

Creating and recreating the Yorkist tombs in Fotheringhay church (Northamptonshire)

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The two sixteenth-century tombs in Fotheringhay church commemorate fifteenth-century members of the Yorkist dynasty whose roles as ancestors of the Tudor monarchy required that new monuments be set up to replace their damaged originals. Despite being royal tombs, the documents that describe the events of their recreation omit to mention how the tombs were paid for. A consideration of the histories of the original tombs, coupled with a close examination of the sixteenth-century documents, enables the events of 1572/3 to be understood more fully.

Fotheringhay church is the burial site of four members of the Yorkist dynasty who died in the fifteenth century (Fig. 1). Three died in battle and their bodies were brought to the church for burial. Edward, duke of York, died at Agincourt in 1415 and his body was returned to England later that year. Richard and his second son Edmund, Edward's nephew and great nephew, were killed during the Wars of the Roses in an unsuccessful attempt to take the throne that ended at the battle of Wakefield in 1460. Their bodies were initially buried in Pontefract, and in 1476 Edward IV arranged for their removal to Fotheringhay in a great ceremonial procession.¹ Richard's widow, Cecily, survived until 1495 and was buried with her husband in the church. The tombs that now cover the burials, however, date from 1573.²

The history of the monuments' erection is often cited as an illustrative example of Elizabethan attitudes to tombs in the wake of legislation in the early part of the reign, since the tombs were built to replace earlier ones damaged during the Reformation.³ In 1560 Elizabeth had been forced to bring in a proclamation to halt the attacks on tombs and monuments that had occurred as a result of the zeal with which people had responded to legislation of the 1540s and 50s requiring the destruction of religious imagery. The 1560 act stated that people were forbidden from 'breaking or defacing [...] any monument [...] or inscription and memory of any person deceased being in any manner of place, or to break any image of Kings, princes or noble estates of this realm [...] that have been erected and set up for the only memory of them to their posterity'.⁴

According to the account in Edmund Gibson's 1722 (revised) edition of Camden's *Britannia*, Elizabeth had become aware that the tombs of her ancestors at Fotheringhay had suffered such a fate and, 'were thrown down and ruin'd, together with the upper part (or Chancel) of the Church' and so she commanded that two monuments be set up in their memory in the nave of the church.⁵ The events are well documented but the situation is not quite as described by Gibson; Elizabeth stayed at Fotheringhay Castle and was accommodated at several houses in the county during her progress of 1566, during which time she must have become aware of the condition of her ancestors' tombs, but it was only in 1572 that steps were taken to deal with the matter. Instructions were given that the bodies were to be moved into



1. Fotheringhay church (Northamptonshire) from the south-east.

Photo: authors

the nave, but no mention is made of new tombs for them, there are no fabric accounts for the monuments, or contracts with masons, and the person who took final responsibility for their construction has not been identified, although the presumption that it was the Queen is almost certainly wrong. By close examination of the tombs and of the documentary evidence, including the accounts of the original fifteenth-century burials, it is possible to reconstruct the events, demonstrate why it was necessary to make the new tombs, and suggest the person who, most probably, paid for them.⁶

The Church

The collegiate church of Fotheringhay was founded under the patronage of the dukes of York in the early fifteenth century, although the completion of its endowment took some considerable time, and from the first it was regarded as a royal foundation. Edward, duke of York, founded the college in 1411; it was to consist of a master, twelve chaplains, eight clerks and thirteen choristers.⁷ The existing parish church at Fotheringhay, which had remained in the possession of the Cluniac priory of Fotheringhay after the priory's removal to Northampton in the 1140s, was ceded to the new collegiate foundation in 1415.⁸ This was done to allow the college to use the church, which lay next to their site, for their services (the land grant was described in the foundation document rather strangely as 'a soil containing six acres'), and plans had been made for construction to start on the college buildings at an early stage as stonecutters, carpenters and labourers had been impressed for the work in 1414.⁹

It is clear that Edward was not able to complete his foundation before the battle of Agincourt in 1415 and his untimely death. Shortly before his departure for France he had gained licence to raise a loan to complete the college, and it was left to Richard, duke of York,

to implement this in 1433 in fulfilment of Edward's wishes, for which he was prepared to spend £100 per year, up to a total of £1000 if necessary, to get the college finished.¹⁰ In the following year, 1434, the contract with William Horwood was drawn up for the construction of the church's nave and its west tower, and it is clear from the wording of the document that the choir and its aisles were already standing by this date.¹¹ The rebuilding of the church to create a building more suited to its age and its use as a collegiate church must have been intended from the start, and Edward's request to be buried in the choir of his church (his will was drawn up on the eve of battle in 1415) strongly suggests that rebuilding work had started as soon as the college had been given the church. The endowments were finally completed in the 1460s when Edward IV effectively refounded the college in his own name and dedicated it to his mother and late father, Cecily and Richard of York.¹²

The church survives in a reduced state with the whole section east of the nave destroyed, together with all the structures associated with the college. It now consists of a nave and side aisles with a western lantern tower, to which a fan vault was added in 1529, and a two-storied porch with a charnel chamber beneath it.¹³ The church's nave was retained at the dissolution of the college since it acted as the parish church and a short chancel created in the eastern bay, which had been separated from the aisles by solid walls in the original building. This bay is specifically described in the 1434 contract; 'to the two respowndes of the sayd Qwere shal be two perpeyn-walls joyning of free-stone'.¹⁴

The arches from the nave into the choir and its aisles remain, embedded in the closing wall at the east end of the nave and it is evident that the chancel arch was low and was flanked by sections of solid wall on either side, and that the arches into the choir aisles were also narrow. The buttresses of the east wall align with the outside walls of the nave aisles and are built up against the stumps of the original walls, revealing the jamb of one of the choir aisle windows on the south side. The sites of the choir arcades are not visible but they were probably in line with the nave arcades. The narrowness of the three arches serves to emphasise the separation of the parochial nave from the collegiate choir, and with an entrance from the college buildings and a vestry occupying the last bay of the south aisle it seems that the eastern part of the nave was not parochial either.¹⁵ One window jamb survives from the vestibule that led into the nave from the college on the south, and the college buildings themselves remain as parchmarks and earthworks in the field alongside. Although the choir was evidently the same width as the nave, it is not certain how far it extended. Similarly unknown are the dimensions of the Lady chapel and its aisles that projected to the east of the choir.¹⁶

Description of the Tombs

The two royal tombs are positioned against the side walls flanking the high altar (Fig. 2). They were erected in 1573 as the posthumous monuments to Richard Plantagenet, duke of York (d. 1460), and his wife Cecily (d. 1495), daughter of Ralph Neville, first earl of Westmorland, and to Edward, duke of York, (d. 1415), but not his wife Philippa, the third daughter of John Mohun of Dunster, by whom he had no children.¹⁷

