Bentley, Derbyshire, which was also erected retrospectively².

Many medieval tombs probably were chosen and erected by descendants of the commemorated, reflecting the tastes of a subsequent generation. Thomas and Agnes Beresford were luckier in this respect than was John Paston. His family, having impressed the neighbours with a most ostentatious funeral in 1466, were thereafter entirely negligent in carrying out his wishes to have a tomb and chantry established at Bromholm³. The only real guarantee for anyone anxious about the provisions in this world for their soul in the next, was to attend to the erection of a tomb and the establishment of a chantry during their own lifetime. This was the precaution taken by, among others, **Thomas Bekynton**, Bishop of Bath and Wells, who died in Wells on 14 January 1465⁴, almost fourteen years after he had had

1. *List of Early Chancery Proceedings*, I, PRO Lists and Indexes XII, 19, 180, 330.
2. The Beresford tomb, see 100 above, strictly speaking falls within the group under examination, Thomas Beresford having died in 1473. It has, however, been thought best not to include it in the present survey as the inspiration for the tomb belongs to a date probably some 120 years later.
3. Colin Richmond, "Religion and the Fifteenth-Century English Gentleman", *The Church, Politics and Patronage in the Fifteenth Century*, ed, Barrie Dobson (Gloucester, 1984), 193-208.
4. Emden, *BRUD*, I, 158.

his double-decker cadaver tomb erected in his chantry chapel there¹.

Something has already been said about Bekynton's career², his intellectual associates and his aesthetic tastes. He has much in common with Henry Chichele, whose patronage he enjoyed. He too was born into a "middle class" family, being the son of a clothmaker or weaver from the village of Beckington, Somerset³. He was admitted to Winchester College as a scholar in 1403 and, again as a scholar nominated by the founder, to New College, Oxford, in June 1406. He became a fellow two years later. He had achieved his doctorate in canon law by 1418. Whilst he was at New College, he was a member of the delegation from the faculty of laws which petitioned Henry Chichele about its grievances against the faculty of medicine⁴. Bekynton's background and education, therefore, was the classic fifteenth-century preparation for a life of ecclesiastical and governmental administration.

Throughout the 1420's, Bekynton amassed benefices. An example of his success in this area may be illustrated by

1, See Chapter II, no.15.

2, See 182 *et seq.* above.

3, Emden, *BRUD*, I, 157; Arnold Judd, *The Life of Thomas Bekynton; Secretary to King Henry VI and Bishop of Bath and Wells 1443-65* (Chichester, 1961), 3. The source is drawn from William of Worcester.

4, Emden, *BRUD*, I, 157.

the fact that he was, at various times, canon of York, Salisbury, Chichester, Lichfield and St Pauls¹. He was also appointed Dean of Arches in 1423². In the subsequent decade he may be seen working more closely with Chichele as an official of the court of Canterbury, in particular as prolocutor of the lower house of convocation in 1433-34³. Bekynton's period as ecclesiastical administrator, therefore, coincides with the delicate years of Chichele's episcopacy, with the need to reassure the papacy that England was neither pro-Wyclif nor anti-papalist, whilst preserving the relative constitutional autonomy of an English church. He attended the Council of Basel in 1432⁴.

At the same time as Thomas Bekynton was moving up the ladder of ecclesiastical promotion as a busy canon lawyer, he also attracted lay patronage. In 1423, he was appointed Chancellor to Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester⁵. Given the cultured tastes of Duke Humphrey, it was probably in this office that Bekynton first made contact with the Continental scholars who were later to become his correspondents and friends, thereby reinforcing his contacts in the papal curia. From this office, he moved on to become secretary to

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid; Judd, *Life of Bekynton*, 14.
3. Ibid, 20.
4. Emden, *BRUD*, I, 158.
5. Ibid., 157.

Henry VI., a post which he held from 1438-43. In 1443-44 he was Keeper of the Privy Seal¹.

It is from this middle period of Bekynton's career, rather than the subsequent twenty years of his episcopacy at Wells, that most direct evidence about his character survives, chiefly from the collections of letters, official and personal, and journals, which have survived from his hand. Apart from the information about his standpoint on individual issues these afford, they as a body support the widely held view that he revolutionised the art of epistolography in England according to models which are loosely described as "humanist".

He was also employed by the crown as an ambassador during this period, and it is from his various missions in this capacity, without exception abortive, that some of the more personal material comes. His mission to Calais in 1439, when he was forced by Beaufort to stay behind with the Bishops of St Davids and Norwich and the Earl of Oxford, gave rise to a letter to William Say, written in August, in which Bekynton gives vent to expressions of ennui²:

*Non facile te crediturum reor, quanta mentis alacritate
litteras tuas legerim, quantaque me letitia ipse*

1. Ibid., 158.
2. Williams, ed. *Bekynton; Correspondence*, I, 103-04.

perfuderint. Prius enim quicquid egerum, comedens, bibens, sed et dormiens, torquebar spiritu, et in iis quae domi agerentur erat cogitatio cordis mei semper, hisce cruciabar curis, ita ut pane a meipso alienus efficerar.

More frustrating still, for the apparently efficient administrator who revelled in the company of an exclusive coterie of cultivated friends, must have been the long autumn and winter of 1442. On this occasion, Bekynton and Sir Robert Roos waited for Hans the painter to complete portraits of the three daughters of the Duke of Armagnac, from which Henry VI proposed to choose his bride, in political circumstances which made it increasingly unlikely that such an alliance would be advantageous to either party. Despite the delicacy of the situation, the ambassadors were, in early November, moved to write to the Duke's secretary, Batute, that Edward Hull had arrived from England and was, "much astonished at our long and fruitless stay in this place"¹. In July of the same year, Bekynton had written most emotively to his own monarch touching the condition of Aquitaine²,

Wherefore moost gracious and moost christian Prince, we beseech your high and moost noble grace that ye wel opene your ighes of pite and compassion upon your true subgetts here, which as nowe lyven in grete dred, and withoute that help be had they rather been lyke to perishe...

1. N. H. Nicholas, ed., *A Journal by One of the Suite of Thomas Beckington afterwards Bishop of Bath and Wells, During an Embassy to Negotiate a Marriage between Henry VI and a Daughter of the Count of Armagnac AD MCCCCXLIX* (London, 1828), 61-63.
2. *Ibid.*, 17.

An overall view of his correspondence shows Thomas Bekynton in his own behalf to have been capable of the most elaborate rhetoric of gratitude, as when the Bishop of Chichester bestowed the prebend of Henfield upon him in November 1439¹, but equally of being capable of the most scathing intellectual snobbery toward his ostensible friend, John Wheathampstead, Abbot of St Albans²:

Rogo, pater, construe latinum hoc, quod literis mihi missis inscripseras, ipsum juvare vellitis in sancto devotoque proposito suo. "Vellitis;" pater, quæ pars? si verbum hoc, declinando verbum Volo, nullibi reperias, quid prohibet concludere, quod incongrue sis locutus? Helas! pater, helas! ubi ferula? ubi virga, quibus tam incongrui correctoris temeritas feriatur?

John Wheathampstead was one of the small group of personal friends to whom Bekynton wrote frequently. Another was fellow Wykehamist, Andrew Holes, who became an important contact in the papal curia³. In 1441, Bekynton wrote to this friend deploring the pitiful condition of New College⁴:

...Memoratum Collegium in miserabilem, proh dolor! paupertatem his annis dilapsim est...

Bekynton's concern with his old college was more than nostalgic. One of the many common causes he appears to have

1. Williams, ed., *Bekynton; Correspondence*, I, 208.
2. *Ibid.*, I, 113-115.
3. *Ibid.*, I, xxviii; Judd, *Life of Bekynton*, 6.
4. Williams ed., *Bekynton; Correspondence*, I, 226.

held with Chichele is a general concern to promote education. He had, from the early days of his association with the elder Wykhamist, been involved in the latter's campaigns for the promotion of graduates¹. Later, in his capacity as secretary to the king, he was involved in the foundation of Eton College and King's College, Cambridge².

The year of 1441 is marked by many letters and gifts going between Bekynton and Holes and Richard Caunton, another Englishman at the curia. He also wrote and sent gifts to the Italians Biondo of Forli and Angelo Gatola. These relationships clearly had their political motives, as Bekynton wished to be well esteemed in the pope's eyes, but they also went beyond that, as the continuing exchange of letters, ideas and books indicates³.

In 1443, Thomas Bekynton's attempts to ingratiate himself with Rome paid off on the death of Henry Chichele. His initial nomination by the pope was to the see of Salisbury, but this proved abortive as Bishop Aiscough declined translation to Canterbury. Stafford, however, did not, and it was to his vacant see of Bath and Wells that Bekynton was

1. Judd, *Life of Bekynton*, 20.
2. Ibid., 48-56; Emden, *BRUD*, I, 158; Cecil Monro, ed., *Letters of Queen Margaret of Anjou and Bishop Bekynton*, Camden Society (1863), 79.
3. Williams, ed., *Bekynton; Correspondence*, I, xxvii-xxxi; e.g. 169-72.

provided on 24 July 1443¹. He was consecrated in the old collegiate church of Eton on 13 October and afterwards celebrated his first mass *in pontificalibus* on the site of the newly begun college chapel there.

As bishop, Bekynton spent seven of his twenty-one years out of the diocese engaged in affairs of state. He employed two suffragans, James Blakedon, bishop of Achoury in Tuam and John Valens, Augustinian canon of Blythburgh. Nonetheless, he was a great benefactor to his diocese, fortifying the cathedral close at Wells in the wake of Cade's rebellion, and building elegant gateways in the town. He added nothing to the cathedral church itself, but was zealous in the maintenance of its fabric. *His attentions were above all* lavished upon the bishop's palace, to which he added a hall, parlour, kitchen and stables, guest chambers, cloister, gateway and porter's lodge². Nor was he, in Wells, to be isolated from his coterie of friends, for the chapter during his episcopacy included Hole, Thomas Chaundler, Thomas Gascoigne and other notables³.

In his will, made on 3 November 1464, he left further benefactions to the cathedral and town of Wells, to New

1. Emden, *BRUD*, I, 157.
2. Judd, *Life of Bekynton*, 109-19; 153-59.
3. *Ibid.*, 125.

College and Winchester College. Though generous in scale, it is in no way an exceptional document'. There are no family bequests, and masses are requested for the souls of Duke Humphrey and William of Wykeham. Bekynton the private man and Bekynton the public figure are ostensibly indivisible.

Thomas Bekynton's life is more than adequately documented² elsewhere. Once again we are faced with a man who, although a prelate who used his cadaver tomb as a focus of daily devotions, can in no other respect be seen as an ascetic. Nor can Bekynton be categorised as one of the philosophers of his time. Undoubtedly he was a very talented man, particularly in administrative work. Of the two manuscripts in his hand which survive³, one is a *thesaurus* of phrases and formulae for use in letter-writing, the other a treatise in support of the English claim to the French throne. In the field of creative and philosophical writings his role was firmly that of an appreciative recipient of the works of others⁴. In short, Bekynton's choice of tomb must be understood in empirical terms by the influence of Chichele's, and in the aesthetic context examined above, rather than as any personal expression of abnormal piety.

1. *Somerset Medieval Wills 1383-1500*, Somerset Record Society, 16 (1901), 202-07.
2. Sources mentioned above and *DNB*, I, 123.
3. Oxford, Bodley MS Ashmole 789 and London, BL MS Cotton Tiberius XII.
4. As well as Chaundler's work (182 *et seq.* above), he received work from e.g. Biondo Forli.

Philip Astley, who died and was buried, probably in 1467, in Standon, Herts, is a relatively obscure individual. His appearances in crown records are rare and inconsequential. Local historians record that he was the son of Ralph Astley, who acquired Bartrams Manor in Standon in 1436¹. He also held property in London and Warwickshire. Perowne states that Ralph was a knight of the order of St John of Jerusalem², which is not impossible, for he certainly held the lease of the Standon preceptory, which he left to his two younger sons, William and Thomas³. He desired to be buried in the major English church of the order in Clerkenwell, where, seventy-three years later, the last Lord Prior had built for himself a cadaver tomb⁴.

Philip was Ralph's eldest son, and heir to the manor of Bartrams. He is said to have outlived four wives, five sons and five daughters, all of whom were originally shown on the brass which is now lost⁵. The fact that the brass is no longer extant has made its dating, recorded by Chauncy, open to doubt, not least since Cussons and Perowne both record the inscription in widely varying forms⁶. The allegation that Philip Astley was *famulus illustrissimi principis*

1. Perowne, *A History of the Parish of Standon*, 53-56.

2. *Ibid.*, 54.

3. *VCH Hertfordshire*, IV, 444.

4. See Chapter II, no.87.

5. Perowne, *History of Standon*, 55.

6. *Ibid.*; Cusson, *History of Hertfordshire*, I, 176. For versions of the inscription see Chapter II, no.17

Ricardi nuper Ducis Eboraci, suggests little contact with the other Hertfordshire figures discussed below, as most of them are associated in some way with the Duchy of Lancaster. Philip's aunt, however, may have been the wife of Thomas Astley and nurse to Henry VI in his minority'.

An examination of the tomb and will of John Baret, who also died in 1467, and who is buried near his cadaver tomb, under the beautiful ceiling of his chantry chapel in St Mary's, Bury St Edmunds, is fortunately more fruitful. In many ways, the evidence of the allegiances and tastes of this Bury burgess are the most important factor in establishing a recognisable milieu within which the tomb design could be seen to circulate at this period. It also demonstrates a closer connection between Baret and certain Lancastrian court partisans than has hitherto been recognised.

M.D. Lobel suggests² that a new prosperity brought about by a thriving woollen industry, stimulated demand for political freedom from the abbot's rule in Bury during the lifetime of Baret, and that clashes between Lancastrians and Yorkists in the town had a rousing effect on the burgesses. There must certainly be some explanation why a Bury burgess with

1. Ibid., 55.

2. M.D. Lobel, *The Borough of Bury St Edmunds* (Oxford, 1935), 159; for an excellent account of the political and cultural life of Bury at this period see, Gail McMurray Gibson, "The Play of *Wisdom* and the Abbey of St Edmund", *Comparative Drama*, 19(ii) (1985), 117-35.

interests in the clothing industry should have a tomb which seems to proclaim his faith in the Lancastrian cause as loudly as any more spiritual faith.

Of Baret's personal inheritance and business interests little is known. He was the younger brother of Geoffrey Baret of Cratfield, although even this is not certain¹. His connection with the Drury family is, however, clear². His wife was a sister of Sir William Drury of Rougham, who married a Catherine Swynford, making Baret the uncle of Mary Drury or Grimstone³. An heraldic visitation of 1560 notes that the Baret arms, *Argent a bend Azure between three square buckles Gules*, appeared at Rougham⁴. This charge also decorates Baret's tomb. It is principally this connection with the Druries which leads to speculation regarding the part played by Baret in the troubled political struggles leading up to the removal and murder of William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, husband of Alice Chaucer⁵. The nature of these connections will unfold later.

1. Samuel Tymms, *The Church of St Mary, Bury St Edmunds* (London, 1854), 70. Tymms believed that this Geoffrey was John's father.
2. J.J. Muskett, *Suffolk Manorial Families; being The County Visitations and Other Pedigrees*, 2 vols (Exeter, 1900), 346-47.
3. See 325-29 below.
4. Joan Corder, *A Dictionary of Suffolk Arms*, Suffolk Records Society, 7 (1965), col.80.
5. See 337-52 below.

John Baret appears to have been involved in the textile industry, as his will mentions a spinning house¹. It is not clear for what particular service to the crown he was awarded the Lancastrian livery, the collar of S's, which is used extensively as a motif on and around the tomb. Tymms suggests that it may have been when he was one of those appointed by the abbot to wait on the king during his visit to Bury in 1433². Certainly he was known to the court when he was awarded an annuity in 1441³. He was in attendance when the king opened parliament in Bury in 1447⁴. Were it not for his will, the view of Baret as a provincial town burgess, flattered by the king's attentions, might be the final possible view of the man. The will, however, shows certain evidence that the circles in which Baret moved make such a conclusion unsatisfactory.

The will, also interesting in its own right, was made in 1463, two years after Edward IV came to the throne. Indicating that his tomb was already in place at this date,

1. Tymms, *Wills and Inventories from the Registers of the Commissary of Bury St Edmunds*, 20. Baret is said to have lived in the house called the Exchequer or Audit House in what is now Chequer Square, according to Tymms' history of the church, 71.
2. Tymms, *Church of St Mary*, 70.
3. *CPR, 1441-46*, 28.
4. The occasion on which the Duke of Suffolk disposed of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. See 346-47 below.

Baret was most anxious that it should not be disturbed by his burial. He desired to be laid as close to it as possible, under the stools where, "my lady Schardelowe was wont to sitte"¹. His other provisions for the decoration of the church are generous and detailed², as are the following clauses concerning the disposal of his various properties³. A considerable proportion of his personal effects were left to a niece, Janet Whitwell, who appears to have been the daughter of his sister, Alice⁴. Both the Druries and the Barets married into the Whitwell family. Amongst the startling array of household goods left to this lady is a "steyned clooth" of the Coronation of the Virgin⁵. Later in the will there is mention of another of these cloths, this time showing the seven ages of man⁶, an interesting subject in the light of Baret's literary tastes and his tomb.

1. Tymms, *Wills and Inventories*, 15. After making the usual provisions for body and soul, Baret goes on to make several bequests to the abbot, prior and monks of Bury and sundry servants, as well as arranging his funeral and masses for his soul in great detail.
2. *Ibid.*, 19-20. As well as his tomb and the decorated ceiling above, Baret gave to the church his papal and episcopal indulgences, and presents including a painting, for the altar of St Mary. He also provided for the mending of the bells. The remarkable ceiling above his tomb was painted by Henry Peintour and has recently been restored (1986) - see Plate 17b.
3. *Ibid.*, 20-21. Baret desired that his new house be occupied by the priest of St Mary's in return for masses for his soul. The inheritor of the principal dwelling was to bear all costs.
4. *Ibid.*, 21-22, 22-23. Janet was to be provided with self-contained lodgings within the principal house. Muskett, 347, demonstrates that John Baret's nephew, Thomas Drury, brother-in-law of Mary Grimstone, married one Catherine Whitwell. As Baret's sister was also married to a Whitwell, there is a double family link.
5. Tymms, *Wills and Inventories*, 23.
6. *Ibid.*, 33. Such cloths, of which only fragments survive, were the man of Baret's class's answer to the tapestries fashionable with his richer counterpart - Joan Evans, *English Art 1307-1461* (Oxford, 1949), 138.

His principal house itself was left to Baret's nephew, William Baret of Cratfield, his elder brother's son and heir, along with certain parcels of land around the town¹. With the house went more household goods, including three candlesticks engraved with "Grace me Gouverne", the motto used so much in the ceiling and the tomb². If all Baret's heirs failed, the property was to fall to Thomas Drury, probably the son of William Drury who married Catherine Whitwell, and was sister to Mary Grimstone³.

More interesting than the painstaking provisions for the inheritance are the three people whom Baret went on to cite as his advisers in matters of property⁴. William Jenney, John Heydon and young Thomas Heigham were to be rewarded by Baret's executors for their assistance. William Jenney was a lawyer, J.P. and several times M.P. for Suffolk. In Wedgwood's words, "a man of great power, made by the law"⁵. He was listed as being among the "conspirators" of the winter of 1447-48 and is mentioned several times, not always favourably, in the *Paston Letters*. They note⁶ that he ignored the king's call to arms in December 1462, when

1. Tymms, *Wills and Inventories*, 25,
2. Ibid.
3. See 318, n.3.
4. Tymms, *Wills and Inventories*, 27.
5. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 500-01.
6. Norman Davies, *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, 1976), I, 524.

Alnwick, Dunstanburgh and Bamburgh, then in the hands of Henry VI's queen, were being besieged by Warwick. Jenney and Yelverton also annoyed the Pastons by claiming the manor of Cotton, property of the late Sir John Fastolf, on behalf of Alice Chaucer¹. Jenney later disagreed with the Duchess as well².

In November 1443 John Heydon was made one of the stewards of Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire in the Duchy of Lancaster for life³. He was deputy chief steward of the North Parts from 1444-45, serving under the Duke of Suffolk and Tuddenham⁴. He and Tuddenham were amongst those accused of conspiring with Suffolk to murder Humphrey Duke of Gloucester⁵. Heydon was certainly no friend of the Pastons, being an ally of Lord Moleyns⁶. After Suffolk's murder a long list of persons wronged specifically by Heydon and Tuddenham was compiled⁷. The latter was put to death in 1462, but Heydon survived to regain many of his former positions⁸. The Heydon family seat was Baconsthorpe

1. Ibid., passim.
2. Ibid., I, 330.
3. R. Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1265-1603* (London, 1953), 425.
4. Ibid., 430, 453, 594.
5. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 452-53; R.L. Storey, *The End of the House of Lancaster* (London, 1966), 55-57.
6. Davies, *Paston Letters*, I, 233-34.
7. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 452.
8. Ibid., 453.

Castle in Norfolk, but John's son, Sir Henry Heydon, lived in their other manor, West Wickham in Kent. He is commemorated there in a window which shows him rising shrouded from his tomb¹. Thomas Heigham served on several commissions with Heydon and Jenney and was another noted Lancastrian partisan².

Amongst the many small charitable bequests³ towards the end of Baret's will is the sum of 3s.4d.⁴ which was to be given to "Master Osberne, frer of Clare". This must be the poet Osbern Bokenham, friar of Stoke Clare and ardent Yorkist⁵. It would not have been Bokenham's political sympathies which attracted the bequest, but the fact that he was an admirer of John Lydgate, late an associate of John Baret's. The sole interesting entry concerning Baret in crown records shows that he shared an annuity with Lydgate, monk of Bury, from 1441 until the death of the latter⁶. Later in his will, Baret leaves a copy of Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes*⁷.

1. See Chapter II, no.51.
2. e.g. *CPR, 1467-77*, 248.
3. Tymms, *Wills and Inventories*, 27-34, lists several small bequests, mostly to Baret's relations, which are too numerous to itemise. They include mention of an inn called the "Hart and Hoop", which Baret inherited from his father.
4. *Ibid.*, 35.
5. S. Moore, "Patrons of Letters in Norfolk and Suffolk, c.1450", *PMLA*, 28 (1913), 79-106.
6. *CPR, 1441-46*, 28. "The like (grant of survivorship) to John Lidgate, Monk of Bury St Edmunds, and John Baret, esquire, of £7.13s.4d yearly from Easter in the eighteenth year out of the issues of the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk by the hand of the sheriffs thereof..."
7. Tymms, *Wills and Inventories*, 35.

This personal connection seems to be crucial in the assessment of the literary and devotional tastes which surround this group of associates commemorated in cadaver tombs¹.

Baret bequeathed another book, unnamed, to Dame Jone Stoonys, a "Book of ynglych and latyn with diuerse maters of good exortacons"². "My lady Poole dwellyng at Bermondysseye", who was left a spoon, is almost certainly Alice Chaucer, or De la Pole, Duchess of Suffolk³. Thomas Drury received a signet ring, enamelled again with "Grace me Gouverne" and Baret's monogram⁴. The Clopton family, who shared some of Baret's devotional tastes, that is Baret's wife's sister and family, also received small items⁵. Baret mentions, after making bequests for street repairs in Bury⁶, Thomas Brews esquire, who may have been connected with Sir Thomas Brews, knight of the shire for Suffolk and another Lancastrian⁷. Unfortunately, Robert Lawshull, who received Baret's copy of *Disce Mori*⁸, cannot be identified.

1. See Chapter VII below.

2. Tymes, *Wills and Inventories*, 35.

3. *Ibid.*, 36.

4. *Ibid.*, 37.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*, 37-41. One of the recipients of a small bequest is Jankyn Smith, probably the town's most generous benefactor in the period - c.f. Tymes, *St Mary's Church*, 71-72.

7. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 108-09.

8. Tymes, *Wills and Inventories*, 41.

The will was to be supervised by John Clopton and executed by Thomas Drury, Thomas Heigham, William Qweth, Adam Newhawe and John Coote¹. In addition to its value as an interesting social document, it seems now that the will contains more clues to Baret's precise affiliations than has previously been recognised. The tomb, the will and the genealogical information tie Baret inextricably to a recognisable faction.

Robert Brampton, of Brampton, Norfolk, who died in 1468, came from a local family of some antiquity, as his name indicates. He was the eldest son of another Robert Brampton, and the family can be traced back in the direct male line to 1099². Brampton was obviously not a clerk, not only on the evidence of his brass but because he was definitely married to Isabel, daughter of Simpkin Cock of Norwich; but another Robert Brampton is listed as being rector of Brampton church in 1475³. Emden records yet another Robert Brampton at Cambridge, proceeding to a higher degree on 10 June 1480, who may in turn have been the Robert Brampton, rector of Yarmouth, Hockerīng, Narborough and Stiffkey, all in Norfolk, and who died before October 1497⁴.

1. Ibid., 42.
2. Francis Blomefield, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk* 11 vols, (London, 1805-10), VI, 433.
3. Ibid., 439.
4. Emden, *BRUC*, 87-88.

The sixteenth-century visitations of Norfolk give no indication as to how, if at all, these men were related, but it is clear that in Brampton one is not dealing with the new prosperous class of East Anglian merchants who were prolific in their benefactions to local churches at this date, men like Mattock and Spryng¹. Brampton, despite his relative obscurity, belonged to an old family who bore arms and who had sufficient resources to give its members a university education.

A few connections can be made between Brampton and those familiar as members of the Duke of Suffolk's support in East Anglia. He appears as a feoffee with John Heydon in a chancery suit², and he and Heydon in 1442 gave certain messuages in Norwich to the prior of Holy Trinity there³. He also appears as witness to a deed involving Walter Estoft of Useflete⁴, who quitclaimed a manor to John Leventhorpe⁵, possibly senior, and John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, in 1446. Brampton was also co-feoffee with John Wenlock of whom more will be said in connection with Eleanor Moleyns⁶. These

1. See 390-91, 394-98 below.
2. *List of Early Chancery Proceedings I*, PRO Lists and Indexes, XII, 310.
3. *CFR*, 1437-45, 247.
4. *CCR*, 1447-54, 378.
5. *CCR*, 1441-47, 392.
6. See 355-61 below.

connections, however, cannot be made much of in isolation, since all they indicate is an involvement in East Anglian affairs only appropriate in a man of Brampton's standing. Heydon was a lawyer, after all, with a finger in several pies, and Wenlok, after 1462, occurs in hundreds of land transactions, following his meteoric rise to favour. Brampton cannot be proved to be a member of any political "inner circle", but he certainly knew as neighbours those in East Anglia who occur in connection with others who had cadaver tombs.

Mary Grimstone, née Drury, who died in 1469, leaves very little evidence of her own life, but provides an important link with others commemorated in cadaver tombs. Through her, much of John Baret's will is illuminated which might otherwise be passed by. Her shroud brass has disappeared altogether, except for a short reference in the seventeenth-century *Chorography of Suffolk*¹ which describes the effigy and accompanying heraldry. On 31 October 1421, the rector of Garlickhithe was licensed to join in marriage William Drury and Catherine Swynford, notwithstanding that the banns had been published only twice². These persons were to

1. MacCulloch, *The Chorography of Suffolk*, 74-75.
2. Jacob, ed., *The Register of Henry Chichele*, IV, 222.

become the parents of six children, the youngest of whom was Mary. The male line became known as Drury of Rougham.

Mary's father was one of the nine children of Sir Roger Drury of Chaunte in Rougham. His sister Margaret married Sir William Clopton of Long Melford, and his sister Elizabeth married John Baret. The nephew Thomas whom Baret mentions is Mary's brother, who married a Whitwell, Baret's sister also being allied to that family'. Sir William Drury, Sir Roger's heir, occurred as escheator for Norfolk and Suffolk until his death in 1450². He also appears on commissions with Sir John Fastolf, William de la Pole, husband of Alice Chaucer, William Paston, John Heydon, John Clopton and others³. Mary's mother, Catherine Swynford, was grand-daughter of Sir Hugh Swynford and his wife Catherine Roet, later Duchess of Lancaster, and sister to Geoffrey Chaucer's wife⁴. Accordingly, John Baret's niece Mary had a great-grandfather who was Alice, Duchess of Suffolk's grandfather.

1. Muskett, *Suffolk Manorial Families*, I, 346-47.

2. *CFR*, 1422-30, 85, 1445-52, 133.

3. *CFR*, 1429-36, 85, 1445-52, 133. The Henry Drury who appeared in the same period, also as escheator (*CFR*, 1431-37), and the Robert Drury who was Deputy Chief Steward of the South Parts of the Duchy of Lancaster and on Henry VII's Privy Council, are Druries of Hawstead, a cadet branch of the family, descended from Sir Roger Drury's brother Nicholas. J.S. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 284, gives the history of the career of Sir Robert Drury; J.J. Muskett, *Suffolk Manorial Families*, I, 354, gives the pedigree of Robert Drury of Hawstead. He is also discussed briefly in R.C. Bald, *Donne and the Druries* (Cambridge, 1959), 10, since Drury of Hawstead is the family which gave its name to Drury Lane in London. In the seventeenth century, Sir William Drury was a patron of John Donne the poet and Dean of St Paul's, whose shrouded figure appears on his tomb and is considered to be the first example of the reinterpretation of the medieval cadaver tomb in the Renaissance style.

Mary's husband, Edward Grimstone, was an ally of the Duke of Suffolk. He appears to have been involved in Suffolk's negotiations which led to Margaret of Anjou returning to become Henry VI's queen¹. Storey describes him as a "well known partisan of the court", who sat on the jury which dealt with Cade's rising in Bury St Edmunds². He was also said to be part of the alleged plan to marry Suffolk's son, John, to Margaret Beaufort and then put the pair on the throne³. Such rumours, however, surround the murders of those involved that the truth is unclear, let alone the part played by a relatively minor individual who was eventually acquitted. What is clear, is that Grimstone was involved with William de la Pole at home and abroad, and thereby with the Lancastrian court party who were particular allies of Cardinal Beaufort. The allegiances involved were as much a family as a political matter, as will become increasingly apparent in the study of Alice, Duchess of Suffolk, herself⁴. Grimstone was employed as an ambassador, chiefly to the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy, throughout the 1440's, and it must have been on one of these missions that he commissioned Petrus Christus to paint his portrait. The

1. C, Knight Watson, "Instructions given by Henry VI to Edward Grimston and Notice of a Portrait of Edward Grimston", *Archaeologia*, XL (1866), 467.
2. *Ibid.*, 457.
3. Storey, *The End of the House of Lancaster*, 79n.
4. *Ibid.*, 74n. The chief conspirators were Lord Say, William de la Pole and the bishops of Salisbury and Chichester.

portrait is a further testimony to his political allegiances as it shows him holding a collar of S's in his right hand. The painting is fully described by Scharf¹, whose opinions about it are confirmed by Panofsky². It is the earliest domestic portrait of an Englishman.

