



Extracts from the Chapter minutes from 1701 onwards
Mark Brandon - markandsuebrandon@outlook.com

TOMB TALK

One coffee break I arrived in the middle of an animated discussion on the Gorges tomb sparked by a question from Rebecca. The main contributor was Trish who had swotted up on the Gorges during her training. This reminded me that my training test-piece was the Hertford Monument so I then decided to look into both back-stories on Wikipedia and Hall's Dictionary of Subjects & Symbols in Art.

In the 16th century Thomas Gorges (1536–1610), a son of Sir Edward Gorges of Wraxall, Somerset, by either Mary Newton or Mary Poyntz, a kinsman and courtier of Queen Elizabeth I, acquired the manor of Langford, now Longford, in Wiltshire in 1573 and built there Longford Castle. His wife was a Swedish noblewoman, Helena Snakenborg (right), marchioness (through her first marriage) of Northampton. Due to her influence, Swedish-style architecture was adopted in the construction of Longford Castle. Helena's mother was a descendant of Agnes of Borgarsyssel, a natural daughter of Haakon V of Norway.

Gorges was governor of Hurst Castle when, during the Spanish Armada, one of the Spanish ships was driven aground there. Lady Gorges asked the Queen if she could have the wreck, and the request was granted - the ship was one of the Spanish treasure ships laden with silver. In the reign of James I, Sir Thomas Gorges and the dowager Lady Northampton, his wife, were granted the office of Keeper of the palace of West Sheen or Richmond, keeper of the wardrobe, vessels and provisions there, and keeper of the gardens and of Richmond Park; and Letters of Privy Seal granting her an allowance of £245. 5s. p.a.

In 1635 Sir Thomas was buried in Salisbury Cathedral, Wiltshire, where he and his wife Helena have a remarkable monument decorated with carved polyhedra. Each side of the elaborate canopy above the tomb displays two *cuboctahedra* and an *icosahedron*. The monument as a whole is crowned by a celestial globe with a *dodecahedron* on top. I could not get a handle on the symbolism of the polyhedra but remembered there was one in Albrecht Durer's (1471 - 1528) print *Melencolia*. John



(our own Architectural Historian), on holiday in Scotland, suggested Empedocles' elements of *earth, air, fire and water*. The 'Platonic solids' are prominent in the philosophy of Plato who wrote about them in the dialogue *Timaeus* c.360 B.C. in which he associated each of the four classical elements with a regular solid. Earth was associated with the cube, air with the octahedron, water with the icosahedron, and fire with the tetrahedron. There was intuitive justification for these associations: the heat of fire feels sharp and stabbing (like little tetrahedra). Air is made of the octahedron; its minuscule components are so smooth that one can barely feel it. Water, the icosahedron, flows out of one's hand when picked up, as if it is made of tiny little balls. This theory was linked to the four Humours expounded by Hippocrates: blood, bile, phlegm and 'black bile'. These in turn were linked by Galen and others to the four Temperaments: phlegmatic, choleric, sanguine and melancholic. This last links up with Durer's *Melencolia* which has a watery background.

John also forwarded the following information regarding the twisted columns (which remind me of the baldacchino over the papal altar in St.Peters, Rome). 'I used to edit *Ecclesiology Today* at the time that we published the article by Richard Durman (who has since died) and did speak to him at some length about the contents. My view then, and still is, that while he explored the architectural heritage of the design in some depth, he did not devote enough space to exploring the possible symbolic meaning. However, it was a significant contribution to knowledge.

As Richard so wonderfully explains there are numerous examples of precedent for the use of twisted columns, and as he also suggests it was sometimes seen as a declaration of adherence to the "old religion". For those who like a conspiracy theory this latter suggestion has a lot to offer. It was a way of declaring your secret adherence to the old pre-Reformation Catholicism, but with a built-in excuse that could be given, in that it was simply some twisted columns that had a long-standing architectural heritage. Likewise Longford Castle, which was the home of the Gorges before it became the seat of the Radnor's, was built to a triangular style, which was also often held to suggest an adherence to the old religion, the three towers representing the persons of the trinity. The survival of the tomb in the cathedral most probably rests on the fact that the iconoclasts simply did not know the supposed tradition of secret manifestations of Catholicism.

The Gorges could well have remained Catholics - many people did, the Radnors certainly were not, having fled from France to escape Huguenot persecution. To see the monument in its historical background one also needs to explore the history of Longford Castle. There is a recent publication, *Longford Castle: The Treasures and the Collectors* by Amelia Smith, which does have something in it on the pre-Radnor house.'