The tombs consist of classical wall monuments without inscriptions or effigies and are differentiated only by their heraldry (Figs 3, 4). The north tomb has the arms of England, with a label of five points, impaling the arms of Neville, and the south tomb has the royal arms on its own, again with the label of five points to identify a descendant of the monarch.¹⁸ The shields are displayed within strapwork and there are relief carvings of the Yorkist badge of falcons and fetterlocks on the tomb chests and on the friezes. Painted panels from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century fixed to the wall above each monument identify the tombs and provide a date for their construction.

right

2. Fotheringhay church interior from the west, showing the monuments for the dukes of York flanking the high altar.

Photo: authors

below, left

3. Monument for Richard, duke of York. Note the shaft with the longer reeding on the far right side.

Photo: authors

below, right

4. Monument for Edward, duke of York. The shaft with the longer reeding is on the return on the right.

Photo: authors





left

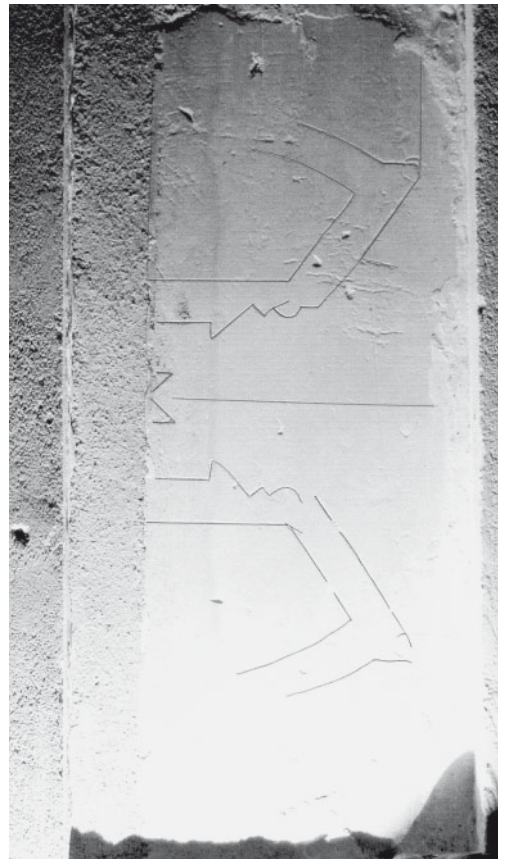
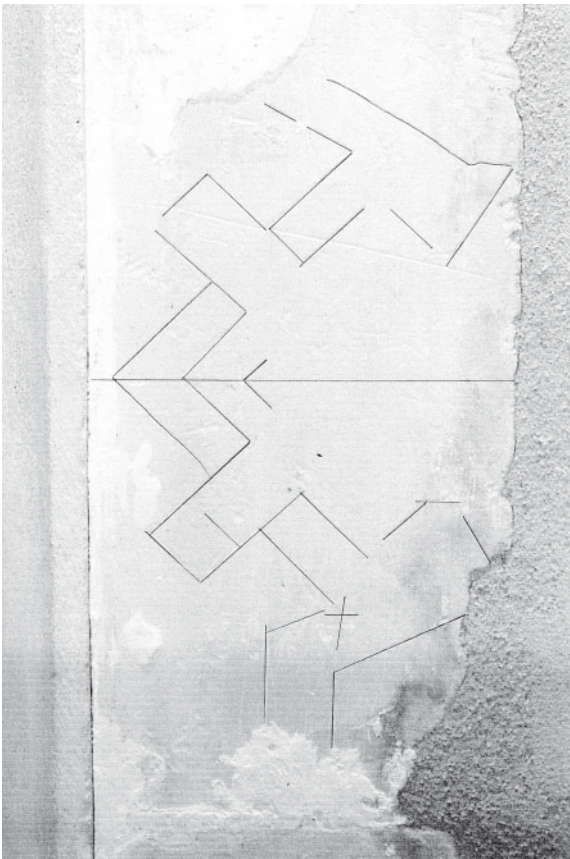
5. Detail of Richard's monument, showing the necks of the columns with the plaster in-fill on the right, and site of lost in-fill on the left column. The capitals and upper part of the entablature are made of chalk.

Photo: authors

below

6a–b. The architectural drawings on the side of Richard's monument, enhanced by changing white lines to black.

Photo: authors



Above Edward's tomb on the south is: 'Edward Duke of York was slain at the Battle of Agincourt, in the 3^d Year of Henry 5th 1415. These Monuments were made in the Year of our Lord 1573'. Above Richard's is: 'Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, Nephew to Edward Duke of York, and Father to King Edward 4th was slain at Wakefield in the 37th Year of Henry 6th 1459, and lies buried here, with Cecily his wife. Cecily, Dutchess of York, Daughter to Ralph Neville first Earl of Westmorland'. According to eighteenth-century antiquarian accounts, the monuments did originally have inscriptions, from which the current panels are derived, although there is disagreement about the length and the wording. They have not survived since they were apparently written in ink, and a letter-cutter, or painter, did not complete the job and make the inscriptions permanent.¹⁹

Although at first sight the monuments seem impressive, albeit straightforward in design, closer inspection reveals evidence of speed, or economy, in their construction. They consist of a mixture of limestone and chalk, with most of the tomb chests and much of the carved work, except the heraldic panels, carved from chalk.²⁰ Chalk is very soft and would therefore be an easy material to work quickly, but it is susceptible to damage. The Composite columns (not Corinthian as described in most accounts of the tombs) that support the architrave have been cut down from longer ones and their necking infilled with plaster to make collars, and they have been carved in the round, as if intended to be fully free-standing (Fig. 5). The fluting is reeded and one column on each monument has a longer section of reeding than the others (Figs 3, 4). The pairs of columns flank an empty base in the centre of the tomb chest which is scribed for a single centre column, but this would have obscured the heraldic panel had it been installed. Instead the base is unused and the projecting centre of the cornice has a console beneath it, although on Edward's tomb the scribing for the column can be seen above the console as well as on the base.²¹ Both monuments are finished with tiny semicircular pediments, but have lining-up marks inscribed on their top surfaces for flanking stepped sections that were never installed.²² There is also a lack of consistency in the pairing up of the badges. The carving of the heraldic panels and their surrounding strapwork is of higher quality, however, and it would seem that the tombs were the work of several masons.²³

Additionally, some of the stone for Richard's monument had already been used in the masons' yard for two scribed architectural drawings (Figs 6a and 6b). On one side there is part of a plan of a house façade with triangular projecting features, and a plan of a porch or gatehouse of two projecting wings, both drawn with a mixture of ruled and freehand lines.²⁴ Although the drawings cannot be related to actual buildings, there are several examples of triangular structures known from the sixteenth century in the region, such as the towers on the façade of Elizabethan Chatsworth, in building from the 1550s to the 1580s, Hardwick Hall's triangular perimeter wall gatehouses from the 1590s (Fig. 7), or Rushton Triangular Lodge, built by Thomas Tresham also in the 1590s.²⁵