Grimstone is mentioned along with John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, and William de la Pole, in connection with England's breaking of her truce in 1449, and was, therefore, one of those who was later blamed for the loss of Normandy³. He fell so far out of favour after Suffolk's murder that he was prompted to petition the king⁴. Grimstone turned out, however, to be as resilient as another associate of his, John Norryes, and made his "comeback" in the 1470's⁵. Norryes

1. George Scharf, "Observations on the Portrait of Edward Grimstone and other Portraits of the same Period", *Archaeologia*, XL (1866), 471-81.
2. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, I, 310,312,316; II, fig.406. The nearest comparable work is the triptych by Memling, commissioned by Sir John Donne of Kidwelly, in which the patron is shown kneeling to the left of the Madonna and child, his hands clasped in prayer. He wears a Yorkist collar of suns and roses. (Ibid., I, 249; II, fig.476.) The triptych has been dated to around 1480 in K.B. McFarlane, *Hans Memling* (Oxford, 1971), 1-15.
3. Stevenson, ed., *Wars of the English in France*, I, 264-73 - 24 July, 1449, "Reply of the Duke of Burgundy to Ambassadors of Charles VII on request for advice on how to treat the English having broken truce", 265.
4. Watson, "Edward Grimston", 462-63.
5. *CFR*, 1445-52, 72, shows a commitment to them both by mainprise of Richard Bedford of Chynor, Oxfordshire, and Thomas Lavyngton of Reading in Berkshire, of the keeping of the manors and lordships of Cookham, Bray, Beningfield and Sunninghill in Berkshire, to hold for seven years. These properties had been in the king's hands since the death of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester. In 1470, John Clopton and others (*CPR*, 1467-77, 246, 248). On 14 February, 1471, he was made a gift of rents amounting to £8.13s.4d, per annum from lands, with warranty to the use of Alice Duchess of Suffolk. The donor was John Arundel, son of John and Margaret Arundel (*CCR 1468-76*, 216). It had previously been agreed between Thomas and Maud Chaucer and John and Margaret Arundel, to settle a dispute that the lands in question, which included Ewelme and Swyncombe, should be granted in their entirety to Thomas and Maud in exchange for an annual rent.

was a clerk of the great wardrobe until 1446, and thereafter Keeper of the Queen's Jewels to Margaret of Anjou, until he was discredited in 1450¹. He was connected with John Merston over the death of Barbour in 1462². Interestingly, on 9 March 1448, John Merston and Edward Grimstone were granted the office of Treasurer of the Chamber and Keeper of the King's Jewels, "during good behaviour"³. Norrys was related to Agnes Bulstrode, who is studied below⁴.

Mary Drury was Grimstone's second wife, after her first marriage to Thomas Curson esquire⁵. The couple had five sons and two daughters. Mary then died at the age of twenty-seven, on 7 March 1469, leaving Edward Grimston free to remarry, this time to Philippa Roos, in the presence of John de la Pole and his wife, who was sister to Edward IV⁶. Grimstone died in 1478 and was buried at Rishangles, his family home, under an armoured effigy⁷.

In his will dated 15 September, 1469, Richard Willughby of Wollaton, Nottinghamshire, asks to be buried in the church of St Leonards, Wollaton, *juxta monumentum per me nuper*

1. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 637-38.
2. Ibid.
3. *CPR*, 1446-52, 130.
4. See 334-37 below.
5. Watson, "Edward Grimstone", 465-67.
6. Ibid., 470.
7. Ibid.

*ædificatum*¹. His wishes were carried out when he died in 1471. His family was an old one, tracing ancestry back to Robert de Mortain in the early twelfth century². The family later divided, taking the names Bingham and Willughby, after their estates. They are connected neither with the Parham nor the Earsby Willoughbys until a later date, the name being spelt without the central "o" to make this distinction. Richard was the son of Hugh Willughby and his wife Isabel Foljambe, another of that name whose tomb in Chesterfield is alluded to above³. Richard married Anne, daughter of Simon Leek of Cotham and, according to Thoroton, died without issue⁴. It seems, however, that they may have had a daughter, the Maud Willughby who married Gervase Clifton⁵. Certainly a *Gervaso Clyfton armigero* and *Roberto Clyfton militi* are both executors of Richard's will⁶; although there is no mention of Maud, almost all bequests going to pious uses. Richard Willughby appears frequently as J.P. for Nottinghamshire⁷, often with members of the

1. James Raine, ed., *Testamenta Eboracensia*, III, Surtees Society 45 (1864), 170-71.
2. Thoroton, *Thoroton's History of Nottinghamshire and Embellished with Picturesque and Select Views of Seats of the Nobility and Gentry, Towns, Village Churches and Ruins*, 3 vols (London, 1797), II, 209.
3. See 305 above.
4. Thoroton, *History of Nottinghamshire*, II, 172.
5. John Manly and Edith Rickert, *The Text of the Canterbury Tales* (Chicago, 1940), I, 609-10.
6. *Test. Ebor.*, III, 172.
7. e.g. *CPR*, 1446-52, 477, 593; 1452-61, 176, 224, 407, 442, 560, 308, 495, 540; 1461-67, 100, 102, 190, 569; 1467-77, 625.

Clifton and Chaworth families. He, Robert Clifton and Sir Thomas Chaworth held lands together in the Duchy of Lancaster¹, and both the Chaworths and Willughbys were connected by marriages to the Annesly family². Richard Willughby was M.P. for Nottinghamshire in 1436³.

That these three men were closely connected through marriage, land and political interests, is made more interesting in the light of their related literary interests⁴, which will be further discussed below⁵. Chaworth had been born into a background of manuscript ownership, an ancestor of his being the Geoffrey Luttrell who owned the Luttrell Psalter⁶. The evidence strongly suggests that these neighbours moved in literary circles. In the Willughby family the tradition was carried on by Sir Henry Willughby, d. 1528⁶, also commemorated in a cadaver tomb. He also demonstrated in a bequest of a service book to the church there, a family connection with Tideswell in Derbyshire, where Sampson Meverell's tomb is located⁷. Both Chaworth and Richard Willughby left bequests to William

1. *CCR, 1454-61*, 321, 323-24.

2. Thoroton, *History of Nottinghamshire*, II, 172.

3. *CFR, 1430-37*, 282, 289.

4. I am indebted to K.G. Harris, formerly Centre for Medieval Studies, University of York, for drawing my attention to these connections.

5. Manly and Rickert, *Canterbury Tales*, 609.

6. See Chapter II, no. 77.

7. Manly and Rickert, *Canterbury Tales*, 110-11.

Gull, a clerk in Nottingham, described by Willughby as¹, *clerico sacræ paginæ professor*, a Doctor of Theology and learned friend who may have had something to do with the interest in the production of devotional books. Similarly the connection of Willughby, the Chaworths and the Cliftons with the Booths is undoubtedly significant.

Chaworth's will, in which Robert Clifton and Richard Willughby are named as executors, was supervised by the Archbishop of York, at that time William Booth², one of the two Booth archbishops who are candidates for the Southwell tomb³. William Booth names both Robert and Gervase Clifton as his executors. The latter was married to his sister, Alice. She is, therefore, likely to have been the mother of Gervase Clifton the younger who married Richard Willughby's daughter, though Robert and Gervase are Clifton family names which appear with such frequency, that the position is impossible to clarify. In his will of 1491, Gervase Clifton⁴, husband of Alice Booth, certainly names sons of both names and also refers to his own capacity as executor of the wills of both Laurence Booth and Richard Willughby.

1. *Test Ebor*, III, 172.

2. *Test, Ebor.*, II, 220n.

3. See Chapter II, no. 32, and 373-84 below.

4. *Testamenta Eboracensia*, IV, Surtees Society, 53 (1873), 64-71.

Gervase Clifton's third successful clerical brother-in-law, Robert Booth, Dean of York, left him a bequest in his will of 1487-88¹. Richard Willughby, therefore, clearly belonged within an educated northern Lancastrian milieu, which complement the southern and East Anglian groups of similar allegiances.

A small brass showing an emaciated figure in his shroud, located in the ante-chapel of New College, Oxford, commemorates Thomas Fleming, and returns us to William of Wykeham's foundation to discuss another clerk who favoured the cadaver iconography on his tomb. Fleming's career may be briefly summarised. Like Henry Chichele and Thomas Bekynton, he was admitted to Winchester College as a scholar, in his case in 1454². His family home was in Temple Street, Bristol, so he may have come from the same middle ranks of society which characterised the other Wykehamists in this study. He was admitted to New College, again as a scholar, on 29 July 1460, becoming a fellow in 1462. He attained the degrees of B.C.L, B.Cn and C.L., but progressed no further. On 9 November 1465 he was granted a cession of action and on 7 April 1472 he died, presumably at around the age of thirty. Despite his premature demise, therefore, Thomas Fleming can be grouped with the other Wykehamists commemorated in cadaver tombs.

1, Ibid., 66.

2, Eaden, *BRUQ*, II, 700, and for all subsequent details,

With the tomb to Agnes Bulstrode, who died in 1471, we return to the area and circles in which there is most evidence for transmission of these tombs in the period. The shrouded effigy of Agnes is all that survives of the brass to herself and her husband William. As is often the case with women of this period, little can be discovered about her own life and times, but fortunately a brief study of the careers of her brother and her son proves more fruitful. She was the daughter of William Norryys of Bray in Berkshire¹, which makes her the sister of John Norryys who was mentioned briefly above in connection with Edward Grimstone². Wedgwood asserts that John Norryys's father was Roger Norryys of Bray³, who died in 1422, but in fact his short-lived son, William, father of Agnes, was also John's father⁴. This confirms the allegation of Margaret Wood, writing on Ockwells Manor in Berkshire,⁵ built by Sir John Norryys, that Richard Bulstrode was his nephew.

In addition to his offices as Usher of the Chamber (1429-40), Squire of the Body (1441-60) and Keeper of the Great Wardrobe (1444-46)⁶, John Norryys served several times as M.P. for Berkshire and Oxfordshire. His wife, Alice, inherited lands in Yattendon, Berkshire, which became the

1. *VCH, Berkshire*, III, 103.
2. See 328 above.
3. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 637.
4. *Ibid.*, 130; *VCH, Berkshire*, III, 103.
5. Margaret Wood, *The English Medieval House* (London, 1965), 359.
6. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 637.

estate of his eldest son, William. His involvement with those, including Edward Grimstone, who were blamed for failures in France, is confirmed by his condemnation by Cade and by his place in the popular song, "On the Popular Discontent at the Disasters in France", where he appears alongside Cardinal Beaufort, William de la Pole and others¹. Finally, his allegiances are nowhere better attested to than in the fortunate survival of the original roundels of glass at Ockwells Manor. Among these are to be found the arms of Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou, John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, Lord John Wenlock and Richard Bulstrode of Upton².

Richard Bulstrode was Agnes's son, born in 1425, who soon found his place in the Lancastrian court, notably as "master of the revels at the manor of Pleasance"³. He was, like his uncle, pardoned by the Yorkists and appears several times as sheriff and J.P. for Buckinghamshire. He was M.P. for Wallingford in 1450-51 and for Buckinghamshire in 1472-75⁴, and was also one of John Norry's executors⁵. Both his cousins, William Norry of Yattendon⁶ and John Norry

1. Thomas Wright, ed., *Political Poems and Songs relating to English History, composed during the Period from the Accession of Edward III to that of Richard III* (Rolls Series II, 1861), 222.
2. Wood, *English Medieval House*, 358-59; *VCH, Berkshire*, III, 103.
3. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 131.
4. *Ibid.*, 130-31.
5. *Ibid.*, 131.
6. *Ibid.*, 640.

junior' also appear as M.P.'s, William being Knight of the Body to Edward IV. He later took part in the Duke of Buckingham's rising against Richard III in September 1483.

The Bulstrodes themselves were a comparatively insignificant family of small Buckinghamshire landowners with interests in London². It is, therefore, probable that Richard's offices came to him through the influence of his mother's family. It is her family connections with a certain dictinguishable group, rather than her husband's, that are interesting in the context of their tomb. The group might tentatively be defined as comprising those of Lancastrian sympathy in East Anglia, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire, who were involved with William de la Pole in his differences with Humphrey Duke of Gloucester in the 1440's, and who were particularly attached to Margaret of Anjou and her household. Many of them survived the change of dynasty to emerge alongside William de la Pole's son John as office holders under Edward IV. Most of the by now familiar names come together in the study of Alice Duchess of Suffolk.

1. *Ibid.*, 639.

2. *CCR*, 1461-68, 367; 1468-76, 131.

Before considering the career of that great lady, something must be said of William Gurney. That he died in 1472, in Stone, Buckinghamshire, is virtually all that is known of the man. Lipscomb notes that Gurney appears in Stone in connection with fines of land transactions², and the inscription on the brass calls him "William Gurney of Bishopstone", showing that he held lands or a house of that name. Otherwise it is assumed that the William Gurney who was escheator in Norfolk and Suffolk in the 1460's³ is not the same man, but is probably that William Gurney who was co-feoffee with William Drury and John Paston in 1484⁴.

Alice Chaucer, grand-daughter of the poet, was born in 1404, the only child of Thomas Chaucer, co-feoffee and associate of John Golafre⁵, and Maud Burghersh. Alice married three times. Her first husband was Sir John Phelip⁶, then, nine years after his death, she married Thomas Montacute Earl of Salisbury, sometime before November 1424. This marriage

1. George Lipscomb, *History and Antiquities of the County of Buckinghamshire*, 4 vols, (London, 1847), III,, 463.
2. *CFR*, 1461-71, 169.
3. *CCR*, 1476-85, 411.
4. See 261-70 above. John Golafre's widow, Philippa, was daughter of John Lord Mohun, whose wife was a Burgersh. The Mohun arms are featured on the chaucer tomb at Ewelme. For the life of Thomas Chaucer, see, Rudd, *Thomas Chaucer*, passim.
5. Sir John Phelip was twice married already. He died of dysentery at Harfleur in 1415, when his wife was still only eleven.

lasted only four years before he was killed on 3 November 1428. Finally she married William de la Pole Earl, and afterwards Duke, of Suffolk, in the winter of 1430-31. She bore her only child, John, by him on 27 September 1442. Her third husband was murdered in notorious circumstances on 2 May 1450, but Alice herself survived him to live to the age of seventy-one, dying on 20 May, 1475¹.

The wills of both Thomas Montacute² and William de la Pole³, make provision for Alice's burial. It seems that she rejected both offers. Instead she chose to be buried in her own tomb, next to her father's in the parish church of Ewelme, Oxfordshire. Ewelme, originally a Burgersh manor, was throughout Alice's life regarded as the family home.

1. This biographical summary is extracted from a number of sources noted throughout what follows. Many of the details therein are found in *Complete Peerage*, XII, 447, and Marjorie Anderson, "Alice Chaucer and her Husbands", *PMLA*, LX, 1:1 (1945), 24-47..
2. Thomas Montacute's first wife was to be laid at one side of him, while, *Ex altero vero latere nostro sepeliri volumus ut voluerit, corpus Alicie dilectissime uxoris nostre...* - Jacob, ed., *Register of Henry Chichele*, II, 390-400.
3. William de la Pole's hurried last testament provides,
...and my Wretched body to be buryed in my charthouse at hull there y wol myn ymage and stone be made and the ymage of my best beloved wyf by me she to be there with me yf she lufe my saide sepulture to be made by her discrecioun...

The Register of Stafford, ff189v-190r, Microfilm in the possession of the Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, University of York.

There appear to be no records of Alice Chaucer during the period when she was married to Sir John Phelip, possibly because of her youth. She first appears, in the Patent Rolls, as the wife of Thomas Montacute, Earl of Salisbury¹. Montacute had been married before, to Eleanor, daughter of Thomas Holland, Earl of Kent, and his wife Alice, daughter of Richard, Earl of Arundel. They had one daughter, Alice, who married Richard Nevill, and who became mother of the "Kingmaker". Hence the Montacutes may be seen to be intermarried with the circle already explored in the previous chapter².

In August 1428, Thomas Montacute was wounded by a shot from the walls of Orleans. He died a week later at Meung-sur-Loire and William de la Pole succeeded him as chief commander at the siege of Orleans³. Montacute's will, which was so complicated that it was still being administered in 1435, was executed by Thomas Sperlyng and John Golafre among others. Sperlyng's father and Golafre were both co-

1. *CPR, 1422-29, 474, 477, 478*. Three licences issued to them jointly to enfeoff certain estates;- 1. Ringwood and Warblington on the Hampshire/Dorset border, and £6 rent out of the manor of Christchurch, Dorset, granted to Henry Beaufort, Walter Hungerford, John Golafre and others; 2. Beaufort and others enfeoffed of the manors of Charleton and Henxtrigge, Somerset; 3. Richard Aldred, Andrew Sperlyng and their heirs enfeoffed of manors of Stokenham and Valhampton in Devon. Apart from the obvious interest in Golafre's involvement here, the family's continuing connection with the Beauforts is also notable. Sperlyng was a knight of the shire, distinguished lawyer and feoffee who was one of Montacute's executors.
2. Marjorie Anderson, "Alice Chaucer", 28.
3. *Complete Peerage, XII, 144*.

feoffees of Thomas Chaucer, and Golafre appears also to have had a long-standing relationship with the Montacute family, being named as a feoffee with Henry Beaufort and Sir Walter Hungerford when Thomas Montacute mortgaged estates to pay for his expedition to France in 1417¹. Montacute did not request a cadaver tomb², but he did stipulate that his memorial be, *lapidis marmorei planis* with his effigy upon it, in a chapel at Bisham³. This request was carried out. One doubts, however, whether the rather fanciful request that his wife should serve three poor people with food and drink with her own hands, every day after his death, was honoured⁴.

1. CPR, , 1416-22, 108; Roskell, *Commons*, 185.

2. Jacob, ed., *Register of Chichele*, II, 390. The will begins with a long preamble about the passing of earthly glory, perhaps inspired by Montacute's literary tastes, which will be discussed further in Chapter VII below;

In nomine summe et individue Trinitatis Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, Beatissime Dei genetricis Marie totiusque celestis curie Amen. Inevitabilis mortis sententia nulli omnino hominum deferens, imo nobilitatem, potentiam, strenuitatem, genus, etatem et sexum equali lance concludens, creature rationali et humane nimis redderetur amara, nisi post cursum huius vite continue fluctuantis vita beacior in patria speraretur. Et proinde humane providencie sagacitas sciens nature legibus diffinitum quos nil morte cercius et nil incercius eius hora solebat huiusmodi dissolutionis terminum non solum operibus virtuosis et meritoriis sed etiam bonorum suorum dispensacione provida prevenire, ut sic ipsa inopinata hora diligenti ordinatione preventa queat et securius valeat expectari,

Later he goes on concerning his funeral (390),

expresse prohibemus ut neque uxor nostra neque executores nostri magna faciant convivia,,,

3. *Ibid.*, 397.

4. *Ibid.*

In 1429, we find a considerable number of entries in governmental records attempting to re-assign Thomas Montacute's estate. Thus, the escheator of Berkshire was ordered to assign a dower to Alice on 20 February in the presence of Richard Neville¹. Similar orders were given to the escheators of Devon and Cornwall, Buckinghamshire, Essex and Hertfordshire, Somerset and Dorset, Southampton and Wiltshire, Herefordshire and the adjacent march; and to the mayors of London and Calais². Then, on 11 November 1430, a licence was issued³,

for Alice, late the wife of Thomas de Monte Acuto, earl of Salisbury, tenant in chief, to marry William de la Pole earl of Suffolk,

William de la Pole, like Alice's first husband, had been at Harfleur, but had escaped more fortunately. Although he was a veteran of the French wars, he is remembered more as a politician and a poet than a soldier⁴. He later acquired several distinguished offices under the Lancastrian

1. *CCR, 1422-29*, 430.
2. *Ibid.* During the same period, Alice was being granted livery of various estates - c.f. also 441, 431, and *1429-35*, 13.
3. *CPR, 1429-36*, 86.
4. When William de la Pole took command at Orleans on Montacute's death (1428), the tide turned against the English forces. Joan of Arc liberated Orleans and De la Pole was defeated at the battle of Jargeau, where two of his brothers were killed. He was captured; but fortunately his captor, the Bastard of Orleans, showed clemency and he was soon back in England - *Complete Peerage*, XII, 443-48; Enid McLeod, *Charles of Orleans, Prince and Poet* (London, 1969), 174-79. He also began to work towards achieving lasting peace with France, for reasons connected with his alliance with Charles d'Orleans - See Chapter VII below. This was the first of many moves which led to his later unpopularity.

administration in return for his services in France; but it was his attempts to achieve a lasting peace that eventually led to his downfall.

In 1433, William Montacute, kinsman of the late Thomas, was suing Golafre, Andrew Sperlyng and other of Thomas's feoffees regarding his property, showing that his executors were still engaged in complicated dealings¹. Meanwhile Alice and her new husband were being granted more land, particularly in East Anglia, assigned by, and on some occasions, with reversion to, John Hampden, sometime M.P. for Buckinghamshire and feoffee of both the De la Poles and Chaucers². On 18 November 1434, Thomas Chaucer, Alice's father, died³. In May of the following year, orders were issued to the escheator of Oxfordshire to deliver his Oxfordshire estates to his widow, Maud, and his feoffees⁴.

1. *List of Early Chancery Proceedings*, I, PRO Lists and Indexes XII, 113, no.227. The dispute was over the lordship of Lambourn in Berkshire.
2. In July 1433, John, Duke of Bedford, was granted the manors of Henxtrigge and Cherlton in Somerset and two-thirds of the manors of Canford, Ambersbury and Winterbourne in Dorset and Wiltshire with reversion of the remaining third of Canford on the death of Alice, (*CPR*, 1429-36, 297-98). Again, on 18 June 1434, John Hampden, Thomas Hasely, Richard Restwold, Thomas Walsyngham and William Henry were licensed to grant the manors of Costessey, Benhall, Beklyng, Cantley in Snape and Veises in Stratford, and sixty-nine acres of land in Wingfield, all in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, to Alice and her husband (*Ibid.*, 346). They were granted more land on 29 October 1434 (*Ibid.*, 444).
3. Rudd, *Thomas Chaucer*, 3.
4. Thomas Chaucer held lands in Oxfordshire, Lincolnshire, Berkshire, Essex, Hampshire and Suffolk (*CCR*, 1429-35, 335-37.)

On 12 July of the same year the escheators of Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire were to cause William de la Pole and his wife, Alice, daughter and heir of Thomas Chaucer, to have seisin of all the lands in the bailiwick which Thomas Chaucer had held in chief, saving a reasonable dower to his widow¹. On 19 May 1436, William, Alice and Maud received licence to grant property held in chief by Thomas Chaucer to persons nominated by them for their own use or in fulfilment of Thomas Chaucer's will². They were also issued with a licence on 20 March which put at their disposal lands held by the king in chief to the value of £400 per year in return for William de la Pole's services in France³. Even at this stage, it becomes clear that with the considerable properties inherited from her father and her first two husbands, to say nothing of the lands and powerful offices accumulated by her third husband, that Alice Chaucer became and remained an extremely influential lady in Lancastrian court circles. The prudent marriage of her son, coinciding with the change of dynasty, and her own longevity, later make it reasonable to conceive of her influence as a continuum throughout the period and the group of those commemorated by cadaver tombs under present consideration.

1. *CFR*, 1431-37, 239; *CCR*, 1429-36, 339.

2. *CPR*, 1429-36, 600.

3. Especially his attendance at the Congress of Arras on 20 June 1435 and 20 May 1436 (*Ibid.*, 508; *Complete Peerage*, XII, 445.)

Maud Chaucer, Alice's mother, died on 27 April 1437¹. Alice and William were given seisin of the estates held by her in Berkshire, Lincolnshire, Southampton, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridge and Oxford². On 3 July following, William and Alice were granted a licence to found an almshouse for two chaplains and thirteen poor men at Ewelme, and to endow it with lands, rents and advowsons to the value of a hundred marks per year, probably at the request of Maud³. In April of that year, William de la Pole had been appointed High Steward of the Duchy of Lancaster North of the Trent, a position which he held until his death⁴. The next three years brought more lands and offices, including the keeping of Cornbury Park, held with John Golafre⁵, the office of Constable of Wallingford Castle and stewardship of the Honours of Wallingford and St Valery⁶, as well as income as compensation for part of Alice's dower from the Montacute estates given to Henry Beaufort, who had originally held them in reversion but evidently could not wait for her to die⁷.

1. Rudd, *Thomas Chaucer*, 3.

2. *CFR*, 1431-37, 346.

3. *CPR*, 1436-41, 80.

4. *Complete Peerage*, XII, 445.

5. *CPR*, 1436-41, 307. The grant was made "for their solace".

6. *Ibid.*, 366.

7. *Ibid.*, 311, for the original agreement, then, in November, William and Alice were granted 64s.5hd, from the feefarm of Yarmouth, and 60s. from Ipswich when the agreement was changed (*Ibid.*, 480). They were also granted the manors of Neddyng and Kettlebaston in Suffolk on 16 May 1440, as these had originally belonged to Sir John Phelip (*Ibid.*, 400), and they were given 3d, a day during their lives from the manor of Wodestock with John Golafre (*CCR*, 1435-41, 393).

William de la Pole's frequent travels to the Continent on various missions resulted in 1440 in a licence to import certain luxury household goods through the port of Sandwich¹. This is interesting as a small testimony to the way in which English diplomats and soldiers abroad clearly were affected by the fashionable works of art and household ephemera which they saw on their travels, and how social fashions, even in tomb design, may have been transmitted.

On 27 September 1442, William and Alice's only child, John, was born². Meanwhile the land transactions, particularly with Henry Beaufort in East Anglia, went on, as did the accumulation of honours³. William and Alice were appointed Wardens of the New Forest together with associated honours with reversion on the death of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, an office previously held by Thomas Montacute⁴. They were also to become Earl and Countess of Pembroke, should Gloucester die without heirs⁵. This particular honour was

1. *CCR, 1435-41*, 396, 399. The list included Flemish tapestries.
2. *Complete Peerage*, XII, 448. In February of the same year, they had granted estates to the value of £59 to their almshouses at Ewelme (*CCR, 1441-46*, 54).
3. In March they quitclaimed the manors of Claxton, Helington, Kerdeston and other lands to Sir Thomas Kerdeston of Norfolk (*CCR, 1441-47*, 55). The previous year, Sir Thomas had given them recognisance for £500 to be levied in Norfolk and certain manors, to return to Alice when Sir Thomas's wife came of age (*Ibid.*, 57-58). On 28 November 1442, William and Alice were granted two parts of the manor of Swaffam in Norfolk, with reversion of the third part (*CFR, 1441-46*, 90). On 18 of the same month they and Henry Beaufort were pardoned fines for entering into unlicensed land transactions of the previous two years (*Ibid.*, 129).
4. *Ibid.*, 63.
5. *Ibid.*, 198.

fulfilled on the death of the said duke on 23 February 1447, for which, ironically, Suffolk was held responsible in some quarters¹.

On 14 September 1444, William de la Pole was created Marquess of Suffolk². In the same year, his wife was granted keeping of their heir, should William die before he came of age³. This was done in consideration of the part played by William de la Pole as chief ambassador in France in February of the same year and as proxy (in May) at Tours for the king's betrothal to Margaret of Anjou. Alice's was present with her husband at the very grand occasion in Tours and was, allegedly, featured in a painting of the betrothal⁴. The very close links forged at this time between Suffolk and Henry VI's queen, though not, perhaps, so close as Shakespeare and some more fanciful commentators might have one believe, does lend force to the suggestion that the English fashion for cadaver tombs was, at least in part, influenced by René of Anjou's tastes in such matters⁵.

1. J.S. Roskell, *The Commons and their Speakers in English Parliaments 1376-1523* (Manchester, 1965), 230. Also in 1443, William and Alice granted lands to the mayor and commonalty of Thetford, in May (*CPR, 1441-46*, 178). In August they were granted the manors of East Worldham, Nuttel, Worldham, Benewick and Wolmer in Hampshire (*Ibid.*, 195). Then, in June 1444, they granted the manor of Minchinhampton in Gloucestershire to the monastery of St Saviour, Sion (*Ibid.*, 272).
2. *Complete Peerage*, XII, 446.
3. *CPR, 1441-46*, 319.
4. Henry A. Napier, *Historical Notices of the Parishes of Swyncombe and Ewelme in the County of Oxford* (Oxford, 1858), 61-62 quotes English and French accounts of the event and identifies the Duchess in the painting, owned by Horace Walpole.
5. Anderson, "Alice Chaucer", 37; See Chapter VII below.

De la Pole had, on 28 May of the same year, succeeded in concluding a two year truce with France¹. It was his conduct in France as peacemaker which led at home to accusations of disloyalty². Nevertheless, he was created Duke of Suffolk on 2 June 1448, demonstrating that he still had the support of the king, or, more accurately, the queen.³ After the deaths of Gloucester and Henry Beaufort, however, matters began to escalate and Henry VI, under pressure from a hostile House of Commons under Thomas Tresham, was forced to banish Suffolk⁴. Suffolk for his part managed to escape the angry London mob only to be intercepted at sea on his way to the Netherlands by the *Nicholas of the Tower* and murdered⁵.

Alice de la Pole survived her husband's descent into disrepute comparatively unscathed. On 8 May 1450 she was granted the keeping, with the appropriate feoffees, of all the honours and inherited property held by her late husband,

1. *Complete Peerage*, XII, 446.
2. *CPR, 1446-52*, 78.
3. *Ibid.*, 174.
4. Storey, *End of the House of Lancaster*, chapter 2 *passim*; Jacob, *Fifteenth Century*, 473-95.
5. *Ibid.*; Roskell, *Commons and their Speakers*, 238-39.

until the full age of their son¹. She did not then vanish into quiet retirement, being, one suspects, too influential and wealthy to be ignored, and being, for instance, indispensable for the raising of loans to finance the army going to Gascony². Some of the names, like Brews and Clopton, who were involved in raising such loans, are familiar from the will of John Baret³.

By Christmas Eve 1450, orders were going out to the escheators of Somerset, Norfolk, Oxfordshire, Kent, Suffolk, Berkshire, Nottinghamshire, Essex and Yorkshire to take fealty of Alice and to give her livery of the estates in each county which she had held jointly with her husband⁴. The list is not only a reminder of the huge amount of land which had by now accrued to the family, but of the names of friends and feoffees involved, like Hamden, Tuddenham, Hungerford, James, Hasely, Restwold, Sperlyng, Clopton and of course Golafre. There was also a similar order to the mayor of Kingston-upon-Hull regarding the De la Pole lands there and the advowson of the Carthusian priory which had been founded by William de la Pole, knight, in 1354, and to which William the duke had added lands in 1436 and 1441⁵. In his short will, made on 17 January 1448, William de la

1. *CFR*, 1445-52, 154.