Now, one of my favourite sources is James Harris' *The Epitaphs in Salisbury Cathedral* of 1825: *At the upper end of the north side isle, is a fair tomb of Purbeck stone, over which is an arch, supported by four twisted Corinthian pillars, and four pilasters; on the top of which are four*

pyramids, bearing; balls on their top ; on the top of all is a globe, whereon is a cube. At the four corners are the four Cardinal Virtues, and Fame, with a laurel and palm in her hands ; underneath are the figures of a Man and Woman at full length, he in armour, his head supported by a cushion on a head-piece, and his feet by a horse: she in a widow's dress, and her feet on a greyhound; both holding up their hands in a posture of devotion.

On the north side : Within this monument lies the body of Sir Thomas Gorges, of Longford, in this county, Knt. fifth son of Edward Gorges, of Wraxall, in the county of Somerset, Knt. who having passed the greatest part of his life in the service of Queen Elizabeth, and King James, of blessed memory, (principally in the Cabinet,) with the utmost fidelity, resigned his soul into the hands of his Redeemer, 3 March, 1610, aged 74.

At the west end: Edward Lord Gorges, Baron Dundalk, their very affectionate son, erected this dormitory to receive the bodies of his beloved parents, in the year of our Lord 1035.

On the south side: Here are deposited the bones of Hellen Snachenburg, of Sweden, who attending the Lady Cicelia (daughter of Eric, King of Sweden), into this kingdom, the beauty of her person, and the modesty of her demeanour, attracting the particular notice of Queen Elizabeth, she was by her admitted as one of her Maids of Honor and Ladies of the Bedchamber, and bestowed in marriage on William Lord Par de Kendall, Marquis of Northampton, who, dying without issue, she married Sir Thomas whom she bore four sons and three daughters, after whose death she lived a widow's life for 25 years, which having passed religiously, she departed this life on the 1st day of April 1635, aged 86.

At the south side, near the top *The world's the sea, and life's the ship. We all should steer from sin Death's the port, the country heaven, The righteous enter in.* Under the coat of arms, on a black marble tablet *Cunning and swift, the prey will gain Firm and faithful, reward obtain.* At the west end, at the top: *Attend, stranger, and remark the change; our flesh, because mortal, is soon reduced to ashes. This monument will last for ages, but will decay, while she will revive again to eternity, at the coming of the Lord of Glory.*

William Par de Kendal, Marquis of Northampton, was brother to Catherine Par, widow of Henry VIII ; she afterwards married Thomas Seymour, the admiral, brother to the Protector, of whom more hereafter.—William Par was Earl of Essex before he was advanced to the title of Marquis of Northampton. He was condemned to die by Queen Mary (of fire and faggot memory) in 1553, pardoned in 1554, and restored to his title of Marquis in 1559 ; soon after which he married Helen Snachenburg. Sir Thomas Gorges and the Marchioness Dowager his wife, built Longford Castle, or rebuilt it, and both died there. There is an ancient print of the Castle, at the time of their residence there, in the possession of a person in Salisbury. Longford Castle is in Wiltshire, near Salisbury, and the seat of the Right Hon. Jacob Bouverie, Earl of Radnor.

Now to the Hertford monument.....

From 1547, when his father was created Duke of Somerset, his son Edward Seymour was styled by the duke's subsidiary title of Earl of Hertford. He was educated with the young Prince Edward, later Edward VI, and was knighted on the occasion of Edward's

coronation. On 7 April 1550 he was sent to France as a hostage, returning three weeks later. Following his father's disgrace and execution, his son was barred from inheriting his titles and most of his wealth. Some of his father's lands and property were restored to him by Edward VI, but he still seemed to have been forced to rely on Sir John Thynne [Longleat] for some financial support. Under Queen Mary he was "restored in blood", but was not given back his title; Queen Elizabeth I created him Earl of Hertford, in the earldom's second creation, in 1559.

His first wife, Lady Catherine Grey, was a potential claimant to Elizabeth's throne, and law established that it was a penal offence for her to marry without notifying the Sovereign. They were married by an anonymous clergyman at Hertford House in Cannon Row, Westminster, before 25 December 1560. The marriage was kept secret until August nearly a year later when Catherine became visibly pregnant and she confided the reason to Lord Robert Dudley. Each was ordered to confinement in the Tower; Catherine was confined immediately, and Seymour imprisoned upon his return from a tour of the continent with Sir Thomas Cecil. While in custody, they were questioned about every aspect of their marriage, but they both claimed to have forgotten the date.