The Documentary Evidence

We need to consider how these monuments relate to Elizabeth's wishes for her ancestors' burial at Fotheringhay. In the spring of 1572 Elizabeth issued a series of four 'articles to be executed on the Queen's behalf', starting with a survey of the parts of Fotheringhay church no longer used for divine worship to discover the extent of the damage to the building and costs of repair to such damage.²⁶ The outcome was predetermined, as the next item was to be a consideration of the demolition of the part no longer in use and a valuation of the materials. The royal tombs and bodies had to be assessed for removal to another part of the church where they could be placed 'as comelye and convenyentlye as now they be', with a recommendation sought as to where that should be. The named Commissioners were Edmund Elmes,



7.
Hardwick Hall (Derbyshire),
triangular lodge in the perimeter
wall.

Photo: authors

John Pykering, Humphrey Orme and John Houghton. In the event two reports were written, one was submitted by a group of parishioners, not including the four named, and carefully answered each of the four articles in turn. The view expressed was that very little of the church should be taken down, and indeed it would compromise the rest of the structure to do so. The whole east end, which was made up of a choir with its side aisles and a Lady chapel also with side aisles, had evidently passed out of use, but the parishioners thought that only the smaller Lady chapel, with its aisles, should be demolished. The damage to the choir could be repaired for about £52, whereas the value of the materials from the Lady chapel would be £94 6s 0d which could be used at the royal castle of Fotheringhay and for the town bridge. If the Queen was minded to allow the parishioners to keep the profits of the demolition, they would be prepared to take over the costs of maintaining the whole church, including its choir, forever. An advantage of repairing the choir, they submitted, was that the York tombs could remain where they were.²⁷

The four named Commissioners wrote a very different report. They advised removal of the whole east end, since they could see no use for it, and their estimate for the restoration was that it would cost more than £100. The total scrap value would be £252, allowing for the re-use of some of the stone to build a wall across the end of the nave; they estimated the cost of the wall at around £20. They, too, suggested that the royal castle should have the materials for repair and some should be used to build a stone bridge in the village where there was a decayed timber one. The Commissioners described the tombs and recommended their removal to the nave:

the bodies & tumbes of Edward late duke of yourke now being under a marble stone flatt on the ground in the quere And Cecille late duchesse of yourke now lying in an old decayed chappell And both being in the said decayed part of the said late college church: maie well be removed into that part of the church now used by the pachnrs and there placed more conveniently than they nowe be.²⁸

There is no reference to new tombs being needed, but an iron 'grate' was to be erected around their burials and, as the Commissioners frugally pointed out, ironwork from the windows in the east end would serve very well for the purpose. The total cost of the removal and resiting was estimated at about £10.

The Queen summoned a new group of Commissioners, three of the original four, Elmes, Orme and Houghton, who were joined by members of the local gentry, Sir Edmund Brudenell,

Sir Edward Montagu, William Fitzwilliam (the son of Sir William, Elizabeth's Deputy in Ireland, who had responsibility for Fotheringhay Castle) and Peter Grey, her Receiver General for the county. Their brief, laid out in the letters patent, was to arrange for the demolition of the whole east end of the church, specified as the choir and its aisles together with the eastern (Lady) chapel and the little chapels (aisles) on either side of it. The stone recovered from the demolition was in part to be used for a new bridge and for closing off the end of the church, but the rest, together with the other building materials, was to be sold at the best price. The bodies of Edward and Cecily were to be taken up and removed to the nave of the church and there re-interred with an iron grate 'decently' around their places of burial. The wording is quite specific and makes no mention of replacing, or even of moving existing monuments, and it must have been left to the Commissioners to devise a way of meeting this request as there is no suggestion that money was to be found for the purpose from the sale of the materials.²⁹

The records of the money received from dismantling the east end of the church, for the costs involved in the work and for building the new bridge across the Nene at the edge of the village were also overseen by members of the Commission and signed by Edmund Brudenell, Edward Montagu, Edmund Elmes and Humfrey Orme, with James Cruys. They were compiled by John Houghton.³⁰ The accounts are very detailed and it is possible to reconstruct the events of the summer of 1573 in which the lead was removed from the east end roofs, weighed and carried away to the safekeeping of the village schoolmaster.³¹ The sale of lead, timber, doors, glass and loads of stone is itemised together with the wages of masons and labourers who built the wall closing off the nave, and there is an entry for the sale of the stone from the foundations of the old work. Equally detailed accounts for building the new bridge follow, and it is clear that at no stage were payments made for building two new monuments. The only reference to the tombs is a payment 'gave in reward Haward my L Treasurers masson for his paymt and Travyll att two severall Tymes to ffotheringay ffor his advyce ffor the makyng of the bridge and removynge the Tombs iijjs iiijd'.³²

The Original Tomb for Duke Edward

It is necessary at this point to consider what type of monuments the Queen's Commissioners would have found in the chancel of the church. The description in the Commissioners' report of Edward's monument as a marble slab flat on the floor matches his burial request, 'je devise mon corps estre ensevele en l'esglise parochiale deins mon collegge de Fodrynghay, en mye le quer soubz une plat pere de marbre, c'est assavoir ad gradum chori'.³³ The memorial is a modest one for a member of the royal family but as his will also specified that no more than £100 should be spent on his interment, which would presumably include the cost of his memorial as well, this is perhaps explicable. The Commissioners did move the stone, (and presumably also his remains) and it survives beneath the new monument as a slab of Purbeck marble with the outline of a military figure in brass and a tassel from the mantling of the helm from under the figure's head left (Figs 8a and 8b).³⁴ Most of the damage to Edward's brass had probably occurred before it was placed under the new monument since it was listed amongst the college's assets in the 1548 dissolution inventory, described as 'the brase that covereth the founder's grave' and itemised together with the 'latten lecterne with the egle'.³⁵

The Original Tomb for Duke Richard

The Articles and the Commissioners' reports make no reference to the burial or monument of Richard, duke of York, only to Cecily, his duchess, and yet the replacement tombs commemorate Richard as well.³⁶ It must have been the case that Richard's burial was

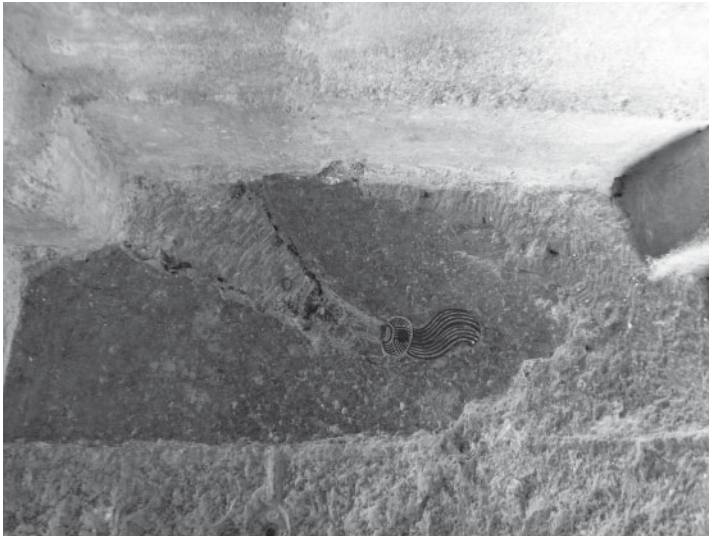


8a.
Duke Edward's original
brass matrix beneath his
later monument.