2. *CFR*, 1446-52, 431.

3. See 315-23 above.

4. *CCR*, 1447-54, 209-15.

5. *Ibid.*, 211; A.S. Harvey, *The De la Pole Family of Kingston Upon Hull* (Yorkshire, 1957), 63-66.

Pole asks for¹,

my wreched body to be beryed in my charthouse at
hull...

He also shunned all "pompes" and "pryde of ye world". He entrusted the management of his estate to Alice as sole named executrix². Unfortunately, in the light of this most pious and austere will, William de la Pole's tomb does not survive. Recollection of the contents of BL MS Additional 37049, which is of Carthusian provenance and which illustrates a double tomb³, makes speculation about the design of the lost tomb all the more tantalizing.

After this period, Alice, Duchess of Suffolk, appears to have remained active in superintending her property⁴. There is ample evidence, for instance, of protracted land disputes with the Duke of Norfolk, both in the *Paston Letters* and the bundles of early Chancery proceedings⁵. Her name is linked with Thomas Tuddenham, Edmund Hampden, Thomas Brews, John Heydon and others who appear to have caused trouble by entering into lands in East Anglia without licence⁶. Those

1. Stafford's Register, f.189v.

2. Ibid., f.190r.

3. See 172 above.

4. March 1452, Alice and feoffees involved in a dispute over Newnham, Oxfordshire, with John Wenlok (*CCR, 1447-52*, 339). 16 October 1452, Keeper of the New Forest appointed after Alice quitclaimed that office (*CPR, 1452-61*, 69). Alice and her son pardoned all debts, accounts etc. due to them in execution of writs against the abbot and convent of Basingwerk, May 1453 (*Ibid.*, 73).

5. *CCR, 1447-54*, 476; *Lists of Early Chancery Proceedings*, I, 235, no.77; 245, no.164; Davies, ed., *Paston Letters*, II, *passim*.

6. *CPR, 1452-61*, 199.

concerned were not only local rivals, but opposed on the level of national politics. The change of dynasty was imminent, however, and those formerly supporters of Beaufort and Suffolk either threw in their lot with the queen, or, in the majority of cases, survived by the clever manipulation of office. Alice de la Pole was no exception. On 6 August 1461, with Edward IV newly on the throne, John, Duke of Suffolk, Alice's son, was granted the office of Constable of Wallingford, and all that went with it, in the manner that his father had held it, with his wife, Elizabeth¹. This Elizabeth was the second daughter of Richard, Duke of York, sister to the new king. It was, therefore, for the Yorkists that John was to fight in that year, at St Albans, Ferrybridge and Towton. Hence, possibly because the Suffolk inheritance was important to the new and insecure throne, Alice de la Pole survived the change of succession very well indeed. In the following year, on 26 March, John de la Pole, styled "the king's brother" was licensed to enter freely into his inheritance without proving his age and his mother's position as guardian of him and his estates was confirmed².

Thereafter there are few significant mentions of Alice de la Pole, as her son presumably came to superintend his own

1. *Complete Peerage*, XII, 448.
2. *CPR, 1461-67*, 261.

inheritance'. She was involved, together with Richard Fowler, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and John Broughton, esquire, in the foundation of a fraternity or guild in the parish of Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, called, "the fraternity of the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ in the parish church of Leighton Bosard"². This, in 1473, is virtually the last we hear of her. After her death in 1475, inquisitions were held in Norfolk, Suffolk, Devon, Southampton, Wiltshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire³. A measure of the extent to which she was personally in control of her own affairs up to the very end of her life, is given in the *Paston Letters*, which do not present a very favourable perspective upon her⁴.

After her death, those properties which she held jointly with Thomas, Earl of Salisbury, passed to his heiresses Isabel and Anne, now wives of George, Duke of Clarence, and Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Those lands held in her right as Duchess of Suffolk went to her son John, now Duke⁵.

1. Minor transactions of land, pardons for debts etc - *CCR, 1468-76, 67; CPR, 1467-77, 325; CCR, 1468-76, 176, 216; CPR, 1467-77, 435.*
2. *Ibid.*, 417.
3. *CPR, 1471-85, 98, 99, 120.*
4. Davies, *Paston Letters*, e.g. II, 388. See also Anderson, "Alice Chaucer", 43-45 for a discussion of her treatment in the *Paston Letters*.
5. *CPR, 1467-76, 550; 1476-85, 10.*

She was buried in Ewelme next to her father. The sixteen heraldic shields on the tomb trace out her connections with many of the country's great houses, notably with the Lancastrian throne through Geoffrey Chaucer and John of Gaunt's marriages to the Roet sisters, and thence the connections behind her family's lasting support for Cardinal Beaufort. Her family tree has been reconstructed from these shields by Greening Lambourn¹. Below the shields, the upper effigy contemplates its earthly lineage, whilst the cadaver below contemplates the paintings on the inner ceiling of the tomb of the Annunciation of the Virgin, John the Baptist and Mary Magdalen².

1. Lambourn, "The Arms on the Chaucer Tomb at Ewelme", 80 *et seq.* The shields are:
 1. De la Pole quartering Burghersh of Ewelme, impaling France and England quarterly - John de la Pole with York label missing.
 2. De la Pole impaling Burghersh of Ewelme - William and Alice.
 3. De la Pole quartering Burghersh of Ewelme - John de la Pole as son and heir of William and Alice.
 4. Burghersh of Ewelme.
 5. Montagu and Monthermer quarterly impaling Burghersh of Ewelme - Thomas of Salisbury.
 6. Roet for Chaucer.
 7. France and England quarterly with traces of a label impaling Roet - John of Gaunt and Catherine Swynford.
 8. Roet for Chaucer impaling Burghersh of Ewelme - Thomas Chaucer and Maud Burghersh.
 9. As 8.
 10. De la Pole impaling Stafford - Michael de la Pole and Catherine Stafford, parents of William.
 11. Montagu and Monthermer quarterly impaling Mohun, the sable of the cross gone - William Montagu second Earl of Salisbury and his wife, Elizabeth Mohun.
 12. De la Pole quartering Burghersh of Ewelme.
 13. Roet for Chaucer quartering Burghersh of Ewelme.
 14. Burghersh of Ewelme.
 15. De la Pole.
 16. De la Pole impaling France and England quarterly without a label.
2. See Plate 23d.

Richard Poryngland's shroud brass, formerly by the altar steps in the church of St Stephen, Norwich, has been wrongly dated to 1457¹. Poryngland died in 1475, the same year as Alice Chaucer. He presents the interesting case of a clerk whose long and detailed will suggests leanings towards true asceticism². He was a graduate of Peterhouse College, Cambridge, where he became a fellow in 1419, in which year he was also ordained. He had graduated B.Th. by 1427 and D.Th. by 1457. He only seems to have held three benefices: firstly he was master of St Michael's Royal, London from 1427 until 1431, then he was vicar of Worstead in Suffolk until 1442, and finally he appears as vicar of St Stephen's, Norwich from 1448 until his death³.

His will was made in 1471 and demonstrates that Poryngland was a deeply pious and cultivated man, possibly of modest wealth, despite his unremarkable career. It was written in latin. There is nothing unusual in the will's opening; the testator left his soul to God, the Virgin Mary and St Stephen, apostle and martyr. His body is to be buried *infra sepultura ecclesie Sancti Stephani in civitate predicta*, should his death occur nearby. He left money to that

1. Emden, *BRUC*, 458,
2. N.C.C. 13 Gelour 91v, 92 r&v .
3. Emden, *BRUC*, 458,

church and to Norwich Cathedral for beautification and distribution. To his old college, Peterhouse, he left 40s. and a copy of Petrarch's *De remediis utriusque fortunæ*¹. There follows a long list of bequests for exequies and masses to various parish churches. Small sums were left to recluses, including Agnoti Kyng (3s.4d.), Julian Lampet (6d.), a hermit who was a Carmelite (20d.) and Robert the recluse of Carnforth (20d.). Local religious houses which received bequests included Bungay, Flyxton and Thetford, but Poryngland also left sums to the Carthusian house at Shene in London, and to the monastery of Syon². Individuals mentioned are numerous, mostly either *frater* or *magister*, and one is called his *filio spirituale*³.

Richard Poryngland was a theology graduate who did not apparently use his education as a means of promoting himself materially in his career, although he had a large circle of associates and an interest in that section of the ecclesiastical community which maintained rigorous standards of asceticism and learning⁴. Exceptions serve to throw observed patterns into sharper relief, and Richard Poryngland is something of an exception among fifteenth-century clerks who commissioned cadaver tombs.

1. N.C.C. 13 6elour, 91v.

2. Ibid., 92r.

3. Ibid.

4. F.R.H. Du Boulay, *Age of Ambition: English Society in the Late Middle Ages* (London, 1970), e.g. 157.

Eleanor Moleyns was born in Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire, on 11 June 1426 to Sir William Moleyns and his second wife Anne, daughter and coheir of John Whalesborough¹. She was very closely connected with Alice Chaucer for a number of reasons. Her mother's sister, Elizabeth, was the wife of John Hampden, the feoffee of William de la Pole, and her mother later married Edmund Hampden². Her maternal grandmother was the daughter of Sir John Rayle and his wife. When Sir John Rayle died, his wife married Sir John Burghersh, Alice Chaucer's grandfather³. Eleanor's shroud brass puts her next in the group under consideration as she died in 1476.

Sir William de Moleyns married Eleanor's mother in 1423⁴ at Ewelme, which was originally the Burghersh manor. William played an active part in the French war, appointing attorneys in 1427 on going abroad⁵. He was killed at the siege of Orleans on 8 May, 1429⁶. Eleanor's marriage was then granted to Thomas Chaucer in 1431, and he appears to have travelled to France in order to bring her home⁷.

1. *Complete Peerage*, IX, 42.
2. *The Visitation of Buckinghamshire, 1634*, Harleian Society (1909), 68.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Complete Peerage*, IX, 42 - states he was previously married to Katherine Fauconer, but in Chichele's register there is a document stating that their betrothal as children need not be honoured as Katherine did not wish to marry him (Jacob, ed., *Chichele's Register*, IV, 89-91).
5. *Complete Peerage*, IX, 42.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Rudd, *Thomas Chaucer*, 12-13. See also *CPR, 1429-36*, 156, and *CFR 1422-31*, 287, wherein William Moleyns' wife and mother surrender custody to Thomas Chaucer.

He was also entrusted with care of all her inheritance if her mother and grandmother should die before she came of age. It was Chaucer too who had been required to take an oath of Eleanor's mother¹, on 26 November 1429, that she would not remarry without the king's consent.

Nothing further is heard of Eleanor until she was fourteen². Then, some time before 5 November of the following year, she married Robert Hungerford and the couple received joint seisin of her inheritance³. Eighteen days later a licence was issued to Robert and Eleanor allowing them to enter into divers lands in divers counties, which were in the king's hands since the death of her grandfather, her grandmother, her father and John Barton senior⁴. Robert Hungerford then adopted the title Lord Moleyns⁵. On 25 May 1446, he and his wife were granted £100 per year at the Exchequer until such a sum was provided from annual rents and lands⁶. Judging by Lord Moleyns' extensive involvement in land transactions, this target cannot have taken long to achieve⁷.

1. *CCR, 1429-35*, 5.
2. *CFR, 1437-45*, 82, 91, 159. These are commitments to Sir Walter Hungerford and Sir Robert Hungerford his son, of the keeping of all the manors and lands in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire and Cornwall, late of Margery, Eleanor's grandmother, at a yearly farm until Eleanor comes of age.
3. *Complete Peerage*, IX, 43; *CCR, 1435-41*, 396.
4. *CPR, 1441-46*, 35-36.
5. *Complete Peerage*, IX, 618.
6. *CPR, 1441-46*, 418.
7. Robert Hungerford was J.P. for Wiltshire, Buckinghamshire, Southampton, Oxfordshire and London - *CPR, 1446-52*, passim. For land acquisitions see e.g. *CCR, 1441-52*, 21; *CPR, 1446-52*, 21, 255.

Apart from one instance in 1453 when he acted for the prosecution in a case of conspiracy to murder the king, Robert Hungerford appears to have spent most of his time in France¹. According to his mother's will, he was in Guienne early in 1453 with sixty spears and six hundred archers². He was taken prisoner shortly afterwards, as his mother sent "Chester Herald to France sundry times in seven years and 16 weeks to procure his enlargement"³. Eleanor's inheritance was mortgaged to raise £3,000 for his ransom, and his parents borrowed 3,000 marks to the same end⁴. He finally returned to England some time in 1459⁵. During this period, Eleanor and Robert's only son, Thomas, married Anne, daughter of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland⁶. Thomas had been knight of the shire for Wiltshire in 1459, and sheriff of Gloucester while still under age⁷.

With a great part of her inheritance mortgaged to secure her husband's release from captivity in France, and her son newly married to the daughter of a staunch Lancastrian, Eleanor Moleyns was in the worst possible position when the

1. *CPR, 1452-61*, 23.

2. *Complete Peerage*, IX, 618n.

3. *Ibid.*, 619n.

4. *Ibid.*

5. It may be as a result of an urgent need to mortgage land to secure his release that he is found being pardoned on 11 July 1459 for intrusions into his inheritance without due suit - *CPR, 1456-61*, 509.

6. *Complete Peerage*, VI, 621.

7. *Ibid.*, 621n.

Yorkists gained the throne. Robert Hungerford set some of the family property in order in 1460¹, before taking an active part with Lord Scales in defending the Tower of London². He then escaped and obtained licence to go to Florence, and thence to France³. His long-standing unpopularity with Richard, Duke of York, is recorded in the *Paston Letters*⁴. A commission for him and his mother's arrest was issued on 8 January 1461, as "evil-disposed persons, adherants of Henry VI"⁵, and in April, John Stourton was given custody of all the Hungerford property⁶. On 4 November 1461, Lord Moleyns was attainted and all his possessions forfeited⁷, after which he threw in his lot with the queen in Scotland⁸.

Meanwhile, on 15 March 1462, Eleanor was put under surveillance⁹:

Appointment for such time as her husband is alive of John Wenlok of Wenlok, knight, as keeper and governor of Eleanor wife of Robert Hungerford...

The same provision was made for Eleanor's mother, now Anne

1. Ibid., 619.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Davies, ed., *Paston Letters*, II, 233-34.
5. *CPR, 1461-67*, 101.
6. Ibid., 182.
7. *Complete Peerage*, VI, 619.
8. Ibid., 620.
9. *CPR, 1461-67*, 181.

Hampden. There is some irony in the fact that Wenlok was Chief Butler to Edward IV, the same office which Eleanor's former and more benevolent guardian, Thomas Chaucer, had held for the Lancastrian throne. Lord Moleyns was captured after the battle of Hexham in 1464 and beheaded in Newcastle on 18 May¹.

On 24 March 1466, John Wenlok was pardoned for all offences committed by him in his execution of the wills of John, Lord Faunhope and Thomas Tuddenham, as guardian of John, Duke of Norfolk, in his minority, and with respect to any property of which Robert Hungerford or Eleanor his wife and others were seised². His appointments, it seems, had not been without their advantages to his own estate. In October 1468, lands in Somerset, Wiltshire, Dorset, Devon, Gloucestershire and elsewhere, formerly the property of Robert Hungerford the elder, were granted to Richard, Duke of Gloucester³.

Meanwhile, Thomas Hungerford had regained his knighthood and recovered an interest in certain family properties where his

1. *Complete Peerage*, VI, 620. By this time all his property had been redistributed, being granted, on 9 September 1462, to the king's brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester (*CPR, 1461-67*, 190,203,228). Thomas hungerford avoided attainder and was pardoned as Thomas Hungerford esquire (Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 485n). Eventually, on 24 April 1463, Margaret Hungerford, Robert's mother, was granted an allowance from her husband's former estates to pay his debts *CPR, 1461-67*, 283).
2. *Ibid.*, 517.
3. *Ibid.*, 139.

father had had only a reversionary interest¹. Humphrey, Lord Stafford, however, who had lately been the sheriff of Somerset and Dorset and had enquired into the Hungerford lands there after the attainder, had a hand in seeing young Thomas Hungerford seized and charged with high treason along with Henry Courtenay, Earl of Devon. They were both hanged, drawn and quartered near Salisbury on 18 January 1469. Thomas Hungerford left a baby daughter, Mary².

Two months after this last family tragedy, the widowed Eleanor, with little of her fortune remaining, was married to Oliver Mannynggham esquire, of London, York and Stoke Poges³. How or where she met her second husband, or who he was, is not recorded; he does not appear in any of the London records of the period. On 28 October 1472, the couple were granted a general pardon for all offences committed before 23 October and were licensed to hold all lands they held in their own right, except the manors of Dytton and Dacet in Buckinghamshire⁴. On 1 April 1475, Oliver Mannynggham presented to Eleanor and three others, all his goods and chattels in the City of London and elsewhere,

1. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 485.
2. *Ibid.*; *Complete Peerage*, VI, 621.
3. *Complete Peerage*, IX, 43. Both were pardoned of all offences, fines, debts and accounts on 29 March of that year, backdated to 24 March, which was probably the date of the marriage (*CPR, 1467-76*, 152). In 1471, Eleanor's stepfather, Edmund Hampden, was killed fighting for the Lancastrians at Tewksbury (*Complete Peerage*, IX, 42).

put in their possession by the delivery of six silver spoons¹. No further record survives of either Eleanor or himself except the remains of her modest brass in Stoke Poges church.

The shroud brass to Joan Walrond, who died in 1477, in St Mary's church, Childrey, Berkshire, is, by comparison, very elaborate². Its owner was married twice, first to Thomas Waryng, then to Robert Strangbon (Strangbou or Strongbow)³. By her first husband she had a daughter Elizabeth who also married twice, and who is commemorated also by a shroud brass in the same church with her second husband, William Feteplace⁴.

Joan was the daughter of Thomas Walrond who outlived her and died in 1480, whereupon the family manor, Rampayne, was settled on William and Elizabeth Feteplace⁵. Thomas Walrond was a lawyer and M.P. for Devizes in 1449, Marlborough 1449-50, Shaftesbury 1450-51 and Berkshire 1467-68. Wedgwood considers that he was the "Wallerowne" arrested with

1. *CCR, 1475-85*, 26. Although Mannyngham remains a mysterious figure, it is noted in the *Complete Peerage*, VI, that he died in 1499 and that in his will (PCC) he leaves most of his property for pious uses.
2. Morley, "Shroud Brasses of Berkshire", 34-37.
3. *VCH, Berkshire*, IV, 276.
4. See Chapter II, no. 63.
5. *VCH, Berkshire*, IV, 276.

Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester in 1447¹. Were this the case, he must have been an opponent of William de la Pole. He was, however, several times J.P. for Berkshire and Oxfordshire, appearing with Thomas Stonour, John de la Pole, John (jnr) and William Norrys and John Wenlok².

Robert Stranbon is considerably more obscure than his father-in-law; but he does appear as a co-feoffee with Thomas Stonour on one occasion³. Otherwise his appearances in crown records seem to be in connection with London merchants and grocers⁴, which could lead one to suppose that he himself came from a well-to-do London merchant class family who had married into the country gentry. As Sylvia Thrupp says of the sons of city magnates⁵:

By settling down on their manors they stood to gain in status, not to lose, for the head of the family was before long likely to be drawn into the influential circle that controlled the administration of the county. The strategic steps that assured the son's entry into the leisured land-owning class required a patient watching of the land and marriage markets and were probably more or less motivated by social ambition.

Whatever the social or geographical origins of her husband, nothing else is known about Joan Strangbon except in connection with her father and daughter.

1. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 916-17.
2. *CPR*, 1461-67, 278, 363, 389, 559, 570; 1467-77, 406, 608, 626, etc.
3. *CPR*, 1461-67, 538.
4. e.g. *CCR*, 1461-68, 75.
5. Sylvia L. Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Medieval London* (Michigan, 1962), 230.

Even less can be discovered of John Beel, whose brass was engraved on the death of his wife Margery in 1477 and placed in Hitchin parish church, Hertfordshire. he can be seen to have had London interests similar to those of Strangbon, being described once as "gentilman of London" in connection with certain properties in Pentecost Lane, and, on another occasion, receiving all the goods of John Frebarn of London, "lyghterman"². It seems that he is less likely to be one of those who left London for the sake of a good marriage, as his wife's family is as obscure as his own. He could, alternatively, have been one of those who lived in the country so as to eke out his living by renting his London property³, or he may have returned to family property in the country. Whatever the case, there is only one interesting entry concerning him in the patent rolls, whereby Beel⁴, with John Wisebeard⁵ and others, was licensed to form a fraternity or guild in St Andrews church, Hitchin, to be called the guild of St Mary. Unfortunately, this is the only known occurrence of Wisebeard as well, merely revealing as one might expect of two persons of similar class in the same small town, that they knew each other.

1. *CFR*, 1452-61, 119.
2. *CCR*, 1454-61, 294.
3. Thrupp, *Merchant Class*, 229.
4. *CPR*, 1467-77, 542.
5. See 393 below.

William Catesby, who died in 1479 and was buried in his parish church in Ashby St Legers, Northamptonshire, was intimately connected with the court of Henry VI and, therefore, fortunately, more can be said of him. He also endured the Yorkist succession remarkably well and had a son of the same name who became notorious as a favourite of Richard III, being Speaker of the Commons and Chancellor of the Exchequer. In short, his family history is not dissimilar to that of Alice Chaucer in its broader patterns. William was the son of John and Margaret Catesby of Ashby St Legers¹. He came of age in 1442² and, in November of the same year, was appointed sheriff of Northamptonshire for the first time. He held the office again in 1451, 55 and 78³. From 1442 until 1461, he appears regularly as a commissioner for the peace in that county⁴. He was also appointed sheriff for Herefordshire in November 1458 and again in 1478, and was J.P. in Warwickshire in 1452 with William de la Pole, and in Warwickshire and Surrey in 1466 and 68⁵. Catesby attended Parliament as knight of the

1. Serjeantson, "The Restoration of the Long-Lost Brass of Sir William Catesby", 519.
2. On 24 July of that year he was awarded a grant for life out of the farm of the manor of Fawsley, Northants, of £10 per annum (*CPR, 1441-46*, 91).
3. *CFR, 1437-45*, 240, 251; *1445-61*, 144; *1471-85*, 153.
4. *Ibid.*, 121; *CPR 1446-52*, 140, 298, 592; *1452-61*, 308, 403, 406, 559, 603, 667, 673, 680, etc.
5. *CFR, 1452-61*, 221; *CPR, 1446-52*, 596; *1461-67*, 573, 574; Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 164.

shire for Northamptonshire on 8 August 1449¹. In September of the previous year he appeared as feoffee of Edmund Hungerford, knight, in a grant of the manor of Hampstead Ferrers in Berkshire². On another occasion he was named as co-feoffee with Edmund Hampden, knight, Eleanor Moleyns' stepfather, John Hampden and others³.

It is not clear when Catesby received his knighthood, as he appears as Sir William in a demise, by his mother and himself, of land in Warwickshire in 1451⁴, but is styled esquire when made sheriff in the same year. In 1453, he was "squire of the body", yet was called to Parliament in that year as William Catesby, knight⁵. He had certainly been knighted before the 1453 session. In 1453 he was enfeoffed in the manor of Drayton on the Oxfordshire/Northamptonshire border, by Henry Grene esquire⁶. On 21 February 1457, Catesby was appointed constable of Northampton Castle⁷. He was then granted, on 17 November of the following year, £40 per annum from the issues of Herefordshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire in the office of "King's Carver", for as long as he held the office⁸. On 20 December 1459, he received a

1. *CFR, 1437-45*, 128.
2. *CFR, 1446-52*, 277.
3. *Ibid.*, 311.
4. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 164n.
5. *Ibid.*, 164.
6. *CFR, 1452-61*, 35.
7. *Ibid.*, 417.
8. *Ibid.*, 461.

portion of the lands late of Richard, Duke of York, recently discredited; then, in the following March, he was granted for life the office of steward of all Richard's lordships, manors and lands in Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire and Herefordshire, and was made Constable of Wigmore Castle¹. Five days later, he and his son, William, were licensed to found a chantry of one chaplain within the church of Ashby St Legers, for his parents' souls, his first wife Philippa, the good estate of the king, himself, and his second wife, Joan². The foundation was to be called Catesby Chantry and the chaplain could acquire lands to the value of twelve marks per year. In the next couple of years, Catesby further increased his property by enclosing certain lands³.

William Catesby's fortunes were thus escalating just when the Yorkists took over the throne. On 14 May 1461, Robert Ingleton, escheator of Northamptonshire and Rutland, took into the king's hands all Catesby's property⁴. He was pardoned, with the other late Lancastrian officials, upon payment of a fine, on 22 December 1462⁵. He then disappears

1. Ibid., 542, 550.

2. Ibid., 551.

3. He was first licensed to impark 300 acres of wood and pasture and a way between his lands at Ashby St Legers, then enclosed with a dyke and hay, so that he could make another way on his land (Ibid.), then he imparked 1000 acres of woodland and pasture in Lappworth, Warwickshire, which was similarly enclosed, so that no-one could enter his land or take anything on penalty of £10 (Ibid.). Then, on 24 March, 1460, he was granted the manor and lordship of Fanhope, Herefordshire, forfeited by Richard, Earl of Warwick (Ibid., 581).

4. CPR, 1461-67, 35.

5. Ibid., 120.

until May 1469 when he was licensed with others to grant the manor of Drayton to John Stafford, son of Humphrey, Duke of Buckingham and his wife, Constance, who was daughter of the late Henry Grene, whose feoffee Catesby had been¹. On 7 March 1470 he was appointed, with Richard, Earl of Warwick and Salisbury, among others, to a commission of array in Warwickshire².

His fortunes then fluctuated. First he was re-instated as sheriff by the readeption government³. Then on 11 April 1471, two days after the battle of Barnet, Ralph Hastynges was granted the castle of Northampton and made sheriff of the county⁴. Catesby was ordered to stay execution of all former letters patent⁵. He did, however, begin to be reappointed to commissions⁶. On 3 December 1473, he was witness to the demise of the manor of Norton Davy, Northamptonshire, according to the will of Thomas Grene⁷, and, on 24 May of the following year, he was one of the recipients of all the goods and debts due of Robert Tanfield

1. *CPR, 1467-77*, 158.
2. *Ibid.*, 218.
3. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 164.
4. *CFR, 1471-85*, 19.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *CPR, 1467-77*, 403.
7. *CCR, 1467-76*, 313.

of Gayton, Northamptonshire¹. By 1475, one begins to see Catesby finally regaining his property interests².

On 26 August, 1476, William Catesby was licensed, with George, Duke of Clarence, to found a guild in the church of St Mary, Ashwell, in Hertfordshire, to be called the fraternity of John the Baptist³. They were licensed to acquire in mortmain lands and possessions to the value of £10 per annum for the sustenance of a chaplain who would pray for the souls of the founders after death and the good estate of the king, the queen and the soul of the king's father, Richard, Duke of York. Thus Catesby was party to charitable foundations which celebrated both the Lancastrian and Yorkist dynasties. He was finally reinstated as sheriff of Northamptonshire in 1478⁴, but he died in 1479. Inquisitions *post mortem* were then held in Northamptonshire and Warwickshire⁵.

1. Ibid., 350.
2. He was first appointed feoffee when George, Duke of Clarence went overseas (*CPR*, 1467-77, 530), then, on 21 May, he was licensed with others to alienate in mortmain the manor of Duddington by Wakerley, on the Leicestershire /Northamptonshire border, and other properties in the Duchy of Lancaster (Ibid., 557). On 17 June he was made a feoffee of Richard Knightly of Fawsley, Northamptonshire (Ibid., 531).
3. Ibid., 597.
4. *CPR*, 1471-85, 153.
5. Ibid., 175.

By the time that his father died, William Catesby junior was appearing frequently on commissions¹. Father and son appear together on 30 July 1478 on a commission regarding a grain business². The son became esquire of the body to Richard III and was later knighted³. He had married the daughter of Lord Zouch of Harringworth, whose mother was a close friend of Edward IV's queen, and who gave her son-in-law lands in Leicestershire⁴. Thus William the younger overcame with ease the disadvantage of having a stubbornly Lancastrian father. William Catesby the elder was married twice, firstly to Philippa, daughter and co-heir of Sir William Bishopton, and secondly to Jane, daughter of Sir Thomas Barre⁵. Little, however, is known of either family.

Once the fashion for cadaver tombs had been established in England by a few prominent examples, the evidence of the identifiable chance survivals seems to suggest that it became a select trend, passing amongst members of a discernible, if not exclusive, group. Certain factors seem to have predisposed individuals to choose such a tomb. These include an Wykhamist education and career as a lawyer-clerk in the Lancastrian court, a lay association with that

1. *CPR, 1476-85*, 19, 11, 144, 146, 233, 241, 257, 354, 371, 393, 396, 400, 419, 465, etc.
2. *Ibid.*, 144.
3. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 164.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*, 163-64.

court, particularly if this involved a connection with the Duchy of Lancaster, or with Beaufort's party at court, or a partisan allegiance to Margaret of Anjou. Foreign travel may have played a part, as all these factors can be linked with diplomatic responsibilities. Also detectable is the slight but discernible tendency for cadaver tombs to be favoured by prominent individuals who did not originate from well-established families, so perhaps manifesting a preference for novel rather than traditional means of commemoration. Among the humbler monuments there are also clearly those whose choice of tomb was a simple act of emulation, either because of direct personal contact, or because the brass workshop acted as intermediary

Cadaver tombs and brasses never, however, became a majority taste and do not even represent the choice of a majority of the servants of Margaret of Anjou and her circle. Nevertheless, it may be significant that none of the followers of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester seems to have chosen to have a cadaver tomb, perhaps because the idea had French connotations distasteful to the more bellicose supporters of the duke. Thomas Bekynton is perhaps an exception to this rule, but his association with Henry Chichele is probably the overriding consideration. No "die-hard Yorkist" appears to have favoured the design either, except Edward IV¹, who seems to have asked for a cadaver

1. Ross, *Edward IV*, 417.

tomb in his will, a wish which his executors chose not to fulfil. Nor does it, perhaps surprisingly, appear to have been something which found favour with ascetics. Certainly most of the clerks considered in this chapter led lives which seem to have been too worldly and too busy for them to have spent time morbidly contemplating either their own mortality or the ravages of the Black Death, which is conventionally presented as the major impetus behind these tombs. The pestilence need not, however, be dismissed entirely as an influential factor, if only because it "actually brought social betterment to the survivors" and a resultant *social mobility and conflict*¹. This chapter has concerned itself with the way in which the trend moved in times of political conflict; as the fashion is observed to spread after 1480, social mobility itself becomes an increasingly important consideration.

1. Du Boulay, *An Age of Ambition*, 145; J. Hatcher, *Plague, Population and the English Economy, 1348-1530* (London, 1977), *passim*.