A commission was begun, headed by Archbishop Parker in February 1562. Under this pressure, Lady Catherine finally declared that they had waited for Elizabeth to quit the capital for Eltham Palace. Servants were questioned, and none of them could remember the exact date either. John Fortescue said it was 'in November'. The priest could not be located, but by consulting the accounts of the Cofferer of the Household the marriage date was decided to be 27 November.

His son Edward was declared illegitimate and the father was fined 15,000 pounds in Star Chamber for "seducing a virgin of the blood royal." Despite all this, the Earl apparently found a way to continue marital relations with his wife in the Tower. In February 1563, Thomas Seymour was born. Lady Catherine died in 1568, and Seymour was finally allowed out of the Tower and allowed to re-appear at court. Officially his sons remained bastards. In 1576 he carried the sword of state at Elizabeth's procession of the knights of the garter.

In 1553, as King Edward VI was dying, the King and his Chief Minister, John Dudley, 1st Duke of Northumberland, planned to exclude Edward's sister Mary Tudor from the succession in favour of Katherine's elder sister, Lady Jane Grey. According to the Letters Patent of 21 June 1553, Lady Katherine was to be second in the line of succession behind her sister and heirs-male. Lady Jane had been married to Northumberland's son, Lord Guildford Dudley, on 25 May 1553. On the same occasion, Lady Katherine (below) was married to Henry, Lord Herbert heir apparent to [our] William Herbert, 1st Earl of Pembroke at Durham House. After the wedding, Katherine (now Lady Herbert) went to live with her husband at Baynard's Castle beside the Thames; Katherine Grey had been betrothed to Lord Herbert sometime before August 1552.

When Lady Jane's accession to the throne failed due to lack of popular support, Henry's father sought to distance himself from the Grey family by separating his son from Lady Katherine and seeking the annulment of the marriage; Lord Pembroke achieved this in 1554 when Archbishop Cranmer declared the marital union as having never been consummated. Meanwhile, her sister Lady Jane Grey and her father the Duke of Suffolk had been executed in February 1554 after the suppression of Wyatt's Rebellion. Katherine, Lady Hertford (right), concealed the marriage from everyone for months, even after she became pregnant; in her eighth month of pregnancy and on progress with the royal court to Ipswich, she decided to ask someone to plead for her with the Queen.

She first confided in Bess of Hardwick, who refused to listen to Katherine and berated her for implicating her. Katherine then went to her brother-in-law, Robert Dudley. Visiting his bedroom in the middle of the night, she explained her dilemma. As Dudley's room adjoined the Queen's chambers, he was afraid they might be overheard or that he might be caught with a visibly pregnant woman at his bedside, and tried to get rid of Katherine as soon as he could. The next day he told Elizabeth everything he knew regarding Katherine and her pregnancy.



Queen Elizabeth was infuriated that her cousin had married without her knowledge or consent. The marriage also upset Anglo-Scottish diplomacy, as the possibility of a union between Lady Katherine and the Earl of Arran, a young and unstable nobleman with a strong claim to the Scottish throne, had thereby been removed as an option. The Queen also disapproved of her choice of husband and, still unmarried, also feared that Katherine's ability to bear male offspring could possibly facilitate a rebellion in support of Katherine as Queen. To Katherine's misfortune, her claim to the throne was at the time argued by a book written by John Hales.

Queen Elizabeth imprisoned Lady Katherine in the Tower of London, where Edward Seymour (Lord Hertford) was sent to join her on his return to England. Bess of Hardwick was also imprisoned, as Elizabeth had become convinced (not without reason) that the marriage was part of a wider conspiracy against the Crown. Sir Edward Warner, Lieutenant of The Tower, permitted secret visits between Katherine and Edward. Warner reported that the furnishings of Katherine's room, which were provided from the Royal Wardrobe in the Tower, had been damaged by her pet monkey and dogs. While imprisoned in the Tower, Katherine gave birth to two sons.

Her eldest son Edward Lord Beauchamp [Bel Canto], on the right of the monument is the ancestor of our present Queen via the Cavendish-Bentinck family (Dukes of Portland) and the Bowes-Lyon family (Queen Mother).

Again, looking into the epitaphs: At the eastern end of the Church, opposite Lord Gorges' Monument, is a noble monument of white alabaster ; viz. A. Man and Woman at length, he in armour, and she in her robes, both praying ; at their head and feet a person in armour under four Corinthian marble pillars kneeling, on the top are several figures and pyramids. This chapel is the dormitory of the Dukes of Somerset.