Photo: authors

8b.
Detail of the mantling
tassle from the original
brass beneath
Duke Edward's later
monument.

Photo: authors



encountered, and his coffin identified, when Cecily's body was exhumed. There is no contemporary description of the event, but a report of 1634, apparently derived from an eye witness account, describes the coffins being opened and the bodies inspected. The presence of a papal indulgence on a ribbon around Cecily's neck is mentioned particularly.³⁷ The question remains, why was Richard's burial not referred to in the Commission to report on the state of the church and tombs? The answer may be found by considering what type of tomb was provided for Richard after his body was brought to Fotheringhay in 1476.

His funeral, as described in several contemporary accounts, was a magnificent event in which a hearse, prepared at Edward IV's instruction, was placed over the casket containing the duke's remains in the choir of the church, preparatory to its burial there. Edmund, Richard's son, was placed beneath a hearse in the Lady chapel, and presumably buried there as well.³⁸ Edward IV ordered a more permanent tomb for Richard in 1482/3 at a cost of £100, but

we have no record of its appearance.³⁹ Edward IV's own tomb is much better documented, although it does not survive in its original form. His will of 1475 specified that he was to be buried in St George's Chapel, Windsor, beneath an architectural two-storeyed monument which was to consist of a 'closet' beneath a chapel in which was to be placed an effigy of the king. Work was underway in 1482 and it is assumed that the tomb was in a suitable state by the death of the king in 1483 to be used for his burial.⁴⁰

It is possible that Edward planned something similar, although less elaborate, for his father. Two comments provide some clues, although any conclusions drawn from them must be provisional. The Commissioners refer to a 'decayed chappell' and while this might refer to the space containing the tombs of Richard and Cecily, the absence of any reference to Richard in 1572 implies that there was no monument as such, and it is noticeable that no parts of any memorial were incorporated in the new one. Leland's account from before the dissolution of the college in 1548 is similar but slightly more specific, as he states that Edward IV had caused the body of his father 'to be layid on the north side of the highe altar, where also is buried King Edward the 4. mother in a vaulte over which is a pratie chapelle'.⁴¹ Both descriptions can perhaps be interpreted as referring to the type of cage chapel or enclosure that would have provided a small private space for a priest to say masses for the souls of the departed, raised over the burial. Some, such as Bishop William of Wykeham's chapel in Winchester from 1403 contain effigies on tomb chests, but others like the Warwick chapel in Tewkesbury abbey (from the 1420s) (Fig. 9), or Prince Arthur's in Worcester from 1504 do not, although there is a Purbeck tomb chest for Arthur.⁴² In the case of the Warwick chapel, an inscription and series of little sculptures on the exterior and paintings on the interior exhibited the descent of the family. Prince Arthur's relies on heraldry (and perhaps a lost brass inscription) to identify its ownership.



9. Tewkesbury Abbey (Gloucestershire) choir north side showing the Warwick and Founder's chantry chapels.

Photo: authors

It is possible that Richard was similarly buried beneath a cage chapel without an effigy or other direct means of identifying his burial there, and that Cecily's request in 1495 for burial within her husband's tomb at Fotheringhay was in a vault beneath such a monument.⁴³ Time, and the destruction of imagery at the Dissolution, may have effaced reference to Richard's burial, although identification of Cecily's was evidently still possible in 1573. As an architectural monument its removal into the main body of the church would have presented a number of problems; in its 'decayed' state it would have required restoration and such chapels were often associated with chantry bequests, which would not have been acceptable in the 1570s.⁴⁴ There is a tantalising clue in the demolition accounts; to 'my L. Treasurer masson' (Haward, mentioned above) for his visits to 'view the matter and adjudge and to settdown a pryce for the same', which is part of the same entry as 'paid to ij massons for takynge down the lytell chappell'. Was this perhaps the cage chapel for Richard and his duchess? The amount paid for this was not inconsiderable at 30s.⁴⁵ In the absence of any further information it would be unwise to be categoric, but this reading does fit the available evidence and would explain the absence of any reference to Duke Richard, and why it was simpler to create a new combined monument for Richard and Cecily.

The Context for 1570s tombs

The architectural form of the Fotheringhay monuments invites comparison with a wider range of sculptural work, including, but not limited to, other tombs. The Fotheringhay monuments have previously been related to a group of monuments, also from the 1570s, connected with the Mordaunt family of Bedfordshire.⁴⁶ The group is characterised by the use of strapwork of similar designs, inscriptions, Doric entablatures and most conspicuously by the inclusion of sarcophagi. Additionally the monuments are made of Totternhoe stone, which is a form of chalk. The links between the Fotheringhay tombs and the Mordaunt group are, however, slight, although the use of chalk may be significant. The emphasis on the attic storey and the use of sarcophagi in the Mordaunt group is in marked contrast to the form of the Fotheringhay tombs, which also show little trace of the influence from the Antwerp engravings of Cornelius Floris that are clearly apparent in the Mordaunt group.⁴⁷

Closer parallels can be drawn with more local monuments under the patronage of the gentry families named in the Fotheringhay Commission. Little Oakley church (Northamptonshire) has a freestone monument that is closely comparable to the Fotheringhay tombs in its use of a classical architectural frame surrounding heraldic panels with strapwork including small heads, and it is also without effigies (Fig. 10).⁴⁸ Two framed panels on the back may have been intended for inscriptions but there is no trace of anything there now. The monument probably dates from the mid 1570s and is similar to the archway to Winwick Manor in its use of the Roman Doric Order with reeded fluting on columns that support an architrave with triglyphs and rosette metopes.⁴⁹ The heraldry identifies the monument to the Montagu and Markham families and it most probably commemorates William Markham (d. 1571), who was the second husband of Elizabeth Montagu (d. 1569), the eldest sister of Sir Edward, one of the Commissioners for Fotheringhay.⁵⁰ Sir Edward Montagu died in 1602, and is buried in the family mausoleum at Weekley (Northamptonshire).⁵¹