Chapter VI

THE CADAVER TOMB 1480-1500:

THE CLERGY AND THE LAITY

The dissemination of cadaver tombs in the last two decades of the fifteenth century presents their historian with something of a paradox. Although more such tombs survive for this than earlier periods, less can be known about the individuals concerned. Neither development is surprising if one accepts that most artistic fashions move socially downwards in time. The geographical concentration of these tombs in certain regions is also more marked as one approaches the end of the century.

Among those who commissioned cadaver tombs at this period, there is, moreover, a recognisable group who may loosely be termed "new" men, some of whom founded minor landed dynasties. For them it was an innovation to have a prominent monument of any kind. That they chose this type of monument may be attributed to relatively local factors and influences, as was the case of the Leventhorpe-influenced group in Hertfordshire and its region. Among the other tomb-owners of this period, the mercantile classes too increasingly rub shoulders with descendants of "old" families of declining eminence¹:

...the redistribution of wealth called for modes of behaviour to justify the *nouveau riche* on the one hand, and to assert on the other the immemorial predominance of the lord.

In the latter instances the cadaver tomb seems to indicate an enhanced sense of posterity. In one instance, that of

1. F.R.H. Du Boulay, *An Age of Ambition: English Society in the Late Middle Ages* (London, 1970), 61.

Ralph Woodford, the choice of tomb may be attributable to almost Boethian sentiments regarding the mutability of earthly status and power¹. There are also three clerks commemorated by cadaver tombs in this period, two of whom defy easy categorisation. That no less a person than Archbishop Booth should have chosen such a tomb does, however, suggest striking connections with many individuals studied in previous chapters.

Two celebrated and perhaps notorious brothers both rose to the archiepiscopal see of York in the late fifteenth century, William and Laurence Booth. Both contributed to the founding of a chantry in Southwell Minster. Dugdale recorded² a double decker cadaver tomb there, as well as a mensa which had the indent of a brass on which the figure was dressed in episcopal robes and carries a cross-staff. Out of the twenty-two members of the Booth family in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries who had clerical careers,³, both William and Laurence Booth are strong candidates for the double tomb. The careers of both place them in the social and political context discussed in the preceding chapters. Laurence Booth, who died in 1480, takes his place here in the chronological sequence of these

1. See 419-23 below.
2. London, BL Loan MS 38 - Dugdale's Book of Monuments - 84v.
3. Ernest Axon, "The Family of Bothe (Booth) and the Church in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries", *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society*, 53 (1938), 32-82.

biographical studies; but something will be said of both brothers on the grounds that the case for attribution of the tomb remains unproven¹.

The Booth family came from Barton-upon-Irwell in Lancashire, the father of both the archbishops being John Booth, who was J.P. and knight of the shire². William and Laurence were his fifth and sixth sons respectively, although Laurence was illegitimate. William's career was unconventional from the outset: he was the only bishop of the fifteenth century who did not have a university education, but was trained at Gray's Inn. This led Thomas Gascoigne to say of him³:

nec sciens nec graduatus in aliqua facultate in aliqua universitate sed cupidus legista juris regni.

This has, perhaps unjustly, become his reputation.

He rapidly acquired benefices from the time he took clerical orders in 1420⁴, but more important to the success of his career was his patronage by laymen of the greatest influence. William Booth was clearly associated in his early years with the Lancastrian court faction surrounding

1. See Chapter II, no. 32.
2. Axon, "The Family of Bothe", 32-34.
3. Helen Jewell, "English Bishops as Educational Benefactors in the Later Fifteenth Century", Barrie Dobson, ed., *The Church, Politics and Patronage in the Fifteenth Century* (Gloucester, 1984), 146-67.
4. A.C. Reeves, *Lancastrian Englishmen* (Washington D.C., 1981), 265-66.

William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, who was his patron. He was thus well placed when Henry VI married Margaret of Anjou in 1445, to become the new Queen's Chancellor, an office into which his half-brother, Laurence, was later to follow him¹.

It was during the brief period between the death of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester and the murder of Suffolk in 1450, that William Booth was provided to his first see, that of Coventry and Lichfield in 1447². Because of his involvement in the royal household, he was largely an absentee from the diocese which was administered throughout his tenure by a suffragan, John Green, bishop of Kilfenora, who, as an Oxford doctor of theology and Carmelite, was a very different breed of divine from Booth³. Among the elements of the day-to-day administration of the diocese, however, can be found the collation of Laurence Booth to the prebend of Offley in 1449⁴.

The longest single entry in William Booth's register whilst he held the see is the section concerning the foundation in 1450 of his chantry dedicated to St Katherine in the parish church of St Mary the Virgin, Eccles, Lancashire⁵. He

1. Ibid., 266.
2. *CPR*, 1446-52, 55; *CPL*, 1447-55, 296.
3. Emden, *BRUD*, 3, 2178-79.
4. Reeves, *Lancastrian Englishmen*, 274.
5. Ibid., 277-80.

entered into this project jointly with his brother-in-law, Sir John Byron, Seth Worsley, his treasurer, and Richard and Laurence Booth. This was, therefore, the first of two such foundations in which the half-brothers shared. Twenty-five names of members of the Booth family whose souls were to be prayed for in this chantry were engraved on a tablet to be fixed above the altar as an *aide memoire* for the celebrating priests. Among these names was Alice Booth, the bishop's sister and wife to Sir Robert Clifton, the close associate of the Willughby family of Wollaton'.

Laurence Booth had taken over the office of Chancellor to the queen by 1452-53². William's single most memorable duty whilst he held office, was his participation in 1448 in the foundation of Queen's College, Cambridge, for which he drew up the statutes³. In the intervening period which saw the murder of Suffolk and Cade's rebellion, William Booth was one of those who was threatened and whose banishment was urged upon Henry VI⁴. In his case, however, the king was non-committal and he retained his influential position at court. Archbishop Stafford's death in 1452, led to Kempe's

1. Ibid., see 329-33 above.
2. A.R. Myers, "The Household of Queen Margaret of Anjou, 1452-53", *BJRL*, 40 (1957-58), 93.
3. Jewell, "Bishops as Educational Benefactors", 159.
4. Reeves, *Lancastrian Englishmen*, 283.

promotion to Canterbury and William Booth's provision to the see of York¹ where he was to preside for the twelve remaining years of his life.

During his archiepiscopacy, he collated half-brother Laurence to the archdeaconry of Richmond in 1454². One of the more interesting amongst his other appointments and colleagues in the York chapter was Richard Andrewe, whom he appointed treasurer. A well known scholar and book collector of his day, Andrewe was secretary to Henry VI and had been chancellor to Henry Chichele when the latter was Archbishop of Canterbury³. The evidence is that William Booth was more often present in his diocese than he had been when he held the Coventry and Lichfield see. In 1455 he was licensed to found St William's College in York as a residence for the Minster's chantry priests there³. Nonetheless, he remained perforce involved in affairs of state, particularly when political crisis touched his own diocese. He it was who had to mediate in the dispute between the Nevilles and the Percies. Then, after Kempe died in 1453, he was the only archbishop at Westminster during the volatile period immediately following Henry VI's descent into insanity⁴.

1. *Ibid.*, 284; *CPL*, 1447-55, 599.
2. *DNB*, I, 186.
3. Reeves, *Lancastrian Englishmen*, 290.
4. *Ibid.*, 321-22.

William Booth's role in the ensuing escalation of hostilities between Lancaster and York is by no means clear, as by this time Laurence was closer to the queen and her retinue. When Edward IV was eventually successful at the battle of Towton, in the Yorkshire (29 March, 1461), the archbishop was in London. When Edward marched to London, Booth returned to York. He was, however, present at the coronation of Edward in June 1461¹. Certainly it cannot be claimed that he was a partisan for either side, despite the sources of his earlier patronage; in this respect William Booth remains, throughout those years of political turbulence, tantalisingly inscrutable. This is effectively demonstrated by Reeves's collation of his appointments to commissions of the peace and of array, which show a remarkable degree of continuity². He twice fulfilled demands to array the clergy of the diocese on behalf of the king to encounter Margaret of Anjou's offensives in the north, but on both occasions failed to see action³.

Prominent on the political scene in turbulent times, William Booth contrived to assume no clear stance. Reputedly an absentee and a nepotist, his record of charitable and pious

1. Ibid., 333.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., 335.

acts is substantial, his nepotism, given the size and apparent vigour of his family, unexceptional for his times. In addition to the Eccles chantry, he established a confraternity at Hexham in Northumberland, was mentioned in the chantry foundations of John Sendale at Ripon and of Gervase Clifton at Clifton, Nottinghamshire'. Nor does William Booth's will make him any less enigmatic, for the reputedly unpopular and worldly prelate, referred to in the *Paston Letters*² in 1454 as, " heyll and mery", began an otherwise straightforward series of bequests to charitable causes and to family with the following preamble³:

In nomine Summae et Individuae Trinitatis, Patris, Filii et Spiritus Sancti, preclarsaque Dei genetricis Mariae, ac omnium celestium civium, Ego Willelmus Both permissione divina Archiepiscopus Eboracensis, Anglia Primas, et Apostolicae sedis Legatus indignus; in mentis acie considerans quam fragilis et infirma est humana natura, quam breves dies hominis, tamenniis et miseriis pleni; quam certa mortis preoccupatio, quam incerta hora ejus; qua omnes disc..... rapit divitem sicuti et pauperem, juvenem ac senem, nec etati sexui parcat aut honori, et volens propterea, Ego Willelmus Archiepiscopus, predicens secundum doctrioperari dum lucem hubuero, nec superveniente nocte ulterius non possit operari'. Incia et misericordia, atque intercessione Beatissimae Virginis Mariae matris suae ac Beatissimi Petri Apostoli patroni mei, insimulque Omnium Sanctorum meritis et precibus, ac totius universaque ecclesiae suffragis confisus, solique Deo laudes reddens, sanus memoria, condo testamentum meum in hunc modum,

1. Ibid., 337. Gervase Clifton was Booth's nephew and an associate of the Willughbys of Wollaton - see above.
2. Axon, "Family of Bothe", 48.
3. James Raine, ed., *Testamenta Eboracensia*, III, Surtees Society 45 (1864), 248-49.

William Booth was buried at Southwell on 12 September 1464, according to his instructions, in the chapel of St John the Baptist in the south part of the chancel of Southwell Cathedral. The difficulties which arise over the location of his tomb have been rehearsed already¹, but in summary, it seems unlikely that he was the founder of the new chantry chapel built on that site, and more probable that his "plain blue stone" was placed in a repaired chapel on which site Laurence Booth and his executors later had a new chapel erected to house that tomb and the more elaborate one of the younger half-brother.

Laurence Booth, despite his apparently irregular start in life², was undoubtedly the more eminent of the two archbishops. He did have a university education³ at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, where he became Master in 1450, an office he held for the following thirty years. He was Chancellor of the university from 1456-58, and started a movement to build an arts school and a civil law school there. His early preferments in the late 1440's coincide with William Booth's initial period of prominence at court.

1. See Chapter II, no.32; Thompson, "The Certificates of the Chantry Commissioners for the College of Southwell", 87-90.
2. There are various suggestions regarding the identity of his mother, but Axon, "Family of Bothe", 50, is in no doubt of his illegitimacy on account of a dispensation of an unrecorded date prior to 1442, to him as son of unmarried parents to be promoted to holy orders.
3. Emden, *BRUC*, 78-79.

He was prebendary of St Paul's in 1449, and Dean in 1456. In 1452 he was archdeacon of Stow ; 1453, provost of Beverley; 1454 archdeacon of Richmond and held many other less notable ecclesiastical appointments besides¹. He rose from succeeding his half-brother as Chancellor to the queen to the office of Keeper of the Privy Seal in 1456/7², the same year in which he was translated to the see of Durham by papal provision, although the queen's influence has been detected behind the appointment³. He was also appointed commissioner to renew the truce with the Scots and became tutor and guardian to Edward, Prince of Wales in the same year⁴. Clearly more politically effective and, perhaps, committed, than William, he was suspended from his bishopric in 1462, probably because he was helping the queen in her northern campaigns⁴.

A mark of Laurence Booth's greater commitment to the Lancastrian cause may be deduced from his virtual disappearance from the public scene from 1464, the year in which William died, until 1471, when he received the Warwick forfeitures and took an oath of loyalty to the Prince of

1. *DNB*, I, 186; Axon, "Family of Bothe", 51.
2. *CPR*, 1452-61, 359.
3. *DNB*, I, 186.
4. *Ibid.*, *CPR*, 1452-61, 359.

Wales¹, son of Edward IV, to whom he was appointed guardian. In 1473, he was appointed Lord Chancellor for twelve months, to be succeeded by Rotherham in the following July². Far from this being a sign that he had again fallen from royal favour, it marked his collation to the see of York which he held until his death in 1480³.

The facts of Laurence Booth's life are better documented than those of his older half-brother: he, for instance, merits an entry in the *DNB*. To what extent his more distinguished career may be attributed to a superior ability, or to that brother's notorious nepotism, is a moot point. When he died, he too was buried in the chapel of St John the Baptist at Southwell. His will⁴ is much more straightforward than William's, without any kind of elaborate preamble. Regarding the chantry chapel, he asks that,

*...si opus circa capellam prædictam per me inceptum in
vita mea finitum non existat, quod tunc executores mei
post decessum meum opus illud performari faciant juxta
intentionem meam, prout illud incepti...*

It would, therefore, seem more likely that the more elaborate tomb which used to be housed there was his.

1. *DNB*, I, 186; Axon, "Family of Bothe", 49.
2. *DNB*, I, 186.
3. *Ibid.* For Laurence Booth as "a polished courtier who could hide hostility under a fair mask", see R.L. Storey, "The North of England", *Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. S.B. Chrimes *et al.* (Manchester, 1972), 139-41.
4. Test. Ebor., III, 248-49

There is no evidence of strong familial feeling in his will, all his goods and money going to religious and charitable uses, though Ralph and Thomas Booth are named amongst the executors. Yet Axon has ascribed to Laurence Booth considerable influence upon later members of the family¹:

Clearly it was his view that the Bothes should be trained for the administrative, legal and political positions open to the lawyer-cleric, and not that they should be mere parish priests.

Be that as it may, both William and Laurence Booth's careers connect them in more than one way with others in the present study. They were lawyer-clerics of social origins in the middle stratum of society like Henry Chichele. Their connection with Queen Margaret of Anjou, in whose support Laurence was the greater partisan, is also of interest. Finally their local connections in Southwell with that literary circle which included the Willughbys, Chaworths and Cliftons suggests yet another possible line of dissemination². Most cadaver tombs datable to the last two decades of the century are humbler monuments, but the lost Booth tomb at Southwell demonstrates the persisting attraction of the double-decker design to eminent clerks like those who had first introduced it into England.

1. Axon, "Family of Bothe", 56.
2. See Chapter VII below.

Another monument which no longer survives is the brass in the church of Glemham Parva, near Framlingham, Suffolk, to John Glemham and his two wives. The second wife, Eleanor, died in 1480¹, which must be approximately the date of the brass as the date of Glemham's own death is left blank. The brass showed him in his shroud, his two wives and their sixteen children. Although the wives both predeceased him, the surviving inscription does not make it clear that they too were shown shrouded². He may be the same John Glemham whose long Latin will survives in the Consistory Court of Norwich, dated 1499³. An inquisition post mortem was certainly held in 1501 for someone of the same name⁴. Alternatively the will could be that of the son of the man commemorated on the brass, as a John Glemham had been a collector of taxes in Suffolk with Henry Drury in 1436⁵. What seems most likely is that the will relates to the man on the brass and that the other is his father.

The will is highly conventional, concerning itself mostly with the disposal of property and pious bequests. The family appear to have held land in North Glemham, Great Glemham, Glemham Parva, Farnham, Stratford, Tunstall, Blaxhall, Asshe and elsewhere in Suffolk⁶. Principal

1. MacCulloch, ed., *Chorography of Suffolk*, 79.
2. See Chapter II, no. 31.
3. N.C.C., 74, 76, Wight, f75r-v.
4. *CFR*, 1485-1509, 305.
5. *CFR*, 1430-37, 286.
6. N.C.C., 74, 76, Wight, f75v.

dwellings are mentioned in Kentonhall, in "Ketilberth" (modern Kettleburgh) and Glemham Parva itself'. The property was distributed between three sons, John, Henry and William, a surviving wife, Margaret, a daughter Alice who was to marry Robert Gefferis and another daughter, Katherine, a nun at Brusyerd Priory. Glemham also made bequests to many neighbouring religious houses, including one to the prior of Glemham². One of the executors was a Robert Brews, who may be of the same Suffolk family as the Thomas Brews mentioned in John Baret's will of 1467³.

The Glemham family do not appear in the records of royal administration with any frequency. They were involved twice in land transactions with the Phelippes, the family of Alice Chaucer's first husband, who appear to have had landed interests in the parish⁴. Otherwise they seem to have been a family very like that of Robert Brampton⁵: i.e. an old East Anglian family with small hereditary estates who were not involved to any great extent in national politics except where local duties called upon their services.

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. See 322 above.
4. *CPR, 1436-41*, 390; *CCR, 1429-35*, 208-11.
5. See 323 above.

The remains of the unusual brass, originally showing a figure of Death with a dart, commemorating John Rudyng, a clerk who died in 1481, survive in the parish church of St Andrew, Biggleswade¹. He is said to have been the benefactor who remodelled the chancel of the church. Rudyng appears infrequently in government records: in sundry minor land transactions², once as clerk of Chancery³, and otherwise merely as the recipient of prebends⁴. In addition, his licence to found a fraternity in St Andrew's in the company of Thomas, bishop of Lincoln, John Bourchier, parson of St Andrews and other laymen, is recorded in the Patent Rolls for 1475⁵.

John Rudyng began his career as an Oxford educated canon lawyer⁶. He graduated B.C.L. prior to 1452, the year before he was admitted rector of St Michael's, Gloucester, a benefice he held until his death. Also in the 1450's, he was admitted as canon of the king's free chapel at Hastings Castle. In 1456 he was licensed to hold incompatible benefices, and from that point forward his accumulation of these accelerated. He held at various times prebendal stalls in Lincoln and in St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster,

1. N.F. Cooke, "Biggleswade Church", *Bedfordshire Magazine*, 4 (1954), 150; *VCH Bedfordshire*, II, 213.
2. *CCR*, 1468-74, 70; 1476-85, 112.
3. *Ibid*.
4. e.g. *CPR*, 1456-61, 54, 362.
5. *CPR*, 1467-77, 485.
6. Emden, *BRUG*, 495. Subsequent references drawn from this.

seems to have held in succession the archdeaconries of Bedford (1460-68), Northampton (1468-71) and Lincoln (1471-death), possibly preceded by the archdeaconry of Stowe (1455-56). In his will of 1 October 1481¹ he requested burial in Buckingham, one of his prebendal churches, to which he bequeathed a bible. Whose decision it was that he should be buried in Biggleswade is unclear, as is the origin of the design for his most original brass. As an educated canon lawyer and wealthy pluralist the possible influences upon him are nebulous but many.

William Robert, depicted on the shroud brass in Digswell church, Hertfordshire, is also commemorated on another brass (1508) in Little Braxted, Essex, where he is shown in full armour, flanked by his two wives². As Little Braxted was his family home, the second brass may more properly be seen as his memorial, the Digswell one pertaining chiefly to his first wife, Joyce Peryent, who died in 1484. The Peryents were a Digswell family, closely connected with the Leventhorpes of Sawbridgeworth³.

1. Alfred William Gibbons, *Early Lincoln Wills; an Abstract of all the wills and administrations recorded in the episcopal registers of the old diocese of Lincoln 1280-1547* (Lincoln, 1888), 196.
2. Henry W. Gray, "The Peryents of Hertfordshire", *Hertfordshire Archaeology*, 1, (1968), 76-88, 80.
3. See 272-76 above.

The Digswell brass states that Robert was auditor to the bishop of Winchester; but his name does not appear to occur in Waynflete's register, the only appointment of an auditor being that of Nicholas Sharp in 1451'. The brass in Little Braxted states that he went on to become auditor to Henry VII, but again this information has proved impossible to corroborate². There can, however, be no doubt that he held these posts because of their obvious influences upon the careers of his son and his nephew.

Joyce Peryent, Robert's wife, was the daughter of Edmund Peryent, third son of the notable Lancastrian, Sir John Peryent³. Joyce's grandfather was Constable of Hertford Castle in the Duchy of Lancaster in the 1420's when John Leventhorpe senior was a Duchy Steward in Essex, Hertfordshire and Middlesex. He came to England from Brittany in the 1390's and served in turn Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V as squire of the body. He later became Master of the Horse to Joan of Navarre. He acquired estates in Hertfordshire after his denization in 1411, joining the ranks of the gentry in that county at the same time as Leventhorpe. His wife, Joan, was also a Breton who became

1. Register of William Waynflete Vols I and II, microfilm in the possession of the Borthwick Institute for Historical Research, University of York, Vol. I, f2*v.
2. Gray, "The Peryents", 80.
3. Gray, "The Peryents", 76-80.

chief lady-in-waiting to Queen Joan¹. Their brass also survives at Digswell, showing her in a remarkable headdress, standing on a hedgehog, and wearing a Lancastrian livery collar of interlocking S's. He is in full armour and wears the same company collar as Leventhorpe senior, the blue and white stripes having been indicated by strips of enamel on the brass². These rarer collars may have been reserved for the intimates of the private household.

William Robert and Joyce Peryent seem to have had four children, two sons and two daughters, although the second brass at Little Braxted shows only three, as if one of the sons had died in the interim³. Robert also had a son and a daughter by his second wife, Margaret Pirton. His heir, Thomas, would, however, appear to be Joyce's son as he was later associated with his Peryent cousin⁴. He also became royal auditor, four times jointly with John Peryent⁵, son of Joyce's elder brother, Thomas. This John Peryent seems to have enjoyed William Robert's patronage in gaining his position at court. He was also connected with Tomesine Tendring, as he married Dorothy, co-heiress of William Tendring of Little Birch, Essex, who was Tomesine's

1. Ibid; Somerville, *Duchy of Lancaster*, 603, 605.
2. Gray, "The Peryents", pl.15; personal observation of the brasses *in situ*.
3. Ibid, 80.
4. Ibid, 81.
5. Ibid.

husband¹. Thus Joyce Peryent, or Robert, is connected both with John Leventhorpe, since his father and her grandfather were associates in the early Lancastrian court, and with the Tendrings, whose daughter married her nephew, the heir to her family's estates.

Elizabeth Mattock, who died in 1485 and was buried in her parish church in Hitchin, Hertfordshire, presents yet another case of a brass to a husband and wife on which the husband's date of death has been left blank. Nicholas Mattock, the husband, appears to have survived until 1521. In his will he requested²,

And my body to be buried within the parysshe churche of
Saint Andrewe of hycchyn under the marbyll stone that
nowe lyeth vpon Elizabeth late my wife.

He describred himself as "late Chamberlayn" of London, and Wedgwood describes him as "of London fishmonger, or Hitchin gent". He was M.P. for Plymouth and Plympton in 1491-92 and seems to have held various civic offices in London, as trustee of the city walls and collector of subsidies in the port of London³. His will mentions properties in Hitchin and London, most of which are left to his son, also named Nicholas, and his second wife, Agnes, and is otherwise

1. Ibid, 81-83; see below 392-93.
2. PCC, 16 Maynwaring, Prob. 11/20, f. 123r.
3. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 581.

unexceptional. It was to be supervised by the rector of Hitchin, one John Leventhorpe¹. Although no positive connection can be made with the Leventhorpe discussed above², it seems likely that they came from the same family. At any rate, as most of the information concerning Mattock belongs to the period some forty years after the date of the brass, it is of limited relevance to the present study.

The most interesting feature of the Mattock family is the evidence of their social aspirations over the generations. Nicholas Mattock's father, also Nicholas, was a merchant of the staple of Calais, operating out of Ipswich and London. In his will he calls himself "de hichin"³, indicating that he held property there, either on an inherited basis, or, more probably, bought from the wealth amassed when the wool trade was at its height. He occurs several times in the patent rolls as being excused paying subsidies on shipments of wool, sometimes in lieu of repayments of his loans to the crown⁴. His son was evidently a man who shrewdly invested his wealth in the purchase of property in London and the country, who acquired "influence" in the form of civic office, and who finally purchased a monumental brass, the appropriate status symbol of his success.

1. PCC, 16 Maynwaring, f.123r.
2. See above, 272-76.
3. PCC, 5 Stokton, Prob. 11/4, f.40v.
4. CPR, 1446-52, 315,323; 1452-61, 210.

With the brass of Tomesine Tendring, d. 1485, we return to the Peryent-Leventhorpe circle. Henry W. Gray states that the identity of Sir John Peryent's first wife was in some doubt. It has been said that she was the daughter of Sir John Tendring or Sir William Tendring, but she has been proved on heraldic grounds to have been the daughter of William Tendring *esquire* and his wife, Tomesine, of Little Birch¹. Tomesine Tendring is not, therefore, to be confused with Elizabeth, the wife of *Sir* William Tendring, whose will survives in the Consistory Court of Norwich, dated 1468, and who asked to be buried in Holbrook, Suffolk². According to Wedgwood³, William Tendring *esquire* was M.P. for Maldon in 1478, escheator for Essex and Hertfordshire in 1455-56. He was pardoned in 1462. He is called "of Herkested Suffolk", a manor which Tomesine inherited from her father, William Sydney, along with land at Holbrook. Why Tomesine chose to be buried at Yoxford is yet another mystery, indicating that there were several branches of the Tendring family, of which the Little Birch family must have been a cadet branch.

William Tendring does not occur often in royal chancery records, but on one occasion (14 November, 1492) he appears to have acted as attorney with Clement Heigham, Robert

1. Gray, "The Peryents of Hertfordshire", 82.
2. N.C.C., 118 Jekkys.
3. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, 844-45.

Tirell, John Cotton and Thomas Sampson, when John de Vere, earl of Oxford gave lands to John prior of Earl's Colne'. Witnesses to the gift included John Clopton and Robert Drury. It would seem that the marriage between William and Tomesine was a local alliance between the Tendrings and the Sydneys who both owned extensive properties in Suffolk and Essex, especially in Holbrook. Through their Suffolk interests, the Tendrings came into contact with those in East Anglia discussed in the preceding chapter; and, thanks to the marriage of Dorothy Tendring to Sir John Peryent, they also became connected with the Lancastrian land-owning families of Hertfordshire. William Tendring's daughter was co-heir with her younger sister, Margaret. There were also two sons, however, William and Richard, who must have been the issue of a second marriage, as the lands inherited by Dorothy and Margaret were those brought to the marriage by Tomesine herself².

Nothing whatever has been discovered about John and Ellen Wisebeard, beyond John's association with John Beel, referred to above³ in the foundation of a perpetual guild at Hitchin, to be called the guild of St Mary. The brass in St Andrew's church, dated 1486, simply serves to swell the numbers of well-to-do Hertfordshire men of a comfortable middle rank in society who favoured this style of monument.

1. *CCR, 1485-1500*, 226.
2. *Wedgwood, History of Parliament*, 845.
3. See 363 above.

Thomas Spryng's name appears very little in government records and his will is short, Latin and conventional'. His particularly fine brass which shows him with his family all rising shrouded on the Judgement Day is located in the vestry of Lavenham church, Suffolk, for in Lavenham Spryng and his family were very prominent indeed. He was the middle of three Thomas Spryngs who were immensely rich clothiers in the town when the cloth industry was at its height. Nor did the family then die out; they simply gave up the cloth trade as they had all by the mid sixteenth-century married into the landed gentry².

The first Thomas Spryng, father of the man commemorated by the brass, was of obscure origins. He died in 1440, leaving 100s. to the fabric of the church.³ As one of the villages along the Stour, Lavenham was one of the prime sites for the expansion of the cloth industry in this period, relying on home-grown wool from recently enclosed land⁴. The church remains typical of those built by the clothiers, as Eileen Power has observed⁵:

The very architecture is characteristic, *nouveau riche* again, like those who paid for it, the elaborate ornament and sumptuous detail of the perpendicular

1. PCC 25 Logge, Prob. 117.
2. Barbara McClenaghan, *The Springs of Lavenham; And the Suffolk Cloth Trade in the XV and XVI Centuries* (Ipswich, 1924), 66-84.
3. *Ibid.*, 62.
4. *Ibid.*, 8-30.
5. Eileen Power, *Medieval People* (London, 1924), 154.

taking the place of the simple majesty of the Early English style. It is just the sort of architecture that a merchant with a fortune would pay for...

By the time the second Thomas inherited the business, the power of industrial capital vested in the cloth trade in Lavenham was reaching its peak¹. The church owes its most memorable feature, its tower, to him and to his even wealthier son. Thomas Spryng the second left the initial 300 marks with which the base of the tower was built. Three versions of his merchant's mark may be seen around the base. He also left 100 marks to be distributed at his wife's discretion amongst his spinners, fullers and tenters, and 200 marks for road repairs in the neighbourhood of Lavenham. With the brass, which shows him, his wife, six daughters and four sons, he endowed a chantry of twenty years². M.R. James noted³ that Spryng combined with John de Vere, earl of Oxford, in the work done on the church. Vere endowed a chantry chapel within the church which in some ways resembles Henry VII's chapel at Westminster. Thomas Spryng's brass was erected in the 1480's, in the lifetime of his wife, and, despite the fact that it records her death date as 148-, she lived on until 1504⁴.

1. *VCH, Suffolk*, II (London, 1907), 256.
2. McClenaghan, *Springs of Lavenham*, 63-64.
3. James, *Suffolk and Norfolk*, 44.
4. McClenaghan, *Springs of Lavenham*, 65.

Thomas Spryng the third, son and heir of the man commemorated on the brass, was thirty when his father died. He went on to become no less than the richest layman apart from the peerage outside London in the early sixteenth-century, paying 37% of the total subsidy in Lavenham in 1524. He owned twenty-six whole manors when he died, and left money for masses to be said for his soul in all the 130 churches on his land¹. He had the dubious distinction of featuring in John Skelton's satirical poem, *Why Come Ye Nat to Court*, as "Good Springe of Lanam", because he was a prime target for Wolsey's new taxation policies which Skelton was in turn attacking². These policies were an attempt to increase crown revenues by tapping the wealth of just such men as Spryng, wealth much more fluid than that of the landed magnate and largely a product of foreign trade³. One of Spryng's manors was close to Diss where Skelton was rector during the period when he was out of favour at court. Thomas Spryng the third eventually managed to exchange the merchant's mark, which his father had used, for a coat of arms which is emblazoned further up their church tower⁴; his son, John, was elevated to a knighthood.

1. Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century*, 368; W.G. Hoskins, *An Age of Plunder; King Henry's England 1500-1547* (London, 1976), 152, 245.
2. McClenaghan, *Springs of Lavenham*, 79.
3. Hoskins, *Age of Plunder*, 177-78.
4. McClenaghan, *Springs of Lavenham*, 63.