On the top

Locum tenens; General of the Treasury, and Earl Marshall of England, Governor of the Island of Guernsey and Jersey: by Anne his wife descended from an ancient and noble family. And of Catherine his dearly beloved wife, daughter and heiress of Henry Gray, Duke of Suffolk, by his Dutchess Frances, daughter of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk and Mary his wife, sister to King Henry VIII, and Queen of France, so that she was endowed as the great niece of Henry VIII, and great grand-daughter of Henry VII. Equal to her birth was her conduct as a wife; they often experienced the changes of fortune, here at length they rest together in the same harmony in which they lived.

She was a woman of extraordinary beauty and constancy, of exemplary goodness and piety, and not only of her own, but any age, the best and most amiable: she piously and peaceably expired 22 January, 1563.

He was a man of the highest integrity, a pattern for the nobility, a preserver of morals and primitive manners. He excelled in eloquence and learning ; in prudence and all other virtues, for which he was as much distinguished as for the splendour of his noble birth. He was educated with Prince Edward, son of King Henry VIII. A very strenuous defender of religion, a zealous assertor of justice and equity in governing the provinces entrusted to his care. Being appointed a Chief of Legation to Arch. D. D. for his Britannic Majesty King James I he was distinguished for his munificence abroad as well as at home though abounding in riches, he was still richer in the noble and generous endowments of the mind, nor did he ever use his power to oppress his dependants.— Replete with honors and with years he yielded to nature April 6, 1621, in the 83d year of his age. He had 2 sons by the heroic Lady Catherine.

Under the first, Richard the first born. Viscount Beauchamp, a man in every respect equal to his birth and titles, who dying before his father left 3 sons by his Viscountess Honora of the ancient and noble family of Rogers :

1. Edward, Viscount Beauchamp, deceased.
2. William, now Earl of Hertford.
3. Francis, Knt. married the daughter of a Baron. Thomas the youngest son married Isabella daughter of John Olnius, Esq. and died before his father without issue.

1552 On the 2^d January, Edward Duke of Somerset, Lord Protector, uncle to the King, was beheaded by the intrigues of a faction as infamous as ever disgraced the pages of history, at the head of which was his own brother (who, though married to the Queen Dowager, was nevertheless the favoured lover of the Princess Elizabeth, afterwards the virgin Queen), and his second was that bully and dastard, Dudley, Duke of Northumberland. The undeserved punishment of this great man was atoned for by the decapitation of every one of his enemies, his brother before him, and the rest soon after, neither of whom evinced the intrepid courage which he did on the same awful occasion ; nor is the conduct of his nephew, Edward VI, to be excused, in suffering his uncle, who had served him faithfully, to fall a prey to such a faction; for even his youth and ill health cannot excuse him from the charge of the most unnatural ingratitude.

The Duke's widow lived till the year 1580, and died at the age of 90 years. By the suffering of his son, Edward, Earl of Hertford, and his much injured lady, there is sufficient to prove that the aforesaid Virgin Queen, could act with as much cruelty as her sister Mary did, and against as unoffending an object of her suspicions, and indeed more so, for death would have been mercy to the suffering of the Lady Catherine. James, her minion loving successor, from the same impulse, drove the innocent and lovely Arabella Stuart to despair and death, her lover. Sir William Seymour, not giving very strong proofs either of his courage or affection on the occasion. But what could be expected of such a man as James, who, to please a declared enemy of his country, could destroy a Raleigh, was fool and rogue enough to write a book in favour of magic, and wicked enough to be suspected of the murder of his own son.

Lady Catherine Seymour, Countess of Hertford, died in the Tower, at the time mentioned in the monument, in the prime of life; a victim to an inexorable and unfeeling tyrant; her right to the throne being the only charge she could have against her. Her sister, Lady Jane, with her husband, had perished eight years before, by the axe of the wretched Mary; both of them under twenty years of age.

The Earl and Countess were married in the church of Great Bedwin, in North Wiltshire. Lord Beauchamp, a son of this unfortunate pair, lies buried in the church-yard there. There is nothing said on the monument about a daughter, so that probably it was by her first husband. Lord Herbert, whom the same infamous power forced to forsake her. The Earl of Hertford had a horse killed under him at the Battle of Pinkey, gained by his illustrious father, Sept. 10th, 1547. The Castle at Marlborough, now an inn, was the family mansion, where he resided many years, and died there at the great age mentioned on his monument. Sir William Seymour, the husband of Arabella Stuart, was grandson to the Earl of Hertford, (being the second son of his eldest son, as mentioned on the monument.) He offended James I. by the same means that the Earl did Elizabeth. Sir William was subsequently Duke of Somerset, and often mentioned in the reign of the unfortunate Charles I. He died in 1660.

Back numbers available on request.