Deene Park and Church

The closest connections are with sculptural work associated with Sir Edmund Brudenell (d. 1585). A tomb dated 1585 in Deene church shows a slightly later interpretation of the Fotheringhay type of architectural monument without figures (Col. pl. 1). It is for the two wives



10. Little Oakley (Northamptonshire), monument to William Markham, second husband of Elizabeth Montagu.

Photo: authors

of Sir Edmund, Agnes Bussy (d. 1583) and Etheldreda Fernley (d. 1584), and consists of an arched recess above a tomb chest without effigies, flanked by reeded Ionic pilasters supporting an architrave with an inscription on the frieze. The attic storey has a second inscription within strapwork and shields in wreaths surmounted by obelisks. The monument is related in turn to work at Brudenell's house, Deene Park, that was underway in the 1560s and in 1571. The earliest work is the resited bay window now on the east front, which is tentatively dated to c.1560, although its 'inventive naivety' makes dating it problematic (Fig. 11).⁵² The inclusion of the initials E A on the upper panels, for Edmund Brudenell and his first wife Agnes, suggest a date range of 1549–83, (between Edmund inheriting Deene and his wife's death) for the original work. The little trefoils included on the plinth, taken from the arms of Tresham displayed on the wall beside, indicate that it was moved here and remodelled some time after the marriage of Sir Thomas Brudenell and Mary Tresham in 1605.⁵³ It includes Ionic columns with reeding and strange capitals that are integrated into the architrave rather than support it. More finely detailed Ionic capitals are used on the two-storied porch to the courtyard, which was built by Sir Edmund and has the arms of his first wife included on the frieze above the entrance (Fig. 12). It is dated by its connection with the fireplace inscribed 1571 now sited in

the great hall, and the timber overmantel on the end wall that was also part of the same period of building work. These bear close resemblance to the Fotheringhay tombs (Figs 13, 14).

One can see echoes of the porch in the use of the small-scale semi-circular pediments and lozenge motifs on the plinths at Fotheringhay, and of the fireplace in the massing of the architectural elements of the tombs, in the bold breaking forward of the entablature and the moulding beneath the bases. The strapwork at Deene Park is less exuberant than the Fotheringhay surrounds to the heraldry, but the inclusion of heads and pierced trefoil ends are common to both. If the female heads from the strapwork at Deene Park are placed next to



11. Deene Park (Northamptonshire), bay window with glazing infilled, now sited on the east front.

Photo: authors. Reproduced by courtesy of Mr Edmund Brudenell



12. Deene Park, porch from the courtyard.

Photo: authors. Reproduced by courtesy of Mr Edmund Brudenell



13. Deene Park, overmantel to the fireplace in the great hall, dated 1571.

Photo: authors. Reproduced by courtesy of Mr Edmund Brudenell



14. Deene Park, timber panelling in the great hall.

Photo: authors. Reproduced by courtesy of Mr Edmund Brudenell



a



b

15a–c.

Strapwork female heads from

- a) Deene Park
- b) Fotheringhay
- c) Little Oakley

*Photos: authors.**Fig. 15a reproduced by courtesy of Mr Edmund Brudenell*

c

those from the Fotheringhay and Little Oakley tombs, the resemblances are clear (Figs 15a–c). All three have the same facial type with full, heavy jawlines and small mouths, the hair is looped up in the same style, with plaits at Little Oakley and Deene Park, and the necks are covered by coifs. The demonic masks on the tombs at both sites find their parallels in the head of the priapic figure beneath the shield on the left side of the Deene Park fireplace (Figs 16a–c). The similarity between the open mouths and elongated thin moustaches growing from the corners of their mouths is marked. The Little Oakley tomb shares with Fotheringhay the device of prolonging the whiskers and changing them into ribbons looped through the scrollwork.



a



b



c

16a-c.

Strapwork demonic heads from

- a) Deene Park
- b) Fotheringhay
- c) Little Oakley

*Photo: authors.**Fig. 16a reproduced**by courtesy of**Mr Edmund Brudenell*

An architectural detail further links Fotheringhay and Deene Park. The roof of Deene Park's great hall is supported on corbels in the form of consoles and these are almost identical to the consoles on the tombs, with a rosette placed above the scrolled acanthus (Figs 17, 18). The side of the consoles in both places is ornamented with a tapered double scroll from which emerges a delicate foliage trail with heavy seedpods. The wooden overmantel at Deene Park has exactly the same device and it appears again on the 1585 tomb at Deene church. The details of the roof over the great hall have been compared to those of the hall roof at Kirby, which was under construction at the same time, and there are further architectural connections there as well.⁵⁴ The superb porch to the hall at Kirby has the same design of consoles supporting the reeded Composite columns of the upper level from 1570–75 with acanthus, rosettes and the scroll with seedpods on the side (Figs 19, 20).

It therefore seems likely that there were connections between the teams of masons working at Kirby and at Deene Park in the early 1570s. The estates of Deene Park border those of Kirby

17.
Corbel from the roof of the
great hall at Deene Park.

*Photo: authors.
Reproduced by courtesy of
Mr Edmund Brudenell*

18.
Console from Duke Edward's
monument, Fotheringhay.

Photo: authors



and Sir Edmund maintained a close relationship with his neighbour, initially Sir Humphrey Stafford, and after 1576 Sir Christopher Hatton, which was based on an agreement over land sales.⁵⁵ It is unfortunate that there are no major fireplaces at Kirby surviving from the 1570–75 phase to compare with the one at Deene Park, which has been described as ‘the finest of its period in the county’,⁵⁶ since that would have enabled further comparisons to be made between the two building projects, but it is clear that the quality of the Deene work is close to



19.
Upper level of the hall porch, Kirby Hall.

Photo: authors

20.
Detail of the consoles supporting the columns on Kirby Hall porch.

Photo: authors



that of Kirby. Little Oakley and Fotheringhay are not perhaps of such consistently high quality, although the best work on the royal tombs, the strapwork of the centre panels, and the attic storey on the Markham tomb, do come close.