Little can be said of Thomas Spryng II's political allegiances beyond the obvious: that he lived within the domains of John de Vere, thirteenth earl of Oxford, who was a staunch supporter of Henry VII and appointed admiral of England and constable of the Tower of London on that monarch's accession to the throne. Vere had suffered a long period of forfeiture and property confiscation under Edward IV and Richard III¹. One can only surmise that Spryng's allegiances would have matched those of his patron. As far as Spryng's choice of a brass are concerned, the desire of new money to spend conspicuously on relatively new devotional fashion must play a part. The proximity of Baret's tomb in Bury St Edmunds, as Baret came from a similar rank in society and was involved with various influential Suffolk men, may also have been a factor, although the iconography and medium of his tomb make the Lavenham brass a very different type of artefact; whether they would have been perceived as in any way similar by the men who commissioned them is hard to establish. There were, of course, other East Anglian tombs of similar iconography by this date, as well as London and Norwich workshops producing shroud brasses, so there remain several possible sources of inspiration for the Spryngs' brasses.

1, Jacob, *Fifteenth Century*, 544.

Bernard Brocas, whose curious brass in Sherborne St John, Hampshire, commemorates his death in 1488, was the relatively obscure descendant of two others of the same name, father and son, who were both executed for their part in the conspiracy of 1400 to restore Richard II to the throne'. The younger of the two conspirators was married to Joan, daughter and heiress of Gilbert Banbury by whom he had five children. The second son was another Bernard Brocas of Alton, said to have been twenty years old when his father was executed. He had two sons called Bernard, one by each of his two wives. The son of the first wife, Sibbell Croke of London, appears to have died without progeny; the son of the second wife, Emlin, widow of a Grewend of Bedington, Hertfordshire, married Anne, daughter and heir of John Morell of Dunstable. The latter's line was eventually to re-unite the inheritance when the next Bernard Brocas married Anne, daughter and coheir of Sir Richard Pexsall (d.1571), who had acquired Beaurepaire from his wife Edith, the sole heir of the elder Brocas line².

The Bernard who commissioned the brass bearing a skeleton, at Sherborne St John, was the younger son of William Brocas of Beaurepaire, by his second wife, Joanna Sandys, whose

1. Walter Money, "The Brocas Family and Beaurepaire", *Newbury and District Field Club Transactions*, 3 (1875-86), 242-46, *passim*.
2. *The Visitations of Hampshire, 1530, 1575 and 1622-34*, Harleian Society (1913), 129-31.

arms are quartered with Brocas and Roche on the brass¹ Writs for inquisitions *post mortem* were entered in the Fine Rolls for a Bernard Brocas holding lands in Hampshire and Dorset in 1488², but unfortunately his will does not survive. All that is known of his wife is her name, Philippa³. Bernard's elder half-brother, William, inherited Beaurepaire, whereas Bernard inherited the neighbouring estate of The Vyne from his mother⁴. Numerous members of the Brocas family appear in government records throughout his lifetime, on commissions in Hampshire and as court officials. John Brocas, heir of the elder line, was J.P. seven times for Hampshire between 1485 and 1494⁵.

The Brocas family is accordingly much better documented than the "new" men who favoured the cadaver tomb at the end of the fifteenth century. Although the personality of the

1. H.K.C., *Brasses to the Family of De Brocas*, contains a brief family history and reproductions of all the Brocas brasses. Members of the family had been in royal service since Bannockburn (1314).
2. *CFR, 1485-1509*, 72, 331; the will of a different Bernard Brocas, who held lands in Buckinghamshire and Wiltshire and who died in 1502 survives in PCC 17 Blamyr, Prob, 11/12,
3. H.K.C., *Brasses to the Family of De Brocas*.
4. *Ibid*,
5. *CPR, 1485-94*, 500.

individual who commissioned the tomb at Sherborne St John is, as usual, quite inscrutable, it is comparatively easy to show how his forebears were connected, both politically and through land transactions, with many of those who had favoured this type of tomb earlier in the century. Bernard Brocas (c.1330-1395), the great-grandfather of the Brocas who commissioned the shroud brass, had been one of the Black Prince's favourite knights, seeing service at Poitiers, Crecy and Najera¹. He had also been a friend of William of Wykeham and chief warden of Wykeham's parks during the latter's episcopacy. John Golafre was a feoffee of his son, William, with an interest in Beaurepaire. And of course Hampshire business consistently caused members of the Brocas family to be associated with the Earls of Arundel². What sense of ancestry may be attributed to successive generations of such a family is impossible to assess. The fact, however, that this brass at Sherborne does not bear the conventional shroud effigy popular with the merchants of this period, but an engraved picture of a shrouded skeleton beneath an image of the commemorated kneeling at prayer, accompanied by prominent armorial achievements, would seem to point towards some consciousness of existing tradition.

1. *DNB*, 222; Roskell, *Commons*, 156-57; H.K.C., *Brasses to the Family of De Brocas*.
2. *CPR*, 1476-85, 572.

The inscription on the brass, now fragmentary¹, bears out this impression, by self-consciously asserting that,

*Humanum multum fuerat reddunt decoratum, Mores
dapsilitas illum amplectendaque honestas*

Despite the reputed social mobility of this age, "...even still there was some social snobbery about 'trade'..."². The brass is, in fact, one of an interesting group in the family chantry chapel at Sherborne, including two to Sir John Brocas who died in 1492, all of interesting and complex composition with prominent reference to the family's descent.

The Bernard Brocas of the cadaver brass at Sherborne, therefore, was a minor member of a family which had once been more nationally eminent. His unique memorial may have been designed to call to mind his own descent from an ancient landed family, as well as to emulate, modestly, the double tombs of the noble associates of more prominent ancestors.

1. H.K.C., *Brasses to the Family of De Brocas*.
2. Du Boulay, *Age of Ambition*, 93.

In his will, dated 10 December 1490 and proved both at Scrooby on the 13 June and at Calais on the 28 June following, John Barton describes himself as, *stapulæ villæ Calisiæ mercator* and asks for burial, *in mea nova monumento in capella per me noviter in Holme constructa*¹. Not only the monument (with its corpse effigy) but also the chapel in question, indeed the whole tiny church of St Giles, Holme-by-Newark, Nottinghamshire, still stands as a memorial to this wealthy wool-merchant, although in all other respects he remains relatively obscure.

Barton himself appears to have come from a Lancashire family, but one which did not apparently bear arms, as throughout the church the arms of the Staple of Calais and Barton's simple monograph alternate with the arms of Gernon, a local Nottinghamshire family from which his wife Isabella derived². The will tells us that he had two sisters, Margaret Spencer and Marion, a spinster³. He also had six children. The eldest son, Ralph, inherited Barton's concerns in England⁴, whereas Thomas, the second son, inherited the Calais business and one hundred marks on condition that he kept the peace and agreed with Ralph and the other executors⁵. Despite the division of John Barton's

1. James Raine, ed., *Testamenta Eboracensia*, IV, *Surtees Society*, 53 (1868), 61.
2. Nevill Truman, "The Barton Family of Holme-by-Newark", *Thoroton Society Transactions*, 40 (1936), 1-17, 2.
3. *Test. Ebor.*, 4, 61.
4. *Ibid.*; Truman, "Barton Family", 3.
5. *Ibid.*

wealth in this manner, both sons appear to have prospered, Ralph's line surviving down to the mid seventeenth-century when the last of the Bartons was wife to the royalist Thomas Belasyse, Earl of Fauconberg (d.1700), whose splendid monument dominates the choir in Coxwold parish church, North Yorkshire¹. Thomas Barton lived in Calais as a member and then mayor of the Staple; he died in 1508².

Of John Barton's other four children, Robert was in religious orders and was left forty marks, *ita quod se gerat bene et religiose in Prioratu de Shelford, vel alio loco honesto ejusdem religionis vel arctioris*³. The youngest son, Richard, received one hundred marks and town properties in Newark and Osmundthorp⁴. There were two daughters, Katherine, who married a Tyllesley⁵, and Isabella, who married John Tamworth, to whom Barton left £10.00 so that he could become, *liberum hominem stapulæ Calisæ, si possit*⁶. Barton's wife received two hundred marks, a third of his household effects excluding heirlooms, and £10.00 a year for life from the rents of his properties, to be administered by the eldest son⁷. Despite the evidence of

1. Ibid., 17.
2. CPR, 1494-1509, 296.
3. Test, Ebor., IV, 61.
4. Ibid.
5. Truman, "Barton Family", 3.
6. Test, Ebor., IV, 61.
7. Ibid.

the will that Barton was a man of substantial means for one in his station in life, there is an absence of the usual array of pious bequests, undoubtedly on account of the funds lavished upon his parish church in his lifetime.

Barton features infrequently in government records. On 16 October, 1454, he was one of the merchants of the Staple ordered to pay a fine to the Duke of Burgundy in recompense for offenses committed during a dispute between English and Burgundian merchants. Another of the merchants of the Staple listed in this document is Nicholas Mattock, whose brass in Hitchin has been discussed above¹. On this occasion Barton was said to be of Kingston-upon-Hull; in a later general pardon², he is called ,

John Barton of Holme in the parish of Northmoscham, co,
Nottingham 'merchant', alias late farmer of the manor
of Egyll by Lincoln, co, Lincoln,

In a further general pardon a John Barton is referred to as being of the town of Middleton, Lancashire, "gentilman", alias late of Calais³; this is unlikely to be the same man.

Undoubtedly the richest memorial to the wealthy merchant is, precisely as he himself devised, the fabric of his church. The improvements to this building, a chapelry under the jurisdiction of the Peculiar Court of Southwell⁴, included a

1. *CPR, 1452-61*, 210-12.
2. *CPR, 1467-77*, 316.
3. *CPR, 1476-85*, 191.
4. T.M. Blagg, "Second Excursion; Holme", *Thoroton Society Transactions*, 9 (1905), 33-38, 34.

glazing scheme in which Barton, his wife and children appear as little donor figures under lights showing saints and Old Testament prophets. The glass features Barton's favoured rhyme, which also appears on the outside stonework of the church,

I thanke God, and ever shall,
It is the shepe hath payed for all,

Also prominently displayed are Barton's *rebus*, the bear and tun, an obvious pun on his name, his monograph and the arms of the Staple¹. Nevil Truman, who wrote several short studies of the family and their church, has correlated the series of prophets and saints from Holme with the famous series in Fairford, Gloucestershire². Barton was a contemporary of John Tame, who endowed the rebuilding of Fairford church, himself also a merchant of the Staple. It is indeed possible that in the field of conspicuous charitable expenditure the two men enjoyed a collaborative and perhaps even competitive relationship. Fairford church also contains some fine brasses to the Tame family, though none with cadaver effigies. In Shipton-under-Wychwood church, Oxfordshire, however, a palimpsest brass³ with a recumbent cadaver effigy commemorates Elizabeth Tame,

1. Nevil Truman, "Medieval Glass in Holme-by-Newark Church", *Thoroton Society Transactions*, 39 (1935), 92-118, 92.
2. *Ibid*; see also Truman, *Holme by Newark Church and its Founder*.
3. See Chapter II, no. 91 above. The verse from the palimpsest brass is published in King, "Eight English Verses", 496 .

d. 1548, who is also commemorated on a conventional brass with her husband in Fairford church.

John Barton's choice of monument, clearly selected as the central feature of his grandiose and rather self-regarding plans for his parish church, may tentatively be regarded as arising from a variety of influences. Firstly, as a merchant of the Staple of Calais, Barton was well-travelled and would have had the opportunity to see cadaver monuments on both sides of the Channel. The linking of his name with that of Nicholas Mattock may indicate that he belonged to a loose circle of individuals who were attuned to relatively new devotional tastes. As a man who had improved himself from obscure origins, married well and amassed considerable wealth, he would also have been susceptible to conspicuous pious benefaction, not least as a recognised way of immortalising his own name. In this connection, the cadaver tomb, being relatively new, striking and costly, as well as expressing rather extravagant piety, had its attractions. On the other hand, Barton could simply, perhaps on the prompting of a local monumental mason, have been emulating someone else whom he admired, a likely candidate being Archbishop Laurence Booth, whose tomb in Southwell Minster had probably been installed very recently¹.

1. See 373-82 above.

The career of Thomas Fisher, usually called Heywood after his place of birth¹, reads initially like that of any man of prominent birth who entered the church through an Oxford education in canon law²: dispensations to hold incompatible benefices were granted early in a career which from the outset demonstrated rampant pluralism. In particular, Heywood became a canon of Lichfield Cathedral, collated to the prebendal stall of Gaia Minor at the age of twenty-four³, whereupon began the special relationship with the chapter there which was to last sixty years and which leaves some clues as to the individual character of the man.

Heywood became a residentiary of the Lichfield Chapter at a time when it and its revenues were shrinking. Nonetheless, many rising stars of the church passed through it⁴: John Arundel, Henry Chichele and even William Booth had departed on Heywood's arrival, but Laurence Booth held several prebendal stalls there from 1449⁵ and the Booths may be regarded as an influence in Heywood's choice of tomb. Heywood, unlike the others, arrived and stayed, occupying the office of Dean from 1457 until his death in 1492. Because of his remarkable beneficence, a product of his

1. J. Charles Cox, "Benefactions of Thomas Heywood, Dean (1457-1492), to the Cathedral Church of Lichfield", *Archaeologia*, 52 (1889), 617-46, 617.
2. Emden, *Oxford*, II, 897-98.
3. *Ibid.*, 897.
4. *V.C.H. Staffordshire*, III (London, 1970), 36.
5. Axon, "The Family of Bothe", 51.

considerable personal piety and wealth, and because of his long and active service, he remains the most outstanding figure in the Chapter of this period, despite the fact that he had no career outside the diocese'. The temporalities which he possessed are said to have been the only ones the cathedral possessed at the Reformation.

His long and varied list of benefactions, ranging from the humane and practical to the exotic and devotional, but always involving startlingly large sums of money, is the best surviving testimony to Thomas Heywood, one painstakingly documented by Rev. J. Charles Cox in *Archaeologia* (1890)² and are worth summarising in this context. Thomas Heywood founded no less than two chantries in the cathedral, one dedicated to St Blaise. Benefactions were not restricted to the cathedral, however; the fabric of neighbouring churches also benefitted, and sums of £10.00 each going to the church of St Michael and the church of St Chad at Stow for fabric repairs. The chapel of the Blessed Mary in Lichfield's market place was given £8.00 for glazing the principal window, while Richard Ruge, carpenter, was

1. *V.C.H. Staffs*, III, 159, 161.

2. Cox, "Benefactions of Heywood", 621-23. The information is drawn from three volumes called *Cantaria S. Blasii* in the library of the Dean and Chapter.

paid £16.13.4 for erecting the rood loft there and other carpenters received £15.6.8 for a new rood loft on the north side. In addition, Heywood paid £21 for erecting pillars in the nave of the same church, gave £5.13s.4d. to the guild of the chapel and £7.0s.8d. for the repair of chests. No date is given for any of these benefactions.

The first of Heywood's two Cathedral chantries was that of St Blaise (1466), opposite the episcopal seat. It was supplied with a decorated mass book, a twenty-ounce silver-gilt chalice, three sets of vestments and an alabaster reredos carved with the life of the saint¹. In 1468, it was joined by the chantry of Jesus and St Anne in the north. Heywood gave to this an altar, a mass-book, a silver-gilt chalice and patten, an assortment of sumptuous vestments, two corporals and cases, altar cloths, four *ornamenta* for the altar, two towels and a basin, two pewter cruets, a pix and a cushion for the mass-book. He made further gifts to this altar in 1481².

Heywood also made other extensive gifts to the Cathedral covering almost every aspect of the devotional life. In 1474 he caused to be built a new chamber³, with a chapel

1. Ibid., 621.
2. Ibid., 622.
3. Ibid., 623.

above it at the entrance to the vicars' houses so that infirm vicars could hear mass there. It was fully furnished like the chantries. The vicars were the object of further munificence in 1468, when Heywood paid for additions to their new college by building a new bakehouse and brewhouse with two grain stores above it. He reroofed the building and erected an oven and furnace at a cost of twenty marks, as Cox puts it, "for the safety of his soul and the convenience of the chaplains"¹. He also gave the chaplains 40s for the fabric of the place where the *ciphorium* was situated and for the glazing of windows, finally spending 20s on an iron chimney and 6s.8d. on a good table-cloth.

In 1477 he had a great bell cast in London at a cost of £100 which was hung in the south tower of the cathedral's west front². In 1481 he gave two silver-gilt monstrances containing relics which were assigned to the care of the chaplain of St Blaise who was Keeper of St Chad's head, Lichfield's most important relic³. In 1486 £26.3.4 was spent on a new pair of organs to stand over the screen at the entrance to the choir, and a further £12 for another pair of organs to stand near the Jesus altar for the newly

1. Ibid., 622.

2. Ibid., 623.

3. John Hewitt, "The 'Keeper of Saint Chad's Head' in Lichfield Cathedral, and other matters concerning that Minster in the Fifteenth Century", *Archaeological Journal*, 33 (1876), 72-82, 72-73.

established Wednesday masses there. In the same year, altar cloths were given to all the altars. The windows of the Chapter House were also glazed with lights showing a series of apostles; and in addition frescoes were painted on the roof and walls, a wooden wainscot added and the vestibule window glazed, all at a total cost of £46'. At the very end of his life, in 1490, he gave £40 for the building of a detached library outside the door of the north transept. He did not, however, live to see its completion, which was finally achieved by Dean Yotton in 1500².

Clearly many of these benefactions, though they may have been motivated partly by Heywood's anxiety for his immortal soul, were inspired out a consideration for his fellow clerks in the cathedral community. This apparent concern seems to have extended to the city of Lichfield, where Heywood is known to have made biennial decanal visitations to hear the testimony of his specially appointed street wardens at a court designed to deal with moral offenders³. The chantry foundations, too, were accompanied by the establishment of additional devotional rites, before which a bell was to be rung to attract the local townspeople⁴. In

1. Cox, "Benefactions of Thomas Heywood", 623.
2. *V.C.H., Staffs*, III, 166.
3. Cox, "Benefactions of Heywood", 618.
4. *V.C.H., Staffs*, III, 165.

1473 he obtained an indulgence of one hundred days from Archbishop Bouchier, and forty days from all bishops of the southern province, to all penitents of Canterbury Diocese who attended his newly instituted Friday masses of the Name of Jesus. In 1482 he obtained further papal indulgences to encourage pilgrims to Lichfield Cathedral¹. Nor were all his public acts designed for the cure of souls; he deposited in the treasury twenty marks for distribution as pensions to the canons of Hales Owen after his death, and made an annual gift of 7s. to the house of paupers on Bacon Street, Lichfield².

Heywood is reputed to have been elected Dean *per inspirationem* and to have been touchingly reluctant to accept office³. One must be careful, however, not to read too much into this account which comprises the conventional and formulaic rhetoric on these occasions. How far, however, was he a patrician with a vocation? Certainly he appears to be of a different character from the other eminent churchmen studied so far, the canon lawyers immersed in affairs of state. Heywood not only was content to live within a relatively narrow compass for one so wealthy, but he also seems to have espoused an orthodoxy which goes

1. Ibid,
2. Cox, "Benefactions of Heywood", 623,
3. Ibid., 617.

deeper than theological commonplaces into the very stuff of the liturgy and relics with which he was almost wholly preoccupied. Undoubtedly as Dean he was a strong disciplinarian. It is impossible to say how wide, geographically, was his personal experience. There is nothing to indicate Continental travel, but there was the cathedral bell ordered in London, an impressive array of degrees from Oxford (B.C.L., B.Cn.&C.L., D.Cn.L.) and a list of northern and Midland benefices. On balance, however, the influence of Archbishop Booth's tomb at Southwell offers the readiest explanation for Heywood's choice of a double-decker cadaver monument.

Only the indent of the brass to Thomas Robynson and his wife survives in Digswell church, Hertfordshire. Robynson was a citizen and mercer of London, as the inscription states, one of the many Robynsons of the merchant class in the capital whose names litter the government records of the period. Amongst these, is at least one reference to a Robynson with landed interests in Hertfordshire: Robert Robynson, "hattermerchant" of London, in 1490 was involved in a transaction concerning properties in Datchworth, Brantfield, Tuwyng (Tewin) and Watton-atte-Stone, all of which lie

within a ten mile radius of Digswell¹. It seems likely, therefore, that Mary Peryent married a man who, although not her equal in pedigree, was of a family who held lands locally, probably gained through successful commercial interests in London.

Mary Robynson was probably sister to Joyce Peryent, the wife of William Robert mentioned above². The view that they were both daughters of Sir John Peryent, who died in 1442³, is probably a mistake, as Gray, following Cussons and the Harleian pedigrees, believes that they were the daughters of his brother, Edmund⁴, assuming that John died without issue as Edmund was his sole heir. There is the additional complication that,

Although the arms on her brass show Mary to have been a Peryent, there is no indication of her parentage. The pedigrees in Harl. MSS 1546 and 1647 show her as a sister of Joyce Roberts, and she would certainly seem to be of the same generation. As Edmund Peryent was the only member of the previous generation known to have left issue, it seems very probable that he was her father...

These difficulties aside, it would seem safe to attribute the choice of brass in this instance to the same social contacts and impulses which were identified in the case of Roberts.

1. *CCR, 1485-1500*, 133.
2. H.C. Andrews, "Sidelights on Brasses in Hertfordshire Churches", *East Herts Archaeological Society Transactions*, 13 (1950-54), 13-26, 17; see 387-90 above.
3. R.J. Busby, *Digswell Church Brasses; A Short Guide* (Welwyn Garden City, 1967), 2.
4. Gray, "The Peryents of Hertfordshire", 79.

Margaret Shelley's brass in Hunsdon church, Hertfordshire, tells us that she was the wife of John Shelley. The Shelleys represent yet another family whose origins are obscure and where, in looking for evidence of their activities in the fifteenth century, one is dealing with comparatively "new" men¹. Indeed the Close Rolls of 1467 give strong supportive evidence to this view of the family²: John Lucas, abbot of the exempt monastery of Holy Cross, Waltham, gave acknowledgement that neither John Shelley nor his kin were bondmen of the said abbey,

so far as the abbot has ever heard, but that he is a free man born, though a rumour has been spread that he is in their neif...

The John Shelley in question here was married to Elizabeth, daughter of John Michelgrove, a minor Sussex heiress³, and appears on the evidence of other records to be the son of the owner of the brass⁴. It is nowhere recorded who was the father of Margaret, whom the elder John married in 1455.

John and Thomas were the favoured names in the Shelley family for at least four generations: brothers called John and Thomas were executed for their participation in the plot

1. H. C. Andrews, "The Shelley Family in Hertfordshire; Hunsdon, Temple Chelsin, St Margarets, etc.", *East Herts Archaeological Society Transactions*, 4 (1921-22), 240-55, 242.
2. *CCR*, 1461-68, 439-40.
3. *CCR*, 1468-76, 386.
4. *CPR*, 1476-85, 347.

to restore Richard II in 1400¹, leaving their younger brother William to carry on the line. His son Robert was the father of John who died in 1441, holder of the family's minor estates in Kent, and Thomas, who died in 1434 and is the first of the family to be referred to as "of Hunsdon"². This John was the first to be recorded as a London guildsman, being grocer and mercer, as well as M.P. and J.P. in Kent³. His son was the husband of Margaret. He acquired landed interests in Hertfordshire: and John his son enfeoffed some local notables in his estate of Temple Chelsin, including William and John Say, and Thomas Leventhorpe, in 1470⁴. In 1476, John Shelley is cited in a pardon of debts due to the king as "late sheriff of London"⁵. Elsewhere he commonly occurs as "citizen and merchant of London"⁶. He and Margaret had a house in Hunsdon, where they were neighbours of John's cousin, Thomas, the son of his father's younger brother of the same name. Thomas the younger, who died in 1500, was also a citizen and merchant in London⁷.

1. Andrews, "Shelley Family in Herts", 244.
2. *Ibid.*, 255.
3. *Ibid.*, 247.
4. *CPR, 1467-77*, 182.
5. *CPR, 1476-85*, 3.
6. e.g. *Ibid.*, 80.
7. *Ibid.*, 243.

Margaret's husband, John, died in 1486, seised of Offord Danes in Huntingdonshire, worth £13.00 per annum¹. He also held Bleeches in Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, of William Say, enfeoffed by John Leventhorpe and Richard Quartermayne, and Olives and Cadyngtons in Hunsdon².

In the absence of any information as to the identity of Margaret Shelley, one is forced to conclude that her brass was laid down by her son, John, probably under the ultimate influence of the Leventhorpe brass in Sawbridgeworth. This is a shroud brass which must be ranked among the large number of such in Hertfordshire belonging to families of similar status to the Shelleys. The idea that the memorial brass might be part of a general trend for the social-climbing middle classes at the end of the fifteenth century, seems to be borne out in the examination of the spread of the shroud brass design in Hertfordshire. The trend seems to begin with the influential Leventhorpe and Peryent families, whose rank was based on their county land-holdings and office within the Duchy of Lancaster estates system, and to move outward into smaller land-owning families living nearby, whose money derived from "trade", with some of whom they intermarried, and enfeoffed land.

1. *CPR, 1485-94*, 165; Andrews, "Shelley Family in Hertfordshire", 249.
2. *Ibid.*

The William Leynthal who died in 1497 and is buried in Great Hasely, Oxfordshire, where the remains of his shroud brass is still extant, is recorded as having been married to the last of the Pipards who had obtained the lordship as recently as 1440. He is, therefore, the founder of the Oxfordshire branch of the Leynthal family, which continued to hold the manor of Lachford for the ensuing two centuries¹.

The Leynthals were a Herefordshire family, the most noted member of which was Roland Leynthal, d. 1452, who married Margaret, sister of Lady Joan Beauchamp of Abergavenny, and sister and coheir of Thomas , Earl of Arundel². The relationship between William and Roland proves hard to establish, but it may be assumed that the former was a direct descendant of the latter, with perhaps two generations intervening. Roland and Margaret's eldest son was John.³ It may probably also be assumed that William was a younger son, although no other Leynthal appears in government records for the period. In the codicil to William Leynthal's will, however, a cousin John Leynthal of Taunton and a brother George, of Leynthal, are mentioned⁴.

1. Weare, *Some Remarks upon the Church of Great Hasely, Oxfordshire*, 67.
2. See 228 above.
3. Tierney, *History of Arundel*, I, 192-93; *CPR 1452-61*, 34.
4. P.C.C. , 11 Horne 91, Prob.11/11.

William Leynthal's will is dated 31 May 1495. He expressed the wish to be buried in his parish church, "as god shall dispose of me", later adding cryptically,

Also I wil that a stone with myne domes of Marbill with
an ymage and scripture be laied according vpon my
buryell.

His largest single charitable bequest is one of twenty shillings to the chapel of Our Lady, Leynthal. He mentions two sons, John and Thomas, and two daughters, Alice and Johanne. His wife, Katherine, is to control his estate until the elder son comes of age. Thomas Leynthal, "my master Thomas Daimer" and two men styled "my gossip" are the executors. The will is entirely orthodox for its date, if comparatively personal in its details. To what extent the choice of tomb design was already established by the testator is unclear; it simply shows a shrouded figure, but used also to include the figures of his sons and daughters. His family's close connection with the Arundels and Beauchamps possibly offers an explanation of that choice.

Ralph Woodford of Ashby Folville in Leicestershire, who died in 1498, presents a case as fascinating as his monument is aesthetically outstanding. What little is known of him can all be construed as contributing directly to the sentiments expressed by the cadaver iconography. As such, his is probably the only case in which general assumptions

regarding the sentiments giving rise to that iconography can be attributed with certainty to a particular individual.

Ralph Woodford was named as sole heir of his grandfather, Robert Woodford, knight, in a writ of 1456, his father, Thomas, being already dead¹. It appears that Ralph's grandfather had set about systematically disinheriting him, as his son Robert testifies²:

Memorandum, that Syr Robert Wodford gauffe by fyne to hys younger sones the manours of Wyssurby, Brentyngby, Sproxton, Thorp Arnold, Burton S. Lazarus, and Knypeton, to diserytt Raufe hys eldysde [son's] sone, bycause of a grouge that he had agenste the said Rauffe; and that was, by cause the Villars had marryd hym agenste the said Robert's mynde; and be counsell of hys younger sones, he dyd burne two quarters of evidences yn Asscheby haule, as oulde men could testyfy; and then the said Raufe, after hys dysseise, enteryd yn the manour of Asscheby; and founde a dede, by the which the vycar of Asscheby was ynfeffed; and he over-lyffed the other fiffes; and gave a state of hys and fyne. And I Robert Wodford say, of my fydelyte and truthe, that my fader Rauff Wodford, shewed me the dede yn hys clousett by the grette chamber, and said that by that dede he held all hys lands, The whyche dede is yn the possessyon of my brodyr Matthew Wodford, or else in my brodyr John's, Robert Wodford.

The inheritance involved a substantial parcel of property in Leicestershire and Warwickshire, for which two counties Ralph, styled esquire, answered as sheriff ten years later³.

1. *CFR, 1452-61*, 136, 160.
2. John Nichols, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester*, ... Including also Mr Burton's description of the county, published in 1622, and the later collections of Mr Staveley, Mr Carte, Mr Peck and Sir T. Cave, 4 vols. (London, 1795, 1815, 1795-1811), III, 26.
3. *CFR, 1461-71*, 191.

His will' supplies an interesting counterpart to the sentiment evident in the tomb; the reasons why he was moved to express such sentiment may be connected with his material circumstances, for his will begins,

I Ralfe Woodforde of Ashby Folville, considering how I shall as others have done be fore me departe from this wretched worlde when it pleases oure Lorde Jhesu to call me, And be caus I se daily in experience as yet that grete diseveraunce and variaunce oft tymes ben moved and fallen afor the dethe of man insoas be cause of negligence and Ignoraunce of hyme that shulde dispose theme selfe to do wilnor especially ordeyne theme when they have tyn and power or elles they tresur in long liffe and soo abide to come and thann they may not & tharnot but god knowith, And therefore be leve and trust of *our* Lady Jhesu In eschewing of alle suche doubt and perelles whilez our Lorde hath given me space and tyme I being in good and hole mynde and also disposition of my person thankd be Jhessu the xv day of april in the yer of our lorde m'cccc Lxxxxv and the yer of the Reigne of king Henry the vijth xith, As after ffolowyth aforsade in the countie of Leicester be firm advice and good deliberation make renewe and declair this my none testament last will and Intent of all my ffeffr,,o,ll landes and tenements, And of my moveable goodes and unmoveable to be trewly done and performed in the maner and fourm as folowith, That is to say I be sette and bequeith my soul to our Lorde Jhesu crist and to his moder our Lady saint mary and to all the hole ffellowship of heuen and my body to be buried and to haue resting place *within* the chauncell of the parishe church of Asshby Folevill aforesaide before the Image of our Lady where my wif liggez to making of the which chauncell I have paide v marcs and *more*,..

