

## THE STANTONS OF HOLBORN <sup>1</sup>

By MRS. ARUNDELL ESDAILE

The unfortunate family of whom I am to speak to you to-night have been the victims of inaccuracy from first to last. That their work has been neglected, their names forgotten, is not surprising, in view of the almost total neglect of our native sculpture; that the few writers who have mentioned them have never done so correctly is