Sir Edmund Brudenell as Patron

Sir Edmund Brudenell emerges as the most likely patron for the Fotheringhay tombs, although his background was not in court circles.⁵⁷ He was a third-generation landowner in the county whose family had risen to power under the Tudors and had married into older and wealthier families. His father, Sir Thomas, was a Merchant of the Staple who had started building Deene Park before his death in 1549, as an inscription in the great hall records; Sir Edmund completed the work.⁵⁸ Sir Edmund had no responsibilities beyond the immediate area, and the Fotheringhay Commission is the only one in which he was involved. He was knighted in 1565 and entertained the Queen at Deene Park on her visit to Northamptonshire in 1566. He was especially honoured by this visit since the other individuals who provided hospitality on that occasion, apart from Edward Griffin at Dingley, were the considerably more important figures of Sir Walter Mildmay, at Apethorpe, and Sir William Cecil in Stamford.⁵⁹ As one of the Commissioners, Sir Edmund was responsible for providing new burials for members of the Queen's ancestral family as appropriate within the terms of the letters patent that had been issued. The tombs he encountered in the choir of Fotheringhay church were one brass matrix with most of the brass removed and a 'decayed chapel', neither of which could realistically be installed in the nave nor described as appropriate for the Queen's ancestors. Since Brudenell had a team of masons at work on his house at the time, it would have been a straightforward matter to move them onto the task of creating two new tombs for the church and thereby perhaps gain favour from his sovereign, a point perhaps made to him by either Mildmay or Cecil. The work would not have been unduly expensive as the masons were able to use materials already prepared in the yard that could be adapted and made up as monuments.⁶⁰ The men involved were clearly part of a highly skilled group at work on both tomb monuments and houses in north-eastern Northamptonshire at this time, under the patronage of both the gentry and the higher nobility and further research is needed to identify the centre of the workshop and its wider connections. It was most probably associated with one of the groups of quarries in the region, either at King's Cliffe, where Mildmay owned quarries, or near the sites at Weldon, but this remains to be determined.

APPENDIX: THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH IN 1566

There is a certain amount of confusion in the antiquarian and historical literature about the actual state of Fotheringhay church when Elizabeth visited it in 1566. Clearly the monuments were in an unused part of the church since the choir had ceased to be maintained once the college was dissolved in 1548, but was the building actually a ruin as Gibson, and others, claim?

After the Dissolution, the site passed to John Dudley, duke of Northumberland, but reverted to the Crown on the fall of Dudley in July 1553 (he was executed within a few weeks).⁶¹ The college buildings were sold to John Cruys in 1558 and he occupied them as his dwelling, but he does not seem to have acquired any rights over the church and the part no longer needed for the college may simply have been closed off and abandoned. Initial reading of the documents concerning the fate of the church in 1572/3 would suggest that it was in a parlous state. The Queen's Commissioners claimed that it would cost at least £100 to return it to the state it had been in before the Reformation, although the parishioners estimated the necessary repairs at no more than £52. A less-partial view is found in the valuation of the materials to be gained from the demolition of the east end of the church in the same document. The lead from the roofs of the choir with its two side aisles, plus the Lady chapel with its aisles, was valued at £200, which implies that most of the

roofs were still intact; the wooden ceiling of the choir was also priced and was clearly still in place since the commissioners warned that it would not be possible to take it down without damaging it.

We can estimate the extent of the roofs from the value of the lead. Lord Burghley's agent, Peter Kemp, cited the market value of the Fotheringhay lead at £7 per fother in 1573.⁶² The fother was not a fixed amount but varied between 19¹/₂cwt and 20cwt.⁶³ If we assume the lower figure, then £200's worth of lead from Fotheringhay would equal 28¹/₂ fothers (62,244 lbs). Using a standard thickness of six pounds per square foot, the total size of the roof covering would be 10,374 square feet, which must have been virtually the whole of the east end roofing.⁶⁴ The widely cited claim that Dudley stripped the roof off the choir is therefore a calumny.

The building was probably structurally sound and the only items on the salvage list described as being in poor condition were the glass windows, which were 'so rent & torne as ther be little worth'. The interior fittings will have been removed for sale, any religious carvings left behind would have been smashed in accordance with the legislation on imagery and this, combined with nearly twenty years of nesting birds and the effects of weather, will have made the east end look neglected and decrepit or 'decayed' as the commissioners reported.

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NOTES

1 A.F. Sutton and L. Visser-Fuchs with P.W. Hammond, *The reburial of Richard duke of York, 21–30 July 1476* (London, 1996). For an account of the careers of Edward and of Richard of York, see R. Horrox, 'Edward of Langley' and J. Watts, 'Richard of York', *Oxford DNB*.

2 Only three of the four people have tombs. Edmund, duke of Rutland, who was seventeen at the time of his death, is not commemorated and seems to have been forgotten.

3 For example, P. Lindley, *Tomb destruction and scholarship, medieval monuments in early-modern England* (Donington, 2007), p. 26. Lindley also discusses the situation of a number of noble families who were faced with losing their mausolea during the Dissolution, first of the monasteries, and then of the chantries in the bleak period of the second quarter of the sixteenth century.

4 P.L. Hughes and J.F. Larkin (eds), *Tudor royal proclamations, vol. 2 the later Tudors, 1553–1587* (New Haven, 1969), p. 147.

5 E. Gibson, *Camden's Britannia*, revised and enlarged, 2 vols (London, 1722), 1, col. 521.

6 The relevant documents are from the records of the King's Remembrancer, TNA, E 101/463/23, E 101/622/35, and E 178/1654. The main published accounts on Fotheringhay are: L. Toulmin Smith (ed.), *Leland's itinerary in England and Wales*, 5 vols (London, 1964), 1, pp. 4–5; J. Nichols, *The history and antiquities of the town, college, and castle of Fotheringhay, in the county of Northampton, Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica no. 40* (London, 1789); H.K. Bonney, *Historic notices in reference to Fotheringhay* (Oundle, 1821); J.C. Cox, 'The college of Fotheringhay', *Archaeological Journal* (hereafter *AJ*), 61 (1904), pp. 241–75; R.M. Stevenson and W.R.D. Atkins (eds), *Victoria County History. A history of the county of Northamptonshire*, 6 vols (London, 1906), 2, pp. 170–77; A. Hamilton Thompson, 'The statutes of the college of St Mary and All Saints, Fotheringhay', *AJ*, 75 (1918), pp. 241–309; H.M. Colvin, D.R. Ransome and J. Summerson, *The history of the King's Works, vol. III, 1485–1660* (London, 1975), p. 251; R. Marks, 'The glazing of Fotheringhay Church and College', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 131 (1978), pp. 79–109; RCHME, *An inventory of the historical monuments in the county of Northampton, vol. VI, Architectural monuments in north Northamptonshire* (London, 1984). Bonney is widely referenced by later writers but his account is not reliable. The Royal Commission authors include the royal tombs and have reached a number of similar conclusions to ourselves, although they do not discuss the tombs' stylistic affinities or connections with Deene Park or church. For Elizabeth's progress in Northamptonshire, see E.K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan stage*, 4 vols (Oxford, 1923), 4, p. 83.

7 *Cal. Pat. Rolls 1408–1413*, p. 358. An earlier college seems to have been established at the castle by Edward's father and this formed the basis of the later college, moved onto a site next to the parish church: Hamilton Thompson, 'Statutes', p. 245.