The remainder of the will, although verbose and with the occasional personal touch, is broadly orthodox. The tomb itself is nowhere mentioned, although he does request that

1. P.C.C., 11 Horne, 183v-184r , Prob, 11/11.

his funeral be conducted "in reosonabull maner and formm as is nowe used". More information about Ralph Woodford's family and origins can, however, be deduced from the will: amongst his many pious bequests, for instance, is one to the parish church of , "Skillington in Lincolnshire which I was born in". The name of Elizabeth, his late wife near whom he wishes to be buried, occurs often. Curiously it is not until the very last rehearsal of those to be remembered in his chantry that he mentions, "wives Elizabeth and Margaret", indicating an earlier marriage. The chantry is to be of three years' duration and the names of those involved are to be written on a bill which is to be delivered to the recipients of each of his pious bequests. In the last refinement of this provision, along with wife Margaret, he also asks those concerned, "especiall to pray for the soule of my uncoll Rafe Woodford that died and was slayne at Levefre". His lands are to go to his three sons, Matthew, John and Robert, who are the executors along with his daughter Joan's husband, a Nevill. Other relations include several Woodfords all styled "cossyn" who receive personal effects, particularly gowns, and sums of money. He also makes a bequest to his sister Katheryn. Touchingly, towards the end, he leaves 13s.4d. to "a litell maiden that Johan Nevell my daughter kepte for almes".

There is nothing in the will to indicate that Ralph Woodford was part of any social or political circle in which cadaver monuments enjoyed a vogue. For once this is relatively unimportant, for it seems that such a cadaver tomb has in this case its own self-sufficient explanation. The will demonstrates a form of asceticism of sentiment alongside entirely orthodox forms of bequeathing of the soul and arranging for funeral and chantry provision. This may suggest that by the time Woodford wrote his will, the formulae often associated with theological radicalism a century earlier had, with the corpse image on tombs, become an alternative available as an expression of relatively orthodox lay piety, an alternative with its clear personal attractions to this man.

The penultimate surviving cadaver tomb datable to before 1500 is that of Richard Yate of Longworth, Berkshire. In his case the brass alone saves him from total obscurity as I have been unable to discover other records of his career. The last tomb in this group, however, commemorates the better documented Richard Howard of Aylsham in Norfolk, one of two benefactors of the parish church there who commissioned shroud brasses¹. The church was built in the last quarter of the fourteenth century and John of Gaunt's name has been linked with its foundation, as one of the

1. The other is Thomas Wymer, d. 1507 (Chapter II, no. 55), whose screen and font are still *in situ*.

Duchy of Lancaster courts is reputed to have been held in the town¹. The Howards were a prominent local family, serving as sheriffs and on royal commissions². It would be tempting to attribute Howard's choice of monument, therefore, simply to an East Anglian, "Lancastrian" connection, were it not for an item in the Patent Rolls for December 1458³. According to this document, a commission was appointed in Norfolk to arrest among others William and Richard Howard, "who with other evil-doers wander through various parts of the said county lying in wait for the king's lieges and beating and maiming some and burning their houses". There could be no more emphatic warning against conflating the aesthetic fashions associated through time with the Duchy of Lancaster with the volatile political conflict known as the Wars of the Roses.

In summary, therefore, the tombs of 1480-1500 demonstrate a clear geographic concentration in Hertfordshire and East Anglia. In both instances the prominence of the Duchy of Lancaster in the establishment of the fashion is continued, from the earlier period, although those commemorated by cadaver tombs should not be called "Lancastrians" with any

1. L.G. Bolingbroke, "Aylsham, Felbrigg and Blickling", *Norfolk Archaeology*, 21 (1920-22), xxviii.
2. *CFR*, 1461-71, 9, 48; 1485-1509, 162.
3. *CFR*, 1452-61, 491.

precise partisan connotation. Glemham, Brocas and Leynthal all present instances of old families, in the latter two cases somewhat decayed, expressing perhaps some sense of their ancestry through the design. Robert, Tendring and Robertson may all be directly connected with the specific influence of the Leventhorpe brass, and Mattock, Wisebeard and Shelley may possibly be added to that circle. With the exception of Tendring, whose connection is familial, all lie within a fifteen-mile radius of Sawbridgeworth. Together with the last three names mentioned, Spryng and Barton clearly make up a substantial contingent of rising mercantile landed interest using the tomb as a form of status symbol. If the De la Poles "were perhaps the most remarkable contemporary examples of social climbing"¹, there were naturally many others who were part of the same trend and, for some identifiable groups, the cadaver tomb appears to have been a manifestation of their rise in fortune. Its appeal is intelligible in these cases as a sub-set of the chantry system, "which the average prosperous individual of the fifteenth century could afford...something private and personal in an age of a developing middle class"².

In none of the cases in this chapter, except, perhaps, that of Woodford, is there any evidence that the impulse to

1. Du Boulay, *Age of Ambition*, 67.
2. *Ibid.*, 154.

establish a cadaver tomb was the product of deep religious sensibility as opposed to social fashion. That is not to say that the social and the religious can, in this context, be entirely divorced from each other; the connection between "doing the right religious thing" and succeeding in one's endeavours, " through the consequent supply of God's grace"¹ is not demonstrative of an entirely cynical view of religious practice. A more sophisticated religious education for the first or second generation property-owning classes was not an instant palliative against either social or spiritual anxiety. What may have been of genuine assistance, on the other hand, was particularly any form of religious expression which reinforced a sense of national and of family identity. To all these general reflections, however, Ralph Woodford's tomb, though modest in scale, is perhaps a less complex exception, a rare English example of a specific devotional statement.

1. Richmond, "Religion and the Fifteenth-Century English Gentleman", 201.

Chapter VII

THE CADAVER TOMB IN LATE MEDIEVAL ENGLAND:

PROBLEMS OF INTERPRETATION

It may be that the surviving evidence for the personalities and careers of individuals who commissioned cadaver tombs is, in the end, too impersonal to throw much light on the reasons why they did so. Nevertheless, as thorough an examination of these individuals as the records will allow suggests that there are some grounds for seeing the dissemination of the cadaver tomb in England as a socially motivated fashion. In this light only does it seem fitting to re-examine the proposition that the cadaver tomb design fulfilled some psychological need, or was perceived by those who chose it as a self-conscious spiritual statement. As the only really reliable access to the intellect of the fifteenth-century layman lies in what he read, it now seems appropriate to attempt to return the cadaver tomb to its aesthetic context, bearing in mind that literary tastes too were subject to social pressures and fashions. A full and relatively balanced picture is offered by some of the laymen considered in Chapter V, who presented there most evidence of forming a socially or politically cohesive grouping. Not all the literary material with which they can be connected is, of course, of the "mortality" type commonly associated with the cadaver tomb: it is rather that the fragments of evidence support an impression of the layman who commissioned a cadaver tomb as someone of cultivated but eclectic tastes and moderate spirituality comparable in that respect with the eminent figures who first imported the fashion.

Alice Chaucer, the poet's granddaughter, is an obvious case in point. The evidence that she owned a copy of Chaucer's poetry is rather inconclusive¹; her connection with John Lydgate is easier to establish, as there is clear evidence that four French books and an English translation by that poet were sent to Ewelme for her from Wingfield in August 1466². Perhaps Alice Chaucer's most well documented literary association, however, is through her third husband, William de la Pole, who had literary aspirations of his own, particularly evidenced in the famous alliance between himself and Charles duc d'Orleans, guardian and prisoner.

Suffolk owed a long-standing debt to Charles's family which seems to have led to the friendship of the two men. William de la Pole and his one surviving brother had been taken prisoner by John Count of Dunois, the Bastard of Orleans, at Jargeau in 1429. The Bastard later showed clemency to William and let him return to England on very easy terms³. This in turn helps to establish why Suffolk was later granted custody of Charles at his own request in 1432, at terms which must have been below cost⁴. Not only did Charles d'Orleans write much of his poetry while a prisoner

1. Lilian J. Redstone, "Notes on Suffolk Manuscript Books", *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and Natural History*, 20 (1930), 80-92. She considers that Harley MS 7335 was connected with Cotton, the De la Pole's Suffolk estate.
2. *Ibid.*
3. McLeod, *Charles of Orleans, Prince and Poet*, 174-79.
4. Henry Noble McCracken, "An English Friend of Charles of Orleans", *PMLA*, 26 (1911), 142-80.

in the Suffolk household, Suffolk wrote love poems of a similar style while he was a prisoner in France. It is not inconceivable that these were addressed to Alice Chaucer, whom he married on his release. It may even be that the friendship between the two men contributed to Suffolk's desire to end the war with France, for which objective they acted together in negotiations.

Suffolk's poems written from his French prison are thematically and structurally very similar to Charles's. They are love poems which combine the elements of courtly verse with the elegiac form, the longing for the unattainable lady':

Ou que ie suis, ou que ie vais
Quoi que ie dis, quoy que ie fais,
Vous avez le coer que fuit mien;
or nous entreaion doncque bien,
Si serrount noz playsirs parfaits.

Later Charles d'Orleans wrote his *Poème de la Prison* whilst an enforced guest of the De la Poles. Indeed, two of Charles's poems appear in Harley MS 7333 along with some details from Chaucer's dream poems. MacCracken suggested that these may have come into the hands of Shirley, the

1. Ibid., 152.

editor, via Lydgate who could in turn have received them from Alice Chaucer¹.

It seems reasonable, therefore, to construct a picture of the household of the Suffolks as one of both the patronage and the practice of literary production. That there was a friendly rivalry in this area between William de la Pole and Charles d'Orleans, is supported by the survival of some short poems written in English by the latter. One of these is of particular interest in the present context, as it takes the form of an acrostic addressed to Anne Moleyns, the mother of Eleanor Moleyns, the ward of Thomas Chaucer who was commemorated by a small shroud brass in Stoke Poges church²:

Alas, mercy wher shal myn hert now fynd?
Neuer had he wyth yow ful acquaintans,
Now com to hym and put of hys greuans,
Ellys ye be vnto your frend vnkynd,

Mercy, he hath euer yow in hys mynd;
Ous let hym haue sum conforth of pleans,
 Alas mercy etc,
Let hym not dey, but mak attons a nende
In al hys woo, an right hevy penans,
Noght is the help that whyl not hym avans,
Slauth hys to me and euer com be hynde,
 Alas mercy etc.

1. Ibid., 144, 145n.
2. See 355-61; Eleanor Prescott Hammond, "Charles of Orleans and Anne Molineux", *MP*, 22 (1924), 215-16. The author makes the mistake of conflating the Moleyns and the Molineux families, where this poem clearly refers to Anne Moleyns (Molins).

The De la Pole circle's literary interests were not exclusively secular; Alice Chaucer herself actually commissioned at least one poem from Lydgate, *The Virtues of the Mass*¹. The poem is an explanation and contemplation of the different facets of the mass. Those who would hear mass are first urged to employ their "Inward contemplation" (1.3) to, "The morall menyng of that gostly armure" (1.5), that is the priest's vestments, the nature of which is dictated by scripture. The second stanza connects the divine service with the memory of Christ's Passion, another visual motif for contemplative purposes. The poet then instructs his audience on the basic behaviour required at mass, regular attendance, kneeling, keeping quiet, concentrating on the office and staying until the end.

The first explanatory sequence is based upon the gradual prayer, *Judica me Deus*, by means of an analysis of the forty-second psalm. Each verse of the psalm is first quoted in Latin, then translated in a stanza of verse. Lydgate expands the matter of these translations to include vivid devotional images: for the verse, *Confitebor tibi in cithara*

1. Henry Noble MacCracken, ed., *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, I, EETS, e.s. 107 (1911), 87-115. St John's College MS, Oxford, is reported to have a title which reads: *Hyc incipit interpretacio misse in lingua materna secundum Iohannem litgate monachum de Buria ad rogatum domine Countesse de Suthfolcia*. Line references are given in brackets. See also Derek Pearsall, *John Lydgate* (London, 1970), 162.

deus meus, he writes of the moment,

When all thy senewys were streynyd on the roode
Mary and John, undyr thy crosse they stood
With wepyng eyen, sownyng ofte tyme... (ll. 124-26).

The next sequence involves the allegorical interpretation of the accoutrements of the priest, which arm him against the flesh the world and the devil. The candle is then adopted as a figure of Divine Light which dispels the darkness of sin, of those who do not know God.

Then begins an explanation of each part of the office itself, the Kyrie, Gloria, Orison, Epistle, Gradual, Alleluia, Tract and Sequence, Creed and Offertory. In each case Lydgate expands on the devotional function of the mass by citing the liturgy and certain typological parallels: for example, the Offertory is set against Melchisedech's giving of bread and wine to Abraham, simultaneously as its connection with Christ's own body and blood is emphasised. There follows the Secret and the Preface, the Sanctus and then two Memento,

The furst remembreth of folk that byn alyue,
And the secund for theym that suffre payne,
Whyche by the masse byn delyueryd blyue
Out of torment, as clerkes can dyscryue.

Syngyng of massys and Crystes passion,
And remembraunce of hys woundys fyue,
May most avayle to theyre remission, (ll. 305-12).

Christ's own suffering is this time invoked as a focus for the devotion which will retrieve the souls of dead loved ones in hell.

At the point in the office when the sacrament is elevated, the poet says that a prayer must be said and includes one of his own invention. Again the focus is upon the contemplative motifs associated with the Passion,

Whos blood down raylyd on most pyteous wyse,
To scowre the rust of all my wykydnesse...(ll. 331-32),

Typological figures of the Passion are then invoked from the Old Testament. This prayer is to be followed by the paternoster, then comes the Agnus Dei and the Post Common, when the priest greets the people, then, ultimately, they depart. This marks the end of the exposition of the mass; but Lydgate goes on to relate the opinions of St Augustine and St Bernard on the subject. The last section of the poem is basically a series of lists of saints and those who will benefit from the mass, and adds little to the poem's unity. There is a conventional envoy at the end.

In its formal structure, *The Virtues of the Mass*, though not inspired, is fitting both for its subject and its audience. From a theological point of view, the poem is orthodox, not to say banal, affording no startling insights into the poet or patron's devotional predilections. The frequent use, however, of contemplative motifs, especially those

concerning the blood and wounds of Christ, is visually vivid. Visual emblems of Christ's bodily suffering are, of course, a contemporary commonplace, but are allied to the personal *memento mori* in their affective impact.

A poem which possibly had much more influence on devotional attitudes, however, was probably translated by Lydgate for Alice Chaucer's second husband, Thomas Montacute, Earl of Salisbury. It may be that it was Alice herself who encouraged the translation of Deguilleville's *Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine*¹. In one of three surviving manuscripts of the translation there is pasted a picture of the poet presenting his work to his patron, who is shown as a soldier in armour with a shock of curly hair². If the translation was done by Lydgate, which is generally accepted to be the case, he probably began it whilst in France himself in 1426³. Much of the material provided by the translator deals with the theme of transience. In the first, the translator's, prologue, he writes,

ffor clerkys seyn / how [that] al erthly thyng
Stowndemel, and by vnwar chaungyng,
Whan folk lest wene / & noon hede ne take,
Her mayster olde sodeynly for-sake. ll. 9-12.

1. F.J. Furnivall, ed, I and II, and Katherine B. Locock, ed, III, *Lydgate's Deguilleville's Pilgrimage of the Life of Man*, 3 vols, EETS, e.s. 77 (1899), 83 (1901), 92 (1904).
2. London, B.L. Harley MS 4826, f.1; Pearsall, *John Lydgate*, 172-77.
3. Furnivall, *Lydgate's Deguilleville*, I, 5, 11, 151-57.

The tone is not optimistic:

That kam wyth Ioye / departeth ay wyth sorwe, 1.14.

No tresour here, wyth O man wyl abyde, 1.17.

It al schal passe as doth a soner flovr, 1.41.

The transitory life on earth,

Euerych hovr doth to hys boundys drawe, 1.51.

Not only is the reader reminded of his own death; Death himself is personified,

And deth ay redy with hys dart to kerue,
Lyth in a-wyt, dredful off manacys,
To send palmerys tto on off thys placys
A-geyne whas stroke, helpeth no medycyne... 11.64-67.

The only things which are of any value, he proceeds, are those things,

What ys holson, the soule for to save,
Whan the body ys leyd in hys grave, 11.89-90.

Having delivered this summary of what he considers to be the theme of the poem, Lydgate dedicated it to his patron, "My lord of / Of Salysbury" (11.123-24), who, at the time of writing, was in France.

At the end of the long narrative poem, the theme of the transitory nature of life reaches its inevitable climax. Age and Sickness are sent to warn the pilgrim that death

comes unexpectedly to rich and poor alike. He is advised to prepare. Sickness describes in graphic detail the physical effect he will have on the body:

first I souke vp (for the nones),
the maye closed in the bones
and (wher that it be bad or good,)
waste the flessch, and drynke the blood, ll.24215-18,

Sickness effectively acts as a *memento mori*. Old Age is another reminder of death, with her "empty skin" (l.24270), her "lokkes hore" (l.24272) and the "ryvels" (l.24273) on her face.

As solace to the pilgrim Misericord, Prayer and Alms come to him, with whose help he will enter the holy city with greater ease, although, as the pilgrim points out, the man in holy orders has no alms to give. At the moment that Prayer departs as his messenger for the holy city, Death steps upon the pilgrim's bed and he is terrified by her appearance. Grace Dieu finally warns the pilgrim that there is no escape and describes what will happen to him, offering the consolation, however, of the final resurrection of the body:

And after ward, this is the fyn,
To putte the in hir coffyn;
and after, of entencioun,
to yeve the in pocessioun
of wormes (as thou shalt ek knowe,)
that ligger in the erthe lowe;
the which (as I wel telle can)
Is comon to euery man,
'ther may no man, of no degre,
hygh nor lowh, his power fle,
ffor, lych as herbes and as floures,

that spryngen with soote shoures
both in Aprill and in May,
and afterward (it is no nay,)
with a sythe (who list to knowe,)
that ben on erthe leyd ful lowe,
and far-wel then al their fresshnesse!
farwel her colour and grenesse!
It not appereth, her nor there,
the hoothe Sonne maketh hem Sere;

[Blank in MS for an Illumination,]

Ther colours and their fressh aray,
al is tourned into hay,
 'and, thou, that so longe be
Grene and lusty forto se,
Deth (his power for to kythe,)
wil abatyn with his sythe
thy grenenesse, and ek also
parten the on peces two,
The soule, the body, her and yonder,
and maken hem to parte assondre,
for playnly, as thou shalt lere,
they may, as now, not gon yfere;
the oule muste go tofore,
and the body shal be bore,
 'In erthe to haue his mansioun,
and tourne to corrupcioun;
and afterward, be wel certyn,
loyned with the soule ageyn,
and ben to-gidre eternally. ll. 24755-93.

Death then swings her scyth and the dreamer wakes up.

The evidence that the translation was made by Lydgate has come under scrutiny, and has quite properly been shown to be inconclusive'. Though the question is of obvious importance to Lydgate scholars it does not effect the

1. Katheryn Walls, "Did Lydgate Translate the 'Pélérinage de la Vie Humaine'?", *N&Q*, 222, (1977), 103-05; Walter F. Schirmer, *John Lydgate; A Study in the Culture of the XVth Century* (London, 1961), 123-26. There were, of course, other MSS of the verse translation apart from Harley 4826, as well as a translation in prose, which further complicates this issue.

general connections being made here; it is simply necessary to register caution in attributing the verse translation to Lydgate and, in turn to Thomas Montacute, especially since the evidence of the illumination is suspect, but enticing.

In connection with Deguilleville, another circle of lay literary patronage connected with cadaver tomb commemoration has been uncovered in Nottinghamshire. Sir Thomas Chaworth left Richard Willughby of Wollaton a book known as *Grace Dieu*, which has been identified as a translation of the *Pèlerinage de L'Âme*¹. It is just one of many books which can be associated with these two apparent bibliophiles. Richard Willughby himself left several Latin devotional books, one referred to as *unum Missale per me nuper de novo factum*². Other evidence of his knowledge of the content and foliation of these works demonstrates that he was in the habit of commissioning manuscripts for his own use. There is also one unusual manuscript mentioned in his will, among the service books, and that is the manuscript, *in quo continetur una historia vocato Crede michi*³, possibly the alleged York Creed Play. No text of this play survives, although it is known to have been associated with the Corpus Christi Guild in York⁴. William Revetor left the play to

1. By K.D. Harris.
2. *Test, Ebor.*, III, 171.
3. *Ibid.*
4. A.F. Johnston and M. Rogerson, *Records of Early English Drama; York*, 2 vols (Toronto, 1979), xv, 78, 88 - Corpus Christi Account Roll, 1449-51, Y:C99:3, being a receipt for the Creed Play addressed to Revetour's executors.

that guild at an unknown date with instructions that it was to be performed once every ten years. In 1455 there is a note that the manuscript had become so worn that it needed replacing¹. Although not an integral part of the York cycle of Mystery Plays, the Creed Play had properties which are mentioned in a list. They included twelve scrolls which had the articles of the faith written on them, one for each apostle². How Willughby came into possession of the play is difficult to imagine unless it through his connection with the two Booths³, archbishops of York.

Of equal interest is the will of Willughby's associate, Sir Thomas Chaworth⁴. He left four vernacular books, including the *Grace de Dieu*. Another, a "newe boke of Inglisse ye which begynneth with ye lyffe of Seynt Albon and Amphiabell and other mony dyvers lyfez and thynges in ye same boke" was left to Robert Clifton⁵, who, like Willughby, is styled "cousin". Chaworth's son, William, and a William Gull⁶ were both left copies of the *Polychronicon*. Richard Bingham was to receive an *Orlogium Sapiencie*⁷.

1. Ibid.; Robert Davies, *Extracts from the Municipal Records of York* (York, 1843), 269-71.
2. Ibid.
3. See 375-83 above.
4. *Test. Ebor*, II, Surtees Society, 45 (1864), 220-29.,
5. Ibid, 227.
6. Ibid., 226-28.
7. Ibid.

A picture thus begins to emerge of the laymen commemorated by cadaver tombs as patrons of the arts of perhaps eclectic, but not devotionally extreme, tastes. To return to East Anglia, one finds the current church guide book to St Mary's church, Bury St Edmunds, where John Baret's tomb is to be found, confidently asserting that',

The idea of the cadaver monument derived from the dance of death depicted on the cloister walls surrounding the Pardon graves of the period. The poet Lydgate, a monk at Bury, introduced the pardon graves into this country.

Whereas this remark as it stands is oversimplified nonsense, it is true of course that the idea for the cadaver tomb must have come originally from the Continent. Lydgate, whose poetry on death themes, particularly his *Dance of Death*', in a period when he was personally known to a handful of tomb owners, did come from the Continent. Like many of them, he had visited France. The *Dance of Death* itself, although not commissioned by anyone connected with a cadaver tomb, must have been known to some. Lydgate in his own prologue to the poem wrote,

De the spareth not/ low ne hye degre
Popes kynges ne worthi Emperowrs, 11.9-10.

1. M.P. Statham, *The Church of St Mary, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk* (Bury St Edmunds, 1976), 9-10.
2. Florence Warren, ed., *The Dance of Death, edited from MSS Ellesmere 26/A, 13 and B.M. Lansdowne 699, Collated with other Extant MSS, EETS, o.s. 181* (1971, reprint), 2-77.

and then explained that his poem was inspired by,

...the example / which that at Parise
I fownde depict / ones on a walle
Ful notabely / as I reherce schal
Ther of frensshe clerkes / tak[yn]g aqueyntaunce
I toke on me / to translaten al
Owte of the frensshe / Macabrees daunce, 11,19-24,

He went on to suggest that the proud may behold their own ugly end in the poem "As in a mirrour" (l.31). The simile is an interesting one, as John Baret's epitaph on his tomb includes it',

He that wil sadly beholde me with his ie
May se hys owyn merowr and lerne for to die.

Of course, the mirror is such a popular image in contemporary literature that no too precise a connection should be implied.

The poem is not, however, as lugubrious as it often suggested, and, as is often the case with "mortality" material², on inspection reveals a consolatory approach to the subject, particularly in the address to the Carthusian monk,

Gefe me 3owre honde / with chekes dede & pale
Caused of wacche / & longe abstinence, 11,345-46

and the reply,

1. King, "Eight English Verses", 495.
2. See Chapter III above, *passim*.

Vn to the worlde / I was dede longe a-gon
Be my ordre / and my professioun, 11,353-54

The hermit, the only victim to whom Death offers an answer,
calmly accepts death, saying,

And for my parte / welcome be goddes grace
Thankyng hym / with humble chere and face, 11,621-22

Death's reply to this is,

That is wel seyde / & thus shulde every wight
Thank his god / and as his wittes dresse
To loue and drede hym / with al his herte & myght
Seth dethe to a-scape / may be no sekernesse, 11,625-28,

The poem was used to accompany a set of paintings on the cloister walls of the pardon graveyard at St Paul's Cathedral in London, although it was not translated for that purpose. This does not, however, rule out the possibility that Lydgate's Bury associates knew about the work, especially John Baret, who shared an annuity with the poet monk'. Baret himself left a copy of Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* in his will, as well as the treatise *Disce Mori*². One of Baret's executors, John Clopton, a brother-in-law, endowed a lavishly painted chantry chapel in the church of

1. *CPR*, 1441-46, 28.
2. See 321-22 above.

Long Melford in Suffolk, the walls of which are covered in scrolls with *memento mori* inscriptions and quotations from Lydgate's *Lamentation of Mary Magdalen* and his *Testament*'.

Another lavishly painted chantry chapel which Gough considered to be influenced by Lydgate's *Dance of Death* is no longer extant². This was the Hungerford chapel in Salisbury Cathedral, which included a painting of a skeletal figure of Death addressing a young gallant in doublet and hose, who wore a cap with a long feather in it and carried a long cane. Below the figure of Death was a coffin, and the background was spangled with *IHS* and *M*. Above the gallant was the inscription:

Alasse, Deathe, alasse, a blessful thyng yo were
Yf thou woldyst spare us in our lustynesse,
And cu' to wretches yt bethe of hevy chere,
When they ye clepe to slake there dystresse,
But owte, alasse, thyre owne sely selfwyldnesse
Crewilly werieth them; yt feyght wayle and wepe
To close there yen yt after ye both clepe.

And above Death:

Grasles galante, in all thy luste and pryde,
Remembr yt thou ones schalte dye.
Deth shold fro thy body thy sowle devyde;
Thou mayst him not ascape certaynly,
To ye dede bodys cast downe thyne ye,
Behold thaym well, consydere and see,
For such as they ar, such shalt yow be.

1. J.B. Trapp, "Verses by Lydgate at Long Melford", *RES*, N.S. 6 (1955), 1-11; noted in Rosemary Woolf, *English Religious Lyrics in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1968), 207n.
2. Gough, *Sepulchral Monuments in Great Britain*, II, 186-91, plates 71 & 72. See Plate 54.

Gough considers the painting to be of the mid-fifteenth century, but the costume of the gallant would suggest a slightly later date, perhaps soon after the death of Robert Hungerford, Lord Moleyns, husband of Eleanor Moleyns¹, who was not spared in his "lustynesse", but was executed at Newcastle upon Tyne in 1464. His body was buried in the Hungerford Chapel.

It would seem, then, that to relocate the English cadaver tomb in a specific aesthetic context suggests a few extremely tenuous connections with what is considered the contemporary "vogue" for the macabre, but that equally, those who commissioned cadaver tombs were likely to have been interested in an eclectic range of literary and artistic production. They were not, in all probability, more or less aesthetically or devotionally aware than their contemporaries who did not commission cadaver tombs. The dissemination of the cadaver tomb in England still appears to conform to no easily defined pattern. That, in itself, would seem to be a more balanced view of how the design spread *de facto*, although it does not make such a tidy or forceful argument as one which asserts that the "spirit of the age" was such that such aesthetic manifestations arose spontaneously. That type of reading demonstrably oversimplifies both the nature of dissemination and of the iconography of the tomb design itself.

1. See above.

Such conclusions are supported by the later development of the cadaver tomb beyond the scope of this thesis. After 1500, as one would expect, discernible patterns of dissemination in England became more and more diffuse, continuing to penetrate further down the social scale in popularity. Certain surviving tombs do, however, serve to corroborate some of the observed patterns of dissemination of the preceding seventy-five years. That the design persisted in popularity within certain families is the first and most obvious point to observe. Of especial interest here is the brass, formerly in Marston Montaine, Bedfordshire, to William Lenthorpe(sic) who died in 1506¹. All that now remains of it are two shields, Reynes impaling Mordaunt and Leventhorpe impaling Reynes. It may, therefore, be safely assumed that the man commemorated is related to the Hertfordshire Leventhorpes, and, what's more, probably to the family of Reynes, of Clifton Reynes, Buckinghamshire. In Clifton Reynes, in turn, there is an undated brass to members of the Reynes family, a man and his wife, shown in their shrouds². The brass to Richard Yate of Longworth, Berkshire, who died in 1498 and about whose career virtually nothing can be discovered, was joined in Longworth church by the brass to John Yate³, now lost, who died in 1509, and was possibly a son.

- 1, Chapter II, no. 53,
- 2, Chapter II, no. 117,
- 3, Chapter II, nos 45 and 58,

The complex and interesting brass of Joan Walrond or Strangbon, who died in 1477, in Childrey Church, Oxfordshire¹, is located in the Feteplace chantry chapel, so-called because the endowment of the chantry there was the responsibility of Joan's son-in-law, William Feteplace. He and Joan's daughter, his wife, Elizabeth, are commemorated by an equally interesting brass which is mounted murally within a structure of the Easter Sepulchre type. On it the couple are shown rising from their coffins, shrouded, in a votive posture, as it were on the Day of Judgement².

Henry Willughby, who died in 1528, and is commemorated in a double tomb in Wollaton church, was the immensely wealthy younger cousin of Richard Willughby, d. 1472³. Sir Henry was a coal-mining magnate, worth in excess of £1,400 *per annum* in the 1520's⁴. He married four times and, by the time he had made good marriages for his five children, was connected to many aristocratic houses in the area. Politically, he was associated first with William, Lord Hastings, then with the Duke of Buckingham and, although he avoided taking part in the latter's rebellion, he supported Henry VII after Bosworth, being one of an identifiable

1. Chapter II, no. 28.
2. Chapter II, no. 63; see Plate 43a and b.
3. Chapter II, no. 77, Plate 45a and b, and Chapter II no.21.
4. A. Cameron, "Sir Henry Willoughby of Wollaton", *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, 6 (1902), 10-21.

clique of Midlands gentry of these affiliations'. It is not political affiliation, however, which may offer the clue to Sir Henry's choice of a cadaver tomb, but much more probably the manner in which he appears to have continued the family's tradition of aesthetic interest, particularly manuscript ownership. He has, for instance, been identified as the supplier of a copy of the *De Proprietatibus Rerum* to Wynkyn de Worde for subsequent publication². A combination of cultivated literary tastes and an older cousin who favoured the corpse tomb, part himself of an identifiable literary milieu, probably adequately explains Henry Willughby's choice of a double decker cadaver tomb on which he is shown flanked by his four wives, half size so that they fit, on the top deck, whilst there is the conventional cadaver effigy below. Finally, in the context of close family relations choosing cadaver tombs, it may be mentioned that another of the Norfolk Briggs, who died c.1540, is commemorated by a shroud brass³, at Wiveton, Norfolk, this time of Norfolk workshop provenance.

Family connections are not the sole type of obvious dissemination pattern; geographical proximity seems to have

1. Ibid., 13.
2. Robert W. Mitchner, "Wynkyn de Worde's Use of the Plimpton Manuscript of *De Proprietatibus Rerum*", *The Library*, 5th series, 6(1) (1951), 7-18.
3. Chapter II, no. 102 - see also no. 3.

gone on playing its part. For example, in Norfolk once again, one finds the shroud brass to Thomas Wymer¹, worsted weaver and patron of Aylsham church, d. 1507, rivalling that of the Howards², the church's other patrons, for attention. The font and screen donated to the church by Thomas Wymer are also still extant. Undoubtedly the most striking example of a local vogue for cadaver tombs, however, is the church of St Mary's Hitchin, where, in addition to the Beel, Mattock and Wisebeard shroud brasses³, there are a further two: one to a member of the Abbot family, and another which is unidentified⁴.

Geographically there continues to be a concentration of these tombs in East Anglia and the "Home Counties", but, in addition, the fashion shows clear signs of having moved to the west, with notable tombs in Winchester, Salisbury, Bristol and Exeter cathedrals. These, along with a continuing high proportion of those surviving tombs of the first half of the sixteenth century, commemorate clerks. It is not surprising to see the design spread in these circles as successful clerks, by the nature of their careers, moved around the country more than laymen, having for the most

1. Chapter II, no. 55.
2. Chapter II, no. 47.
3. Chapter II, nos 29, 35 and 37.
4. Chapter II, nos 100 and 134.

part first come through one of the universities. Some of them undoubtedly came into contact in the course of their early careers with one or many of the notable clerks who were among the first to have cadaver tombs in England. This in turn implies the suggestion that the fashion continued to spread through particular intellectual and social milieus, a possibility about which necessarily one must be more tentative.

Among the sixteenth century clerks who favoured the cadaver tomb, however, two perhaps deserve to be singled out for special comment. A particularly interesting example is that of Stephen Gardiner who died in 1555 and was buried under a cadaver tomb in Winchester Cathedral. If ever a cadaver tomb were an exhibition of spiritual anxiety, Gardiner is an excellent candidate for demonstrating that case. The details of his chequered career are familiar'. He was born the son of a Bury St Edmunds clothmaker in the late 1480's, and took degrees in civil and canon law at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. His path to the see of Winchester was like that of many of the able canon lawyers already studied; through preferment at court, in this case the early patronage of Wolsey and several diplomatic missions concerning Henry VIII's divorce in the capacity as Royal Secretary. Over the matter of the royal divorce, Gardiner conducted himself in a

1. e.g. James Arthur Muller, *Stephen Gardiner and the Tudor Reaction* (London, 1926); *DNB*, I, 753.

notoriously politic manner. He went so far personally as to suggest to Catherine of Aragon that her marriage with Prince Arthur might be presumed to have been consummated¹. He later signed the renunciation of the jurisdiction of the see of Rome and published against it, but all the while caused it to be put about amongst his friends in Rome that all this was done under duress². His relationship with Henry VIII appears to have been a delicate one, Henry having commended for Gardiner's emulation, "certain men's gentle nature...that wept at every of his words". Gardiner, however, "...was not so coy as always to reverse my argument"³.

He was, however, unable to sustain his position, and by the time Henry VIII died in 1547, he was consistently seen by the church reformers as an enemy. During the brief reign of Edward VI he was so far out of favour that he was committed to the Fleet, where, in the company of only his cook and two servants, he lived⁴, "as one divided from the world", reflecting that,

The world is mere vanity, which I may learn in mine own case, being now destitute of all such help as friendship, service, familiarity, or gentleness seemed to have gotten me.

He was later transferred to the Tower.

1. Muller, *Gardiner*, 42.
2. *Ibid.*, 54 *et seq*; *DNB*, I, 753.
3. Muller, *Gardiner*, 44.
4. *Ibid.*, 169.

Stephen Gardiner did not, however demonstrate any real ascetic leanings, and, when he was released from prison on Mary Tudor's accession, he naturally returned to affairs of state, being made Chancellor, and presiding at her coronation. Although he favoured her marriage to an English subject, he was by this time writing as vehemently in favour of a return to Rome as he had formerly written to the contrary, even to the point of advocating that parliament enact a proclamation of the invalidity of the marriage of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn and the consequent illegitimacy of Elizabeth, despite his former championing of that marriage¹. It is to him that the migration of many Protestants in 1554 is attributed², "looking to rid the realm of a seditious element which threatened its stability". He was active in the seeking out and putting to the stake of heretics³. Gardiner's own dying words are reported to have been of remorse at his repudiation of Roman supremacy: *Negavi cum Petro, exivi cum Petro, sed nondum flevi cum Petro*⁴.

1. Ibid., 217-21; *DNB*, I, 753.
2. W.R.D. Jones, *The Mid-Tudor Crisis* (London, 1973), 94-101.
3. Muller, *Gardiner*, 268-77.
4. *DNB*, I, 753.

It is hard to attribute to Stephen Gardiner an ideological position: theology and politics were, for him, one and the same thing, and apparently Machiavellian in spirit at that. In a treatise from his own hand, he concludes of the conduct of the prince¹,

A new prince especially cannot observe all the things by which men are held good, even if he wants to, since it is often necessary, to maintain his state, to act contrary to mercy, religion and faith. Therefore his character must be such that he can change what he does / like the wind according to the variety of fortune while what he says seems full of faith, mercy and charity...

Perhaps from this one can extrapolate upon the bishop's own public conduct throughout the the course of his career. It may be noted that the treatise survives only in an Italian translation. The recent editor and translator remarked on the absence of a surviving English text²,

...this is not surprising, for Gardiner's posture in the work is far more pro-Spanish than he would have wished to appear to his countrymen...Gardiner's work, though nominally historical, offers political counsel to Philip of Spain designed to perpetuate Habsburg rule in England.

It is suggested that the Elizabethan translator would have had good reasons not to retain the original in his possession.

1. Peter Samuel Donaldson, ed. and trans, *A Machiavellian Treatise by Stephen Gardiner* (Cambridge, 1975), 149.
2. *Ibid.*, vii.

The reasons why Stephen Gardiner should have chosen to be commemorated by a cadaver tomb are, therefore, as interesting but as intractable as any. Perhaps he fostered a nostalgic connection with Bury St Edmunds and was familiar with Baret's striking tomb there. In so far as he may be said to have adopted any spiritual stance, he must be designated a reactionary, and a reactionary divine with a troubled conscience. As such, despite the late date of his cadaver tomb, he may perhaps be seen as something of a *locus classicus*.

Earlier in date, but more complex in other respects is the choice of tomb of John Colet¹, who died in 1519, was Dean of St Paul's, friend and exact contemporary of Erasmus. It is, indeed, from the latter that we know that Colet's cadaver tomb, now missing, was a matter of personal choice². Colet was one of the twenty-two children of Sir Henry Colet, one time Lord Mayor of London. John Colet's intellectual character was formed by his early education at Oxford, but more particularly by his tour on the Continent in the early 1490's, during which he made his acquaintance with Ficino and Pico della Mirandola³. The influence of these, in

1. Chapter II, No. 66.

2. J.H. Lupton, *A Life of John Colet D.D.; Dean of St Paul's and founder of St Paul's School* (London, 1909), 236.

3. *DNB*, I, 409.

addition to his readings of Plato and Plotinus, gave a highly distinctive character to Colet's series of lectures on St Paul which he gave in Oxford in 1497 and 1498. The latter series was attended by Erasmus⁴, and it was on this occasion that the two scholars founded what was to be an intellectually productive and lifelong friendship.

One of the subjects mentioned above² on which Erasmus and Colet carried on a dialogue, and which was later embodied in the former's *Enchiridion*, was Christ's Agony in the Garden, in which Colet insisted on the Bible's unity of meaning, whereas Erasmus preferred to take the scholastic line that the text held a possible multiplicity of meanings. One of the questions which naturally arose in this context was whether or not Christ feared death. Colet thought that Christ's agony arose out of witnessing the guilt of the Jews; Erasmus argued that Christ in his human nature had a natural dread of death³:

Potest enim mortem exhorrescere qui nulla ratione mori nolit.,,Hanc naturæ a morte fugam humano more loquens expressit christus, "Transeat" inquit "a me, Pater, calix iste; veruntamen non sicut ego volo, sed sicut tu.

Further⁴:

1. Ibid., 410.
2. See 197 above.
3. Schoeck and Corrigan, eds, *The Collected Works of Erasmus*, 108-111, 207.
4. Ibid., 207.

*Gloriosa quedam et ambiciosa res est cruciatum
interrito adire animo, magnum quid et forte inter ipsa
tormenta dicere, At Christus suam mortem etiam
ignominiosissimam esse voluit.*

In certain respects, it does not matter which side of the argument Colet took up, albeit the "wrong" side for the man who would later choose a cadaver tomb; what is interesting is the way in which the subject of fear of death is treated in the dialogue, not so far removed from its treatment in Chandler's *Liber Apologeticus*¹. What is more, Colet among his many other writings left a short treatise on "...the order of a good christen mannes lyfe..."², in which he vicariously provides very accurate insight into his own choice of monument³:

Remembre fyrst of all, virtuous reder, that it is hygh wysedome and great perfection to knowe thy selfe, and than to dispise thy selfe; as, to know thou haste nothing that is good of thy selfe, but all together of God,..And therefore thynke and thanke God, and vtterly dispise thy selfe, and thynke thy selfe a great wretche in that, that God hath done so moche for the, and thou haste so ofte offended his highnes, and also done hym so lytle seruyce. Surely it is also great wisdom to thynke, that if it had pleased God for to haue gyuen to all other men, as well beggers as other, lyke grace as he hath gyuen to the, that they wolde haue serued his goodnes better than thy selfe hast don. Wherefore thynke thy selfe a wretche of all wretches, without the mercye of God,..And especyall haue in mynde, that thou shalte dye shortly, and how Christ dyed for the; the subtyltie and falsnes of this temporall world, the ioyes of heven, and the paynes of hell.

1. See 189 above.
2. *A ryght fruitfull monicion concernynge the order of a good christen mannes lyfe, very profitable for all maner of estates, and othre, to beholde and loke vppon: Made by the famouse doctour Colet, somtyme Deane of paules, Lupton, Life of Colet, 305-07.*
3. Ibid.

Once transferred to the Deanery of St Paul's, Colet continued to preach in the manner he had employed in Oxford and was noted for the frugality of his personal life. Sir Thomas More thought of him as his spiritual director. The *Monicion* was written in his early years there, shortly after his father's death and his own consequent inheritance of a large fortune'. His occupation of the Deanery was characterised by his persistent attacks upon corruption in the church, and against Henry VIII's aggressive policies in Europe. He favoured the use of English in the liturgy, for which he came under attack. In 1514 he planned to build for himself a mansion for his retirement in the grounds of the Carthusian monastery at Sheen, but he never fulfilled this ambition, devoting his last years to the foundation of St Paul's school. His will confirms him in his reputation as a champion of the "new learning", as it contains no bequests whatever for masses for his soul'. All in all, Colet's career presents a fascinating case as individual proof of the ideological overlap between late medieval asceticism and early so-called "humanism", especially in matters such as attitudes to bodily mortality. As a man who consciously chose for himself the cadaver tomb design, he forms part of that continuum in thought which has already been observed²

1. *DNB*, I, 410.
2. See 171, 180-82 above.

between the fifteenth-century Wykehamist bishops and the author of *The Four Last Things*, Sir Thomas More.

Colet's is a case of the cadaver tomb design being adopted rather more self-consciously than was evidently the case where some of the small shroud brasses¹ are concerned. What the whole study of dissemination does suggest, however, is that the cadaver tomb design should be regarded in the manner of a fashion, and a fashion adopted for a variety of reasons by particular individuals, reasons both "thinking" and more or less "unthinking". The "unthinking" adoption of the fashion depended on empirical influences, the "thinking" upon an intellectual projection of the iconography concerned. Plainly Henry Chichele and John Colet conceived as the cadaver iconography as a particularly fitting expression of a personal spiritual statement, as did, perhaps, Ralph Woodford, Richard Poryngland and Thomas Heywood¹ among others. In most cases, however, the impulse was a combination of these factors, as with the case of Thomas Bekynton who probably emulated Chichele but also had a clear perception of the semantics of his chosen tomb.

Because of this perceivable mixture of impulses behind the choice of a cadaver tomb, and their appearance in an

1. See 419, 407 and 353 above.

aesthetic environment which relied heavily on patronage and fashion, it seems that the matter of the dissemination patterns of these tombs remains, ultimately, inseparable from the question of how their iconography was understood. Accordingly and finally, the whole range of iconography of the cadaver tomb demands to be reconsidered.

In this context two continental tombs provide a useful starting point in establishing the semiotic complexity of the design. These are not chosen as the first or even as a representative sample of Continental examples, since Cohen's study deals *widely and adequately with that broader canvas*¹, but in both cases so self-sufficient and personal is the statement apparently being made, that no precedent actually seems necessary to explain their creation. A brief examination of the iconography of the tombs of Cardinal Jean La Grange, erected between 1388 and 1394 in Avignon, and of Réne of Anjou, erected some time before his death in 1480, probably after the death of his first wife, Isabelle of Lorraine, in 1453, in St Maurice of Angers, demonstrate the integration of the corpse image in two specifically eloquent monuments. The first has been described as , "A Monument of the Great Schism of the West"². The tomb, the second which

1. Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol*, *passim*.
2. Anne McGee Morganstern, "The La Grange Tomb and Choir: A Monument of the Great Schism of the West", *Speculum*, 48 (1973), 52-69.

Lagrange devised for himself, was integral to a new apse in the church of St Martial in Avignon which had been founded by Pierre de Cros in 1388.

In a surviving seventeenth century drawing¹, it is clear that there were originally five scenes above the two effigies, one in pontificals, the other the cadaver, in the actual tomb area. Only fragmentary sculptural elements now survive in the Petit Palais museum, Avignon². The scenes were based on the five joys of the Virgin Mary, and at each one there was a kneeling spectator. The kneelers represent a cardinal, a duke, a count, a king and a pope. In combination with the cadaver, it is generally accepted that the entire representation, therefore, follows the same pattern as the *Danse Macabre*, eloquently expressing the fate of all estates in society.

The broadly satirical *Danse*, is given peculiar force, however, when it becomes apparent that not only did La Grange wish to set his own fate in that context, but, in combination with the specific heraldry on the tomb, devised that the kneeling figures who represent the estates should also be personalised. Pierre Pradel has convincingly argued that, in addition to Cardinal La Grange himself, they

1. See Plate 55a and b.
2. Morganstern, "The La Grange Tomb", 58.

represent King Charles V of France, La Grange's erstwhile patron; Pope Clement VII, his later protector; Charles VI, as count, and Louis d'Orleans as duke':

La présence de chacun des personnages s'explique,
- Charles V; la Grange lui voua jusqu'à la fin une reconnaissance un peu tapageuse qui rappelait sa puissance passée; il lui avait fait don de ses magnifiques propriétés de Creil et de Senlis; il fonda par testament des milliers de messes pour son âme,
- Charles VI; toute occasion fut bonne au cardinal pour lutter contre les sentiments d'aversion qu'avait pour lui son ancien pupille et dont les témoins se sont fait l'écho. Il se mit intégralement à son service et à sa solde - car rien chez lui n'était gratuit - dans les dé mêlés complexes du Grand Schisme qui opposaient parfois Paris et Avignon. Les rapports des envoyés français auprès du pape sont remplis de louanges à l'égard de Monseigneur d'Amiens en qui l'on trouve toujours aide, conseil, appui d'«especial et feal ami».
- Louis d'Orléans; autour de lui se cristallisèrent les relations entre la Cour de France et Jean de la Grange; deux intrigants se rencontraient...

Louis needed someone in the papal circle to represent his interests in Provence and Italy, and La Grange was particularly well placed to fulfil this function. The pope in question was Clement VII who had showered preferments on La Grange and his family because he owed his election to La Grange...

Tout cela valait bien qu'à son tour le pontife fut remercié et que son image couronnât - non pas seulement par protocole - l'échafaudage des amis et des protecteurs,

1. Pierre Pradel, "Le Visage Inconnu de Louis d'Orléans, Frère de Charles VI", *Revue des Arts*, 2 (1952), 93-98, 96.

La Grange's career had taken an alarming turn on the death in 1380, of Charles V whose intimate and diplomat he had been. Thereafter he moved from the court in Paris to Avignon. It seems entirely plausible that his second monument - his flesh was buried in Avignon, his bones in Amiens - should celebrate a past political order of which he had formed part and moralise on the impermanence of that and all other earthly orders.

In addition to the identified estates figures on the tomb, La Grange's cadaver effigy itself was originally surmounted by seven skulls, identified by their headgear as two cardinals, a king, a pope, a bishop, a prince and a civilian. The inscription here reads',

Spectaculum facti sumus mundo, ut maior (res et) minores, in nobis clare (per) uident, ad quem statum rediguntur, nemi(en ex) cupiendo, cuiusuis sta(tu)s, / sexus uel etatis, ergo miser cur superbi(s) nam cinis es, et in cadauer fetidum, cibum et escam vermium, ac cinerem sic et nos, reverteris.

La Grange's tomb, therefore, blends the popular iconography associated with moralisation of mortality with a more specific, personal and satirical statement about the individual's own circumstances and times. It could indeed be viewed as a potentially highly influential. Although no later tomb compares with this one in compositional detail,

1. Morganstern, "The Lagrange Tomb and Choir", 62.

England too came to possess tombs with cadaver effigies which celebrated a specific political partisanship, such as that of John Baret of Bury St Edmunds. More generally, others combine the political with the ascetic, as in the memorial of that English churchman especially familiar with the vicissitudes of political and papal patronage, Archbishop Henry Chichele.

Chronologically the tomb of René of Anjou is too late to be regarded as an influential model, but it too demonstrates a peculiarly personal impulse which could have been widely influential. René of Anjou's status in the eyes of some late medieval European historians has attained the dangerous quality of the mythic', although he was not peculiarly politically successful, nor intellectually or philosophically innovative for his time or class. The surviving aesthetic works associated with the duke, however, conveniently reflect certain dominant genres of the late fifteenth century, making it possible to interpret him as a well documented and self-conscious mirror of aristocratic cultural pre-occupations. For example, his own spiritual treatise, *Le Mortifiement de Vaine Plaisance* has been dated tentatively to c.1453, the date of death of René's first

1. Noel Coulet, Alice Planche & Françoise Robin, *Le Roi René; le prince, le mécène, l'écrivain, le mythe* (Aix-en-Provence, 1982), although factually useful, especially in its detailed account of *Le mortifiement de vaine plaisance* which is not readily available in a published edition, enthusiastically perpetuates the historiographical distortion.

wife, Isabel, and, therefore, close to the date of his tomb'. This prose work is openly acknowledged to be didactic in intent, directed at "simples laïcs". Unremarkable for its allegorical ingenuity, it presents a dramatised internal conflict between divine love and the temptations of this world for the soul of man. The soul, for example, complains at being harnessed to a heart , *dont toutes les inclinations naturelles me font trébucher et verser à terre*².

Contrition, despite her arresting appearance, wearing a sword on her head, delivers a string of commonplaces regarding the transitoriness of life, the unpredictability of death, to pull the errant soul into line³,

Si les mortels étaient vraiment sûrs de vivre aussi longtemps que Mathusalem, et qu'ils pussent savoir le point exact du terme de leur mort...ils pourraient partager le temps par moitiés, l'une pour contempler et rassasier la chair, sa très frêle et puante charogne, avec les biens mondains et les plaisirs aussi. Et viellesse et sur le retour, ils viendraient encore à temps pour faire assez de bien et songer au salut de leur âme. Mais seule la mort est sûre, nul ne sait l'heure...

The remedy offered, through three "fables", is the contemplation of Christ's death. That spiritual reading of

1. Ibid., 165.
2. Ibid., 166.
3. Ibid., 167.

this conventional, but sincerely contritional cast was generally favoured by René, is also evidenced in his contribution to visual art, particularly in the figure of the *squelette couronné*, which features as an insertion in two of his books of hours¹. Given that René's visual and literary imagination clearly drew on these already well established fields of imagery, the character of his tomb is not unduly surprising. But its compositional quality again, particularly its assailingly personal and satirical focus, strongly suggests that it was devised *ab initio* by René.

The surviving illustration of the tomb², shows that above a mensa bearing conventional *gisant* figures of René and his wife was a fresco of the *squelette couronné*, enthroned, draped in a royal robe with an orb and sceptre at his feet, and flanked by cherubs bearing coats of arms. In the background is a townscape³. It is commonly argued⁴ that the inspiration for this arrangement came from René's desire to contrast ironically his own circumstances with those of his ancestor, Robert the Wise. The latter, who died in 1343, is commemorated in Santa Chiara, Naples, by a tomb which in one

1. Ibid., 120, 125. The MSS illuminations in question are, BN ms latin 1156A, f.113v, and BL Egerton MS 1070, f.53. Both are illustrated in Cohen,
2. Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol*, pl.33, taken from Paris BN, Gaignières Pe 1, f.6.
3. Ibid., pl. 33.
4. Ibid., 88 - 89, following s'Jacob and Panofsky,

of four depictions shows Robert enthroned in majesty in very much the position of René's *squelette*. René's tomb, therefore, like La Grange's, may combine an iconography of mortality which is relatively commonplace, if not in tombs, with a personal satirical purpose which together provided the impulse for the production of a singular and possibly influential monument.

Moving from the particular to the general and returning to the native tombs, there seems to be a case for a refinement of the whole definition of the semantics of the cadaver. Looking at the different types of corpse effigy should logically reveal not only variations in design, which have been recognised in the past¹, but consequent variations the manner in which the tombs may be read. The weakness of the argument of, for example, Kantorowicz², lies precisely in his extension of his reading of the double tomb to explain the iconography of the corpse tomb in general.

What is the nature of the depiction of the shrouded figure? Clearly the person represented is dead. In some respects, shrouds are as ambivalent in this respect as any other effigy, except that the person represented is intended to be thought of as dead - the very presence of the shroud would

1. See Chapter I above, *passim*.
2. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies* 419-37..

seem to indicate this. Effigies in general show a person as he/she was, is, or will be. The fully-clad idealised portrait is strictly the only one which is truly commemorative, because although the face may indicate moment-of-death, the costume serves as a reminder of what a charitable, rich and well-dressed person this was, in order to inspire prayers for his or her soul.

The concept of the shroud can itself be chronologically ambivalent. Sometimes the shrouded figure can be part of a retrospective composition. This occurs on brasses, where one figure appears in ordinary dress, the other in a shroud, as is the case with the Gurney brass, Stone, Bucks, 1472¹, or the Chylton brass, Newton-next-Hythe, Kent, 1501, both of which indicate that the brass was laid down at the predecease of one spouse, later to commemorate both.

The commonest reading of the double tomb is to see it as being affective - both instructive and commemorative - because it represents a contrast between how the person represented was in life opposed to how he or she now is. "Now" has a variety of interpretations, since the corpse effigy may show varying degrees of decay², something which

1. See Plate 22,

2. Lawson, "Cadaver Effigies: the Portrait as Prediction", 519-23.

will be returned to later. Some single shroud effigies may be deemed to perform the function of the double tomb in much the same way, for instance in the surviving effigy from the Mattock brass', Hitchin, Herts, 1485,. Although the figure here is shrouded and, therefore, as the viewer is reminded, dead, she appears to be alive and animated with her long wavy hair, wide eyes and very plastic limbs. In this group also may be placed the votive shrouded figures, the living dead shown praying to saints the Virgin or the Trinity as in the Brampton brass, Brampton, Norfolk, 1468².

The living-dead body presents a problem of interpretation only if one insists on a view of the corpse iconography which is both literal and cautionary. If, however, one bears in mind the double but opposed use of the image, of which Chaundler for one was certainly aware³, the problem diminishes. Bodily decay can be invoked literally to remind man of his impermanence, or figurally but still as a warning, a reminder of spiritual decay, the fallen state. It can, however, with cautious optimism, also anticipate spiritual regeneration, the release from that fallen state and the hope of bodily resurrection at Doomsday. It would seem that the living corpses presented on some cadaver tombs, particularly in votive compositions, tend toward the latter meaning of the image.

- 1, See Plate 31,
- 2, See Plate 18,
- 3, See 192 above.

The ambivalent status of the shroud as a memorial for the dead and ^acomplex *memento mori* for the living seems to be attested by the high incidence of memorials being laid down prior to the death of the party commemorated. This can often be established from documentary evidence, as is the case with the Chichele tomb in Canterbury Cathedral², 1427, or by the inscription on the tomb itself. In these cases the shroud design is clearly favoured as it combines the function of the tomb as memorial and plea for orisons with the personalised *memento mori*. The Leventhorpe brass, Sawbridgeworth, Herts, 1448, has been dated on stylistic grounds to the earlier of the two dates of decease mentioned in the inscription³. This renders the brass iconographically unambiguous as a memorial for Joan Leventhorpe, but also as a personal *memento mori* for John. The inscription on the brass corroborates this interpretation:

En jacet hic pulvis putrede vermis et esca
 Est Fanulus mortis nam vita jam caret ista
 Hic nil scit nil habet nec virtus inde relucet
 Cerne luto vilius horror terror fetor orbis
 Opprobium cunctis ac est abjectio plebis
 Hic frater aspice te spira suffragia p. me

1. See Chapter II, no.1 and Plate 2.
2. See Chapter II, no.11 and Plate 10.

The very complex composition commemorating Joan Strangbon, Childrey, Berks, 1477¹, seems to have the same dual function. The representation of a table tomb at the base of the brass bears an inscription asking for prayers for the deceased, whereas the verses on the tomb point to its *memento mori* function.

This apparent ambivalence in the function of the cadaver tomb is demonstrated best of all by the instances where the person commemorated on a tomb of this type, turns out to have been commemorated in more conventional wise elsewhere as well. William Robert, Digswell, Herts, 1484², in addition to this brass on which the date of his death is missing, is also commemorated, in full armour, on a brass in Little Braxted, Essex, with both his wives. For him the brass in Digswell must be seen to function as a *memento mori*, quite distinct from the commemorative function of the second brass. Clearly he may have changed his mind in selecting his burial site - Digswell is associated more with his first wife's family than with his -, but the choice of design for the first of the two brasses would seem to indicate a different emphasis. The same may be said for the much later brass to Elizabeth Thame, Shipton-under-Wychwood,

1. See Plate 25.
2. See Plate 30.

Oxfordshire (died 1548) who appears recumbent in her shroud on a palimpsest brass here, with verses beginning:

This picture presenty the to yore remembrance
The last semblytude of all yore bewty and fame...

But later she appears on two other brasses in Fairford Church, Gloucestershire, above the more conventional inscription asking for prayers for her soul. So the shrouded body as an image of the deceased can have a contemplative function, either focussing affectively on the current state, physical and spiritual, of the deceased and/or, by extention, the equivalent range of future expectations of the viewer, be that relict specifically, or just passer-by.

It would seem that the determination to project the image of the cadaver to the living observer occurs when that image is most directly presented as a imaginative prediction of the corpse's physical state. When one enters the realms of the skeletal and even verminous image, the affective quality is rather different. The British mainland boasts comparatively few verminous effigies, the concentration in Ireland being, one is forced to assume, the result of a distinct dissemination pattern direct from continental Europe¹. There are, however, a number of brasses, in particular,

1. Roe, "Cadaver Effigial Monuments in Ireland", *passim*.

which show the body in advanced state of decay, most of them crude productions, like the grinning gibbet-figures at Sedgefield, County Durham'. There is a concentration in East Anglia, with, for example the Howard brass in Aylsham, Norfolk. Shrouded skeletons are, however, visually quite different from unshrouded ones, like that of Thomas Childes (died 1452), formerly in St Lawrence church, Norwich². With these one enters the realms of ambiguity in attempting to read the iconography of the tomb on purely visual evidence, as the skeletons often appear "alive" and indistinguishable from the presentation of the allegorical figure of Death itself. As the wills cited above demonstrated, these two functions were not necessarily distinct in the minds of those who ordered cadaver tombs in any case³.

There are, in fact, only two verminous effigies on the British mainland, the so-called "Wakeman Cenotaph", at Tewkesbury Abbey, Gloucestershire⁴, and the brass to Ralph Hamsterley, Oddington, Oxfordshire, 1518. The fragmentary effigy of Marmaduke Constable, at Flamborough, in Yorkshire, 1520, may have had a toad or mouse on the

1. See Plate 49.
2. See Plate 42.
3. See 61 above.
4. See Plate 47a-g.

ribcage, but the amorphous lump which is all that remains could equally have been a heart, held in the effigy's hands, or a fragment of shroud. In these instances in particular, the overly naïve view that these effigies are supposed to represent the body in the grave at any realistic stage in its decomposition becomes less tenable'.

The Tewkesbury tomb is in fact difficult to attribute precisely, stylistically too early to be positively attributed to Wakeman, who in turn, makes no mention of his tomb in his long and elaborate will², although it is not uncommon for tomb-design to be left to the discretion of executors, who *may* have re-used an old tomb. The effigy on this tomb, probably originally placed on the now empty lower-deck, is crawling with vermin. An early 18th-century description accepts the effigy as an eyewitness account³, complete with its interesting array of vermin. The effigy bears, even in its present fragmentary state, a mouse on the chest cavity, a snake or worm on the left knee and beside the right lower leg, a frog or toad near the left ear, hiding in the folds of the shroud, and a beetle or spider on the left upper arm:

1. For an outline of the following argument for a developed figural reading of the cadaver, see Pamela M. King, "The Iconography of the 'Wakeman Cenotaph' in Tewkesbury Abbey", *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 103 (1985), 141-48.
2. PCC, 44 Populwell f343v, Prob.11/32.
3. G. McN, Rushforth, "Tewkesbury Abbey - The Wakeman Cenotaph and the Starved Monk", *TBAS* 47 (1925), 150-52, quoting from an account by Abel Wantner (d.1714) in Bod, MS Top, Glos, C2 f.1406.