- 8 *Cal. Pat. Rolls 1413–1416*, pp. 282–83.
- 9 *Cal. Pat. Rolls 1413–1416*, p. 180.
- 10 *Cal. Pat. Rolls 1413–1416*, p. 350; *Cal. Close Rolls 1429–1435*, p. 260.
- 11 The contract is printed in L.F. Salzman, *Building in England down to 1540* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 505–9.
- 12 *Cal. Pat. Rolls 1461–1467*, p. 216.
- 13 N. Pevsner and B. Cherry, *The buildings of England: Northamptonshire* (Harmondsworth, 1973), 2nd edn, pp. 220–21.
- 14 Salzman, *Building*, p. 507.
- 15 The chancel arch and its wall may have been retained from the earlier church since the roof level for a narrower and lower building than the present nave is visible above the site of the chancel arch. The window in the top of the wall has been inserted. Its glazing, and that of the window at the end of the south aisle, formed part of the building work in 1573: TNA, E 101/463/23, fol. 4v.
- 16 The Lady chapel was described in 1572 and had been the site of Edmund, duke of Rutland's burial in 1476, for which see below.
- 17 Philippa remarried and is buried, at her request, in Westminster Abbey. Her monument in the chapel of St Nicholas consists of a tomb chest with a female effigy, and includes the Mohun arms impaled with Edward of York's arms amongst the shields on the chest. Philippa included a small sum to Fotheringhay college for prayers amongst her bequests: J. Nichols, *A collection of all the wills now known to be extant of the kings and queens of England* (London, 1780), pp. 224–29.
- 18 This may be a bit of Elizabethan sophistry. The five point label denotes the grandson of the monarch and so was correct for Edward, but not for Richard who was a great-grandson of Edward III.
- 19 Nichols, *Fotheringhay*, p. 33. By the time of its recording, only part of the inscription on the frieze of Edward's tomb survived, written in Roman capitals: 'EB. ----FVIT./ OCCISVS ----/ ANNO SALVTIS 1415, ET REGIS HENRICI QVINTI./ THESE MONUMENTS OF EDWARD DUKE/ OF YORK, AND RICHARD DUKE OF YORK,/ WERE MADE IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD GOD 1573'. On the East Side: 'THE SAYD EDWARD WAS SLAYNE IN THE/ BATTELL OF AGINCOURT, IN THE THIRD YEAR/ OF HENRY THE FIFTH'. Nichols also gives a second version of the frieze on Edward's tomb, taken from a manuscript of a Mr Holcot (an eighteenth-century vicar of Fotheringhay), which reads: 'Edwardus dux Eboraci occisus erat anno tertio regni Henrici Quinti, anno Domini 1415', and thus differs from his own version. Richard's inscription was: 'RICHARDUS DUX EBORACI OBIIT MENSE/ JANUARIII [...] A° Di. 1460./ CECILIA UXOR RICHARDI DUCIS EBORACI OBIIT, 1495'. On the east side of his tomb was: 'SISSILY, DUTCHESS OF YORK, DAUGHTER TO/ RAULFE NEVELL, FIRST EARL OF/ WESTMORLAND'. There was also an inscription (site unrecorded): 'RICHARD PLANTAGENET DUKE OF/ YORK, NEPHEW TO EDWARD DUKE OF/ YORK, FATHER TO KING EDWARD THE/ FOURTH, WAS SLAINE AT WAKEFIELD,/ IN THE THIRTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF HENRY THE/ SIXTH, 1459, AND LIETH BURYED/ HERE WITH CICELY HIS WIFE'. Again, citing Holcot's manuscript, Nichols reports two further inscriptions from the friezes: 'Ricardus dux Eboraci obiit mense Januarii anno 37° regni Henrici Sexti, anno Domini 1460. Cicilia uxor Ricardi ducis Eboraci obiit anno 10mo regni Henrici Septimi, anno Domini 1495'. Nichols may have been relying on an earlier unattributed source for the inscriptions. Peck's 1727 *Annals of Stamford*, published in 1785 in an edition by W. Harrod, makes no reference to inscriptions on the tombs but only to the boards that are there now: W. Harrod, *The antiquities of Stamford and St Martin's compiled chiefly from the annals of the Rev. Francis Peck with notes to which is added their present state including Burghley*, 2 vols (London, 1785), 1, pp. 253–54. Bridges, however, reported the inscriptions in the same form as Nichols, but added that parts of the inscriptions were on the plinth and were badly defaced. J. Bridges, *The history and antiquities of Northamptonshire*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1791), 2, p. 455.
- 20 One section of the strapwork on Richard's monument has been patched in with a piece of chalk and looks original.
- 21 It is hard to envisage a column in such a position as it would have extended through the entablature to reach the cornice and would have been of unusual proportions.
- 22 We are grateful to Michael Lee for bringing these to our attention.
- 23 There are three different masons' marks on the bases and upper sections of the monuments, two on Richard's tomb and one on Edward's.
- 24 Working drawings of this type have been widely reported from medieval and early modern buildings, see for example, A. Pacey, *Medieval architectural drawing, English craftsmen's methods and their later persistence (c.1200–1700)* (Stroud, 2007).
- 25 For Hardwick Hall and for the lost Elizabethan house at Chatsworth, see M. Girouard, *Robert Smythson and the Elizabethan country house* (London, 1983), pp. 143–60, and M. Girouard, *Town and country* (London, 1992), pp. 211–20 respectively; for Rushton Triangular Lodge, see M. Girouard, *Elizabethan architecture, its rise and fall, 1540–1640* (London, 2009), pp. 233–34. Further afield, Audley End in Essex also had triangular rooms projecting from its perimeter wall, Girouard, *Elizabethan architecture*, p. 119.
- 26 TNA, E 178/1654.
- 27 TNA, E 178/1654.
- 28 TNA, E 178/1654.
- 29 TNA, E 101/622/35.
- 30 TNA, E 101/463/23.
- 31 The choice of the schoolmaster for this role did not prove to be wise as, at the death of Thomas Hurland in 1589, it was discovered that he had purloined over £100 from the sale of lead from the church site: Northamptonshire Record

Office, F (M) Charter/779 11th Feb 32 Elizabeth I (1590).

32 TNA, E 101/463/23, f. 3r.

33 'I wish my body to be buried in the parish church within my college of Fotheringhay, near the steps in the choir under a flat marble stone'. Nichols, *Wills*, pp. 217–20.

34 The maker of the brass has been identified as Stephen Lote, master mason to the King: S. Badham, 'Cast copper-alloy tombs and London series B brass production in the late fourteenth century', *Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society*, 17, 2 (2004), pp. 105–27, and P. Whittemore, 'The brass of Edward, Duke of York, d. 1415, at Fotheringhay, Northants', *Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society*, 17, 2 (2004), pp. 128–31. At his death in 1417, Lote left a sum of money for a period of four years to a fellow craftsman 'so that he be friendly and well-disposed in the making of the tomb of the Duke of York' (from Lote's will, cited by J.H. Harvey, *English mediaeval architects, a biographical dictionary down to 1550* (Gloucester, 1984), p. 188). Since the actual monument to Edward was a brass on a floor slab without a tomb chest and would have cost his executors little more than £10, it is hard to see how such a simple monument would have been expected to take four years to complete. One possible explanation is that Lote had anticipated that a commission for an elaborate monument was forthcoming but had not received it by his death. It remains possible that the brass was not installed immediately after Edward's death, but within the next few years. We are grateful to Sally Badham for discussion of this point.