When King Henry the viiith had dissolved the Abbie of Teuxbury, one Wakeman who was Abbot for feare of some secular Punishment privately conveighed himselfe into Teuxbury Park, where he crept so far into a hollow Tree (that lay on the ground) to hide himselfe, that he could not turne back, but was there famished to death, Whose effigies is cutt in stone, and lyeth at this day to be seene, behinde ye north-east end of ye high Altar in forme of a skeliton, with ye pictures of snakes newts and other vermine upon it, according as they were first seen when the body was found.

In fact the effigy on this tomb is not skeletal, and there are no anatomically realistic details which suggest that the corpse is being prayed on by real vermin, such as the loose flesh or exposed bowels of some Continental images of advanced decomposition. The reminder to man that he would eventually become "worms' meat", was probably the inspiration for the Hamsterley brass':

Vermibus hic donor
Et sic ostendere conor
Quod sicut hic ponor
Ponitur omnis honor,

but need not be the chief and literal focus in every case. The iconographer ought to look beyond the realistic-descriptive for an explanation of verminous effigies. As soon as one begins to entertain the basic idea that the corpse image in all its various transmutations could be better explained by taking full account of all its figural and allegorical possibilities, the imagery appears at once

1. Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol*, 91.

richer and less debased, while lines of iconographic enquiry become both more intellectually plausible and more varied.

It has already been established that the corpse effigies on brasses such as those of the Spryng family in Lavenham, Suffolk (1486)¹ and the Feteplaces at Childrey, Berks (1516)² use the body as an optimistic future portrait of the deceased rising up in the flesh at the Last Judgement. Again and again arises the more fundamental question of how the body was regarded from a theological and psychological point of view in the later middle ages, particularly as it related to the soul. Clearly there is a distinction between the corpse effigy as representation of the deceased's dead body and the little naked body which represents the soul, often elevated to heaven in a napkin. These figures are considerably earlier than the cadaver³. There is only one surviving example of the two iconographic types in combination in the unattributed effigy in the church of Hughenden, Buckinghamshire, where the conventional stone recumbent cadaver has a hollow in its breast which contains

1. See Plate 34.
2. See Plate 43.
3. The twelfth century coffin-lid, thought to be that of Bishop Nigel, in the North choir aisle of Ely Cathedral is a well-known example.

small figure with hands elevated, representing the departing soul'. The cadaver itself, however, in certain instances, arguably plays upon the idea that the body could act as a figure of the soul.

As soon as one turns attention away from a specific case toward the generality of verminous tombs, the literal warning, seems less adequate as an explanation for the iconography. Cohen², studying continental examples, concentrates attention on one of the earliest examples not only of the verminous effigy, but of the cadaver itself, the tomb of Francois de la Sarra, in Vaud, Switzerland, thought to date from the 1390's. The single effigy is of a nude male, hands crossed on his breast, with four frogs on his face and another on his genitals. The rest of the body is being bitten by snakes. Cohen explains the prevalence of this type of verminous effigy in the German speaking part of Europe by pointing to German literature in which toads and snakes are connected with the devil. She also claims that it is in Germany and neighbouring Alsace only that there are sculptural analogues of these beliefs in the figures of the World Tempter in the cathedrals of Strasbourg and Nuremberg,

1. W. Richardson, "List of Monumental Effigies in England and Wales" (1898), unpublished MS 698, Society of Antiquaries, London, unpaginated. See also Plate ; the soul figure is now very worn.
2. Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol*, 7, pls 28, 29 & 30.

and the female counterpart, Frau Welt, in Worms Cathedral. From the front, both are presented as benign and attractive people, but their naked backs are covered with toads, worms and other vermin. Cohen suggests that vermin, most obviously in this context, are not actual parasites, but allegories of evil which needs to be driven out by the prayers offered for the deceased. Certainly the way in which the vermin are concentrated upon the sense organs on the La Sarra effigy further suggests that specific sins might be figurally represented by the vermin. The effigy is also, like that on the Tewkesbury tomb, though emaciated, not otherwise in an advanced state of corruption, but is seems to be shown at the point of death

The connection which Cohen makes between the verminous tomb and specific sculptural analogues is, however, shaken by the distribution of such tombs (about which she was apparently unaware) in Ireland. Helen Roe, in discussing these¹ tombs also felt the need to search for a figural explanation for the presence of vermin, particularly in view of the presence of a crocodile, chewing the foot of Joanna Skelton, c.1500-1520, on her effigy at Castledermot, a presence which focuses the general problem admirably²:

1. H. Roe, "Cadaver Effigial Monuments in Ireland", *passim*.
2. *Ibid.*, 7.

The equally improbable presence of vipers, snakes and serpents so freely infesting the corpses must also be attributed to the teaching of the bestiary in which on no less an authority than Pythagoras, and after him Ovid, it is asserted that from the spinal marrow of the dead, such reptiles are engendered.

The Crocodile or cocodryllus was frequently equated in the bestiary with Satan. So this was her explanation, similar to Cohen's, for the reptiles found on anonymous effigies at Stamullen¹, Bewley² and on the tombs of the Goldyngs (1462)³ at Drogeda and of James Rice (1482-85)⁴ in Waterford Cathedral.

The *Physiologus*, as suggested by Roe as a source for vermin on effigies, although apparently obvious, does not, in fact provide many answers. There are, however, sources of a more fruitful variety to be found in popular devotional material of respectable and orthodox origin. The fate of the body had long been conflated with the fate of the soul. St Thomas Aquinas, considered ⁵ that since punishment should correspond to sin, and the soul in sinning subjects itself to the body by sinful concupiscence, therefore the punishment should also involve subjection to a bodily thing. Although he restricted the corporeal suffering of the condemned soul to punishment by hellfire, he laid the way

1. See Plate 59a and b.
2. See Plate 60a and b.
3. See Plate 58.
4. See Plate 57a-c.
5. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, third part, *Supplementum*, q.70, art.3.

open to later writers to conceive of the pains of hell according to a fully-developed corporeal system.

John Bromyard, in one of his late fourteenth-century sermons, wrote with calculated ambiguity of the fate of the proud, apparently conflating the fate of body and soul':

... of all their riches, their delicacies and the rest, they have nothing; and the worms, as you will see, have their bodies... Instead of wives they shall have toads; instead of a great retinue and throng of followers, their body shall have a throng of worms and their soul a throng of demons...

Books describing the pains of hell were very popular throughout the Middle Ages, generally taking the form of visions of those who were reputed to have been privileged to visit and return. They include the Vision of St Paul, of Tundall, of Alberic of Montecassino; the Apocalypse of Peter, the Visio Lazari from the Kalendar of Shepherds, and St Patrick's Purgatory². The *Vision of Tundal*³ was very popular in Germany and the Netherlands, and was translated into several languages including Irish. *St Patrick's Purgatory*⁴ was also widely read, there being fourteen surviving manuscripts of it in the British Library alone.

1. G. R. Owst, *Literature and the Pulpit in Medieval England* (Oxford, 1966), 294.
2. N.F. Palmer, of Oriel College, Oxford, paper delivered at the Symposium of the London Medieval Society at Westfield College in November 1981.
3. Tundal, *Incipit Libellus de Raptu* (1485).
4. G. P. Krapp, *The Legend of St Patrick's Purgatory; its Later Literary History* (Baltimore, 1900).

One of the most commonly represented pains of hell was the biting of the unfortunate sinners by snakes and other reptiles. Gluttons were shown being force-fed on toads and other reptiles, as is the case in the *Visio Lazari*¹. In numerous instances it appears that worms, toads and snakes were not merely associated with the strictly physical *memento mori*, or voice from the grave; they also play an important part in an other worldly view of man's ultimate destiny. Perhaps there is no direct correlation with verminous effigies, but the fact remains that these visions were particularly popular in Germany and the Netherlands, and the cave of St Patrick's Purgatory remained a popular attraction in Ireland until the Reformation.

The general association of reptiles with sins of the flesh considerably predates the period in which the *memento mori* is commonly considered to have gained vogue. St Gregory the Great believed that sinners would be punished through the organs of their lusts². It is not surprising really that vermin such as the toad and snake were associated so tenaciously with sin and punishment, particularly in view of their bad reputation in the Old Testament. Such habits of

1. Richard Pinson (trans), *The Shepherds Kalendar* (London, 1506), unpaginated - see text and woodcuts,
2. Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *Allagories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art from Early Christian Times to the Thirteenth Century* (London, 1939), 58n.

figural use in devotional writing must serve to support the reading of the vermin effigy's iconography suggested by Cohen and Roe.

Returning to the specific case of the Tewkesbury tomb, once the area of figural possibilities has been opened up, the arrangement becomes iconographically potentially very rich. The variety of vermin in this case suggest that the sculptor may have had particular equivalences with individual sins in mind, lurking around the deceased during that delicate passage from the world of the living through the purgatorial process to hoped-for bliss. The equation of the seven deadly sins with animal counterparts is also a widespread devotional phenomenon. Morton Bloomfield¹ cites examples extending backwards into the pre-Christian world, in the works of the church fathers, and up to the famous procession in Spencer's *The Faerie Queene*. Of the vermin on the Tewkesbury tomb, the adder is most often associated with envy. In the works of Petrus Presbyter, anger is a toad, lechery a scorpion and sloth a dormouse. The poem called "The Desert of Religion"² presents charmers as serpents, and backbiters as adders and beetles. Most

1. Morton W. Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins; An Introduction to the History of a Religious Concept with Special Reference to Medieval English Literature* (Michigan, 1967), *passim*.
2. London, BL MS Additional 37049. This is the MS discussed above (172 *et seq*) which is thought to illustrate a double tomb.

dramatic of all Bloomfield's examples of these equivalences is found in Wyclif's *Tractatus de Civili Domino*¹, in which, in attacking the sins of the cloister, the author preaches against the basilisk of pride, the adder or asp of envy, the toad of anger, the spider of avarice, the serpent of gluttony and the viper of lechery:

Item omnes private observancie religionum preter illas in scriptura sacra fundatas difficultant ad observanciam mandatorum, ergo sunt illicite. Argumentum patet ex tribus malis que experimentatoribus debent ex eis in maiori parte contingere; contingit enim quod intrantes religiones huiusmodi exponant se periculo mortis corporis et anime, temptando Deum quod sic ostendunt; Evenit nonnunquam, ut patet ex cronicis, quod totus conventus vel maior eius pars conspiret in mortem sui prepositi per intoxicacionem vel alia nephanda media; sed (quod infinitum plus timendum est) contra multos conventus inveterata malicia anathematisatos; intoxicare spiritualiter conversantes veneno basiliscino superbie qui solo flatu et visu interficit, invidia aspides que visu debili cito in temporibus prosequitur oblique, auditu quem inficit ira buffonum quorum natura plus contrariatur humano generi, accidia venenosorum latitancium, avaricia araneorum, gula sepencium et luxuria vipere que matrem gignentem interficit in mamona superbie, felle invidie, frenesi ire, fastidio accidie, siccitate avaricie, canino appetitu gule et scabie luxurie; tot ergo morbi spiritualiter infectivi regnant in claustralibus sicut fertur, [*,*,* text corrupt].

Of all the sins mentioned here, sloth alone is not equated with a variety of unpleasant vermin.

Without suggesting any direct correlation between this text and the Tewkesbury tomb, it seems at least possible that the

1. Johann Loserth ed., *Wyclif; Tractatus de Civili Domino 3* (London, 1904), 15-16.

sculptor or tomb designer had some figural scheme of this type in mind. There are, of course, only five vermin on the effigy, but then the right arm is missing and there is other superficial defacement making an original arrangement of seven a possibility. What above all strongly supports the tentative view that the iconography of this effigy is figurally rather than literally intended, is the pierced screen, now beneath the effigy, but originally lying between it and the viewer. On this screen there are the fragmentary remains of a series of lozenges which appear to have shown the instruments of the Passion. On the three lozenges of an original series of fourteen, one can still identify the ladder, spear and vinegar rod; three nails; and a hand which appears to be holding a scourge. The *arma Christi* was another very popular devotional motif in the late medieval period. Remembering and enumerating the several pains Christ suffered was a favourite spur for the penitent and was an important element in post-Anselmian affective piety. In devotional writing again, particularly in lyric verse, the instruments or wounds of the Passion were invoked as specific remedies for specific sins¹. In John of Grimstone's *Preaching Book*² of the mid fifteenth century, a short lyric actually sets one of the pains of the Crucifixion against each of the seven deadly sins; for

1. Carleton Brown, *Lyrics of the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1924), 125, 218, 227; and *Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, 1939), 95, 142, 222.
2. Edward Wilson, *A Descriptive Index of the English Lyrics in John of Grimstone's Preaching Book* (Oxford, 1973), 49.

example, contemplation of the nails driven through Christ's feet is the suggested remedy for sloth. Not only do these equations appear in verse, but also in prose-writings for spiritual edification. Indeed Wyclif, in the *Tractatus de Civili Domino*¹ at different points sets the seven effusions of Christ's blood, and the seven words spoken from the cross, against the seven deadly sins.

In other words, what the Tewkesbury tomb may suggest is a picture of the body, immediately after death, engaged in a form of personal *psychomachia*, invoking Christ's assistance, through the blood and wounds of the Passion, to drive out the sins of which the commemorated has been guilty in his lifetime. As this type of iconographic possibility for one specific type of cadaver tomb asserts itself, the iconographic complexities inherent in the whole range of cadaver imagery opens out. The more that the cadaver effigy in tombs is regarded within the context of habits of popular devotion and the continuum of religious writing, visual art and thought which reaches back before the Black Death, the more flexible its iconographic possibilities appear to be and the more intelligible its later diffusion.

1. Loserth, *Wyclif; Tractatus* 2, 202; 4, 625.

CONCLUSION

Apparently, no single explanation for the adoption of the cadaver tomb in fifteenth-century England is forthcoming. A variety of factors have emerged from this study which illuminate, but can hardly ever be said to dictate, that choice of tomb in any individual instance. An examination of two distinct but related issues, the dissemination of the fashion for the cadaver tomb, and its perceived semantic range, has, however, made apparent the inadequacy of dismissing it as an aesthetically debased response to any contemporary vogue for the macabre. The commonly proffered social and psychological explanations for the apparently sudden popularity of the cadaver tomb do not bear close inspection, nor is there anything particularly *avant-garde* about the intellectual climate which fostered it. Indeed the cadaver tomb was unorthodox only in its novel form of plastic expression, as the writings of Aquinas seem to advocate a simultaneous need for striking tombs, expressions of humility and acts of charity, all of which it fulfilled admirably.

A further exploration of the iconography of the corpse suggests that its possible range in the fifteenth-century imagination was considerably more complex than might at first appear. Even if one accepts that men suddenly conceived a pedagogic function for memorials for the dead, there were several dimensions to the *memento mori*. Most simply, a reminder of the inevitability of physical death

was intended to inspire penance, a preparation for eternity. By the same token, however, death was viewed as a release from the merely temporal, into that eternity, leaving behind the body, the legacy of Adam. The journey of the individual from the cradle to the grave was popularly conceived as the correlative of mankind's journey from Fall to final Resurrection. Many cadaver tombs seem in particular to allude to the future hope of eternal life which involved the reuniting of body and soul: in the words of the liturgy of the Office of the Dead,

Credo quod redemptor meus vivit et novissimo die de terra surrecturus sum. Et in carne mea videbo deum salvatorem meum.

In death the body was parted from the soul as a preliminary to being reunited on the last day.

The body was also, however, commonly invoked allegorically to represent the soul, physical corruption and physical punishment serving as an accessible figure of a metaphysical state. The body could, therefore, simultaneously represent the prison of the soul and its mirror. Death was to be feared, as a loss of immortality, the sinner's reckoning; but was also to be received with joy as a release from the woes of this world. All these ideas belong to commonplace mainstream late medieval theology. To recognise them for commonplace, however, is not to overlook their inherent subtleties. To conceive that the

representation of physical decomposition has an emotional range restricted to the horrifying is a product of a psychology both more recent and less subtle than that which corresponded with late medieval spirituality.

The range of meaning which the cadaver tomb held for fifteenth-century English men and women is available in their liturgy, the articles of their faith and in their devotional art. When one begins to examine that material in any detail, however, one gains access not to the individual or corporate psyche of that society, but to a network of socially motivated practices, pressures and tastes. Books were commissioned by wealthy patrons of the arts and left to their friends and relations in their wills. By the same token, the matter of the choice of a tomb design cannot be divorced from what other people were doing and what the workshops were producing. This is not to say that for many the affective range of the cadaver tomb went uncomprehended or played no part in their choice of such a monument - a handful of wills demonstrate that this was not the case. That the taste for these tombs percolated through certain sectors of English society precisely in the manner of a fashion, is, however, a matter of fact.

The imperfect surviving evidence has offered some clues as to the loose social groupings through which the fashion progressed: these include lawyer-clerks of Wykehamist

education associated with the Lancastrian court; their lay associates in that court, particularly those of Beaufort's party or with close connections to Margaret of Anjou; those who served these, or had other reasons for emulating them, including, apparently, many men of middle rank and rising fortunes in East Anglia, Kent and the Home Counties, often with London business interests. Particularly in the third quarter of the fifteenth century, a period of political instability and social conflict, one can begin to detect distinct dissemination patterns. When one concentrates on the social rather than the devotional climate necessary for the introduction of the fashion for the cadaver tomb in England, it becomes less surprising that it initially found favour with the eminent, the busy, the well-travelled and above all the secular; rather than with the ascetic. One is, ultimately, forced to conclude, that the cadaver tomb was not so much the product of any *new* social circumstances, religious practices or beliefs, but possibly that it was the product of a movement within mainstream spirituality to give new and diverse form to the propogations of its conventional tenets, to give the continuum of *commonplaces* associated with mortality a new and fitting plastic expression.

Appendix 1:

CADAVER TOMBS ELSEWHERE IN THE BRITISH ISLES

Although this study has been restricted to the consideration of English medieval cadaver tombs, clearly in the same way that the fashion came to England from continental Europe, it was transmitted to Wales, to Ireland and to Scotland. In Scotland, there appears to be only one surviving very late medieval cadaver tomb¹. It commemorates George Dundas, preceptor of Torphichen Preceptory, near Edinburgh, who died in 1532, and was erected by Dundas's successor as preceptor, Sir Walter Lindsay. The remains of the tomb, two narrow panels of an original four arranged as a rectangular frame, are now set low down in the blocking wall of the west crossing arch. On one of these are carved Renaissance arabesques and trophies, and on the other a shrouded skeleton.

One other fragment is, perhaps relevant to note. On the site of Val-des-Choux Priory at Ardchattan, Argyle, there remained a sculpted stone of which there is a rubbing in the British Museum². It measures 2 feet 7 inches by 6 feet nine inches and is divided into two registers: the upper one shows three niches containing a skeletal figure of death between two successive priors, Duncan and Dugal, the sons of Somerled Macdugail. It is dated c.1502. Undoubtedly the paucity of cadaver tombs in Scotland is the result of a more

1. Colin McWilliam, ed., *The Buildings of England; Lothian* (Harmondsworth, 1978), 449, pl. 23.
2. London, BL Additional MS 34798, No. 6.

thorough iconoclasm than was experienced south of the border, rather than of a distaste for this or any other kind of funerary monument.

The exclusion of Wales from consideration is probably less easy to justify, as there is evidence that cadaver tombs enjoyed some popularity there in the late medieval period. No exhaustive listing has been undertaken, but certainly four stone cadaver effigies, all anonymous, are known to have survived at least until Richardson made his tour. Two of these are located in Llandaff Cathedral, where Richardson recorded them¹. One is of an emaciated female in a winding sheet, the other a badly-damaged male effigy in an open shroud. There is another male effigy, possibly early to mid sixteenth-century in that it shows some similarity to West Country effigies of that date, in St Dogmael's Abbey, Pembrokeshire². The sculpture is angular and stylised, the effigy rather flat in section, the right hand pulling the shroud over the genitals. Finally, Lawson³ recorded a complete shrouded figure in St Mary's Church, Tenby. The iconography conforms to the standard type, with the shroud overlapping the genitals, but she noted the unusual feature

1. London, Society of Antiquaries, Richardson MS, unpaginated.
2. Photograph in the Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London.
3. Lawson, "Cadaver Effigies; the Portrait as Prediction", 522.

that in this instance the mouth is shown open, with the teeth visible. It would be rash to jump to any conclusions on the basis of a random selection of four anonymous and undated effigies; on the other hand, it does seem likely, given patterns of geographical distribution in England, that the cadaver tomb would have reached Wales at much the same time as it percolated into Devon and Cornwall, that is, the early sixteenth-century.

A more interesting case is presented by the surviving collection of Irish cadaver tombs. That they merit a study in their own right is borne out by the fact that Helen Roe¹ undertook just such an exercise, which not only brought these tombs to scholarly attention for the first time, but which is also, methodologically, perhaps the best published account of the cadaver tomb to date.

In her gazeteer, Roe lists the twelve known cadaver monuments in Ireland. Of these, five belong to the late medieval period, three to the later sixteenth century, and the remaining four to the seventeenth century. The medieval tombs are the anonymous effigies at Stamullen² and Bewley³, the tomb to James Rice in Waterford Cathedral (1482-85)⁴,

1. Roe, "Cadaver Effigial Monuments in Ireland".
2. See Plate 59a and b.
3. See Plate 60.
4. See Plate 57a-c.

and two tombs from the period 1500-1520, to James Tallon and Joanna Skelton in Castledermot, and to Sir Edmond Goldyng and Elizabeth Flemyng in Drogheda'. All are iconographically fascinating, being quite different from anything surviving in England. In view of this, it is most unfortunate that three of the five are currently situated in the open, so are likely to deteriorate rapidly.

The Stamullen tomb appears to be the remains of a double tomb, with the figures of a man and a woman in ordinary dress on one slab and an elongated and verminous skeleton on another. It is housed under a wooden protective structure in the ruins of the Chantry Chapel of St Christopher, St Patrick's Church, Stamullen, Co. Meath. The Bewley slab is propped against the west wall of St Brigid's Church, in the grounds of Bewley House, outside Drogheda, Co. Louth. It shows an effigy which is virtually skeletal, apart from a pair of large ears, and which is completely covered in vermin. James Rice's tomb takes the form of a free-standing mensa with a cadaver effigy on top, in the north-west end of the nave of Waterford Cathedral. The chest is decorated with apostles and saints in niches. The effigy shows worms crawling in and out of the limbs and rib-cage and has a toad on the abdomen in exactly the place where a mouse crouches on the effigy on the "Wakeman Cenotaph" in Tewkesbury. In the Franciscan Friary at Castledermot, Co. Kildare, the skeletal effigy of James Tallon and the shrouded figure of

Joanna Skelton, flank a large foliated cross. There are no vermin on these figures. The effigies to Sir Edmond Goldyng of Peristownlaundy and Elizabeth Flemyng, his wife, are set in the churchyard wall of St Peter's Church (C. of I), Drogheda, Co. Louth. They are not verminous, but are shown in a state of advanced corruption, he with his bowels spilling out, she with her spine visible through the ribcage. The shrouds are decorated with sculpted detailing.

Although Helen Roe opened her study by referring to the "psychological shock" of the Black Death¹, she rapidly moved to the consideration of her specific Irish examples in their context. She found the formal shroud to be a constant in Irish work, as in English, as opposed to the rumpled bedsheet common in Continental examples². The continuing consideration of the iconography is acute and detailed, noticing things such as carving techniques, positioning of the corpse, anatomical accuracy, degree of decomposition and the extent of infestation with vermin³. Regarding the presence of vermin, she speculated on its didactic and figural purposes, especially in connection with the Bestiary⁴. She then made her case for believing that the Stamullen and Bewley effigies were produced by the same sculptor, focussing on the former, which had not previously

1. Roe, "Cadaver Effigial Monuments in Ireland", 1
2. Ibid., 3,
3. Ibid., 4,
4. Ibid., 9-10.

been published. On the question of dissemination, she concluded',

For the introduction and circulation of "fashions in shrouds" I would suggest, however, that it may be significant that almost all the Irish carvings are in, or within easy reach of, important mercantile ports; Dublin, Drogheda, Cork, Kinsale and Limerick; certainly the Rice effigy is so extraordinarily close to many of the finest cadaver sculptures of south-west England, particularly in Exeter and one or two of the other Devon sites, that the long and intimate connections of Waterford with the Severn Estuary and its great port of Bristol must not be overlooked.

The argument seems a sane and strong one, were it not for the fact that the Irish cadaver tombs are signally *not* at all like the surviving English examples. Even Rice's effigy, although more familiar in many respects, having vermin on it, is quite "un-English". Perhaps the introduction of "fashions in shrouds" did come to Ireland, as it undoubtedly did to England, through the mercantile ports, but it seems more likely that the influence in Ireland was directly that of Germany and the Low Countries, rather than England, where the verminous cadaver was the exception rather than the rule.

1. Ibid., 11.

Appendix 2:

THE IDENTITY OF THE CADAVER TOMB IN YORK MINSTER

In York Minster there is a mensa tomb bearing a single stone cadaver effigy which has traditionally been attributed to Thomas de Haxey, treasurer of the Minster, who died shortly before 23 January 1425¹. The inscription from the tomb is now lost. According to Drake's *Eboracum*², however, there used to be an inscription in the middle aisle from the west door which read,

Hic iacet Johannes Haxby, quondam thesaurarius istius
ecclesie qui obiit 21 die mensis Januarii an.dom. 1424
Cujus anime propitiatur Deus, Amen.

Drake went on to remark that "Haxby's tomb" had been "removed now nearer the spiritual court". William Hargrove, writing in the early nineteenth century³, described a "flat tomb of black marble supported by an iron trellis about 2½ feet high in memory of John Haxby". Within the trellis was laid "a full-length effigy". His description accords with the surviving monument, although the marble is missing.

The problem here is that this tomb *may* be the first of its type in England, but the evidence for Haxey's title to it does not bear up under scrutiny. Raine's brief notice of Haxey in the Surtees Society edition of the Fabric Rolls includes the statement⁴,

1. R.B. Dobson, "The Residentiary Canons of York in the Fifteenth Century", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 30 (1979), 174.
2. F. Drake, *Eboracum* (York, 1736), 501.
3. W. Hargrove, *History and Description of the Ancient City of York* (York, 1818).
4. J. Raine, ed., *The Fabric Rolls of York Minster*, Surtees Society, 35 (1858), 206.

It is not, however, his tomb, although even in Torre's time it was "commonly mistaken" for it. Haxey's bones were laid a little to the south of it under "a blue marble about 5 yards long, which has been escocheoned at the corners, and on a plate at the head bears the inscription" recorded by Drake. Drake and Mr Poole engrave the skeleton-tomb which is placed, appropriately enough, against the fourth pillar of the lantern, the renovation of which was placed in Haxey's charge in 1409.

The situation is very muddled. Haxey's will does not help.

He states simply¹,

*Item lego corpus meum ad sepeliendi in cathedra
Eboracis vbi meum sepulcrum ordinatum est,*

The floor of the Minster was repaved in the eighteenth century.

Haxey's career would not make him an implausible candidate for a cadaver tomb. His early acquisition of numerous benefices and prebends², his part in national politics³ and his role as a residentiary canon within the York chapter⁴, all point towards a man of the character and calibre of Henry Chichele or Richard Flemyng. His later career also makes it plain that he was a qualified lawyer, and he is generally believed to have been a graduate of Peterhouse College, Cambridge, although no record of his university career survives. He was life-long close associate and

1. York, Dean and Chapter, L2(4), Register of Wills I, folios 219r-220v.
2. *DNB*, 922; *CPR*, 1388-92, 9,394,491; 1391-96, 276; 1396-99, 88, 123; 1399-1407/27; 1401-05 489,158,123; 1405-08, 227,47; 1422-29, 132,141,168,264.
3. *DNB*, 992.
4. Dobson, "Residentiary Canons", 174.

executor of the will of John Newton, his predecessor as York treasurer and master of Peterhouse from 1382-97¹. He also enjoyed, through that association, the patronage of Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury².

Torre's account³ of the tombs in question, however, points in another direction. Haxey's plain monument of marble, with its inscription and "escocheons" is numbered 149; whereas the cadaver, which Torre drew, is 150. Beside the drawing he wrote,

On N. side of last by the NW Lanthorn-pillar, lyes an old monument cast into the Effigies of a man in his Winding Sheet & raised in solid White stone / inclosed on both sides & at the head wth Iron-grates about a yd high. W^h support an Altar stone of black marble about 3 yds long, (it is comonly mistaken for Haxey tomb by it, & called Haxby tomb).

Because of the burial habits of the late medieval residentiary canons of the Minster, the tomb adjacent to Haxey's was almost certainly that of another treasurer⁴:

They gave each other their most precious possessions, served as one another's executors, and even in death often preferred to be buried in carefully chosen and adjoining graves.

1. Margaret Aston, *Thomas Arundel: A Study of Church Life in the Reign of Richard II* (Oxford, 1967), 311.
2. *Ibid.*, 315-16; Emden, *BRUC*, 421-22 for Newton.
3. York Minster Library MS L1(7) - James Torre, York Minster, 165-66.
4. R.B. Dobson, "The Later Middle Ages", *A History of York Minster*, ed., G.E. Aylmer and Reginald Cant (Oxford, 1977), 105 and *passim*.

It happens that no surviving tomb in York Minster is identified with Haxey's closest mentor, John Newton. It is very tempting to speculate, therefore, that the cadaver tomb might be that of Newton himself. He was treasurer of the Minster from 1393 to 1414, and is remembered for being the owner of one of the largest private collections of books of the period, some of which he left to Peterhouse College, but of which a majority went to the Minster, *in subsidium et relevamen libarie faciende*¹. In addition to the expected patristic works, these included a collection which indicates a taste for rarer ascetic works, such as Hugh of St Victor's *De claustro animæ*, and the works of Hovedon, Rolle, Hilton and Remington. He also left a copy of Petrarch's *De remediis utriusque fortunæ*. If one is tempted to discover a certain irony in the presence of such works in a will where they rub shoulders with valuable plate, embroidered vestments and a private river-going barge, this is no more than characteristic of that unselfconscious dualism in the lavish expression of extreme humility of which the cadaver tomb is surely an example.

Not only are Newton's literary tastes of interest, so too, clearly, is his close association with Archbishop Thomas Arundel, whose name and family occur frequently in .

1, Emden, *BRUC*, 421-22.

connection with the earlier English cadaver tombs. It is not, perhaps, beyond the bounds of possibility that Haxey, as executor, not only saw to the construction of the library to house his mentor's books, but to the erection of his tomb, perhaps offering a source for its popular designation as "Haxby's tomb". In short, if Haxey would not be an implausible candidate for England's first cadaver tomb, John Newton would present a much more exciting prospect, especially in view of the fact that he died as early as 1414. As matters stand, however, it would be imprudent to venture further¹.

1. That another graduate of Peterhouse, Richard Poryngland, who died in 1475 and was commemorated by a shroud brass, now lost, in St Stephen's, Norwich, (see 353-54 above) should also have left a copy of the *De remediis utriusque fortunæ* in his will, can be treated as nothing more than an interesting coincidence.

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