35 Stevenson and Atkins, *VCH Northants*, p. 176. The border with its inscription to identify the duke's burial may still have been visible in 1572/3 and since been lost.

36 Following correct heraldic procedure, the arms on the monument may refer to Cecily alone, which would suggest that it had been carved before the remains were exhumed and the two burials discovered. It is only the reported inscription that identifies Richard as well. However, as noted above, there are errors in the labels of both shields. We are grateful to Professor Robert Swanson for discussion of this point.

37 H. Peacham, *The compleat gentleman* (London, 1634), p. 169. Peacham's informant was 'a Master Creuse [...] who dwelt in the Colledge at the same time', and must have been a member of the family of John Cruys who had acquired the college buildings in 1558, for which see below.

38 Sutton and Visser Fuchs, *Reburial*, p.19. The instructions for making the hearse, involving carpenters, joiners, painters ('pictores') and candle-makers, at an unspecified cost, are given in T. Rymer, *Foedera*, 2nd edn, 20 vols (London, 1727), 12, p. 28. It was the third such hearse made at Edward's command; in 1461 one was made for a service for Richard in St Paul's Cathedral at a cost of £150, and a second one for Fotheringhay in January 1463, which service Edward attended in person. The 1463 hearse was an elaborate structure, covered in wax images of angels and kings and for which the royal painter, John Stratford, made pennons and banners and a painted cloth with the image of Christ in Majesty to hang over an image of the duke, *Foedera*, 12, pp. 2–3. The 1476 hearse has not been noted before; Bonney, *Fotheringhay*, p. 42, confused it with Edward IV's tomb for the duke. This marked the end of the Yorkist use of Fotheringhay as a mausoleum, Edward's interests turning instead to St George's chapel at Windsor.

39 Colvin, *King's Works*, p. 251, citing TNA, SC 6/1088/24.

40 A. Fehrmann, 'The chantry chapel of King Edward IV', in L. Keen and E. Scarff (eds), *Windsor, medieval archaeology, art and architecture of the Thames Valley, British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions, XXV* (Leeds, 2002), pp. 177–91, and T. Tatton-Brown, 'The building of the new chapel: the first phase', in N. Saul and T. Tatton-Brown (eds), *St George's Chapel Windsor, history and heritage* (Wimborne Minster, 2010), pp. 69–80.

41 Toulmin Smith, *Leland*, 1, pp. 4–5. Its site to the north of the high altar reflects the position of Edward IV's own tomb at Windsor.

42 See P. Lindley, 'The medieval sculpture', in J. Crook (ed.), *Winchester Cathedral, nine hundred years, 1093–1993* (Chichester, 1993), pp. 97–119, at p. 109; P. Lindley, 'The later medieval monuments and chantry chapels', in R.K. Morris and R. Shoesmith (eds), *Tewkesbury Abbey, history, art and architecture* (Logaston, 2003), pp. 161–82; J.M. Luxford, *The art and architecture of English Benedictine monasteries, 1300–1450* (Woodbridge, 2005), p. 165.

43 Her will gives no instruction for a separate monument or for expenditure on her entombment, although she did bequeath a considerable collection of vestments and altar furnishings to the college. Cecily died at Berkhamstead Castle, which had been her home since she gave up her rights to the castle at Fotheringhay in 1469, but she maintained connections with Fotheringhay and named the master of the college as one of her executors: A.J. Spedding, "At the king's pleasure": The testament of Cecily Neville', *Midland History*, 35, no. 2 (2010), pp. 256–72.

44 Cecily had included a chantry bequest in her will, although the property involved was only to be given to the college after the death of a beneficiary: Spedding, 'Cecily Neville', pp. 268–69.

45 TNA, E 101/463/23, f. 5r.

46 J. Edis, 'Beyond Thomas Kirkby: monuments of the Mordaunt family and their circle, 1567–1618', *Church Monuments*, 16 (2001), pp. 30–43.

47 Girouard, *Elizabethan architecture*, p. 208.

48 Certain details of the monument show an awareness of the Mordaunt group and there is a difference between the quality of the attic and main sections of the monument, but none of it is made of chalk.

49 Girouard, *Elizabethan architecture*, p. 205 and pl. 238.

50 Bridges, *History*, p. 328; D.F. Markham, *A history of the Markham family* (London, 1854), p. 21.

51 A second monument, of much lower quality, to William (d. 1619), the younger brother of Sir Edward Montagu, is also in Little Oakley church. It is made of chalk and painted. William bought the estate from the son-in-law of Elizabeth Markham, who had retained the manor on the death of her first husband. See Bridges, *History of Northants*, p. 328.

- 52 J. Heward and R. Taylor, *The country houses of Northamptonshire* (Swindon, 1996), p. 157.
- 53 The form of this structure is very strange and it would warrant more detailed study, in particular to discover what was done to it in the nineteenth century.
- 54 Heward and Taylor, *Northants houses*, p. 158.
- 55 M. Finch, *The wealth of five Northamptonshire families, 1540–1640*, Northampton Record Society 19 (Northampton, 1956), pp. 146–47.
- 56 Heward and Taylor, *Northants houses*, p. 158.
- 57 The monuments have also been attributed to Brudenell in RCHM, *Architectural monuments*, p. 66, and in Heward and Taylor, *Northants houses*, p. 32, but in neither case has the reason for the attribution been discussed.
- 58 Heward and Taylor, *Northants houses*, p. 153.
- 59 Chambers, *Elizabethan stage*, p. 83.
- 60 Brudenell was able to send hurdles from his building yard for the scaffolding during the demolition works at the church: TNA, E 101/463/23, fol. 3v.
- 61 D. Loades, 'John Dudley, duke of Northumberland', *Oxford DNB*.
- 62 HMC, *Calendar of the Cecil Papers in Hatfield House, vol. II 1572–1582* (London, 1889), p. 53.
- 63 J.E.T. Rogers, 'Facts and observations on wages and prices in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries', *Journal of the Statistical Society of England*, 24, 4 (1861), pp. 535–85.
- 64 The accounts for the recovered lead in 1573 reveal that the estimate was somewhat optimistic as the total recovered was only about 22¹/₂ fothers, including all the scraps and gutter lead.



1. Deene (Northamptonshire), detail of the monument to the two wives of Sir Edmund Brudenell.

Photo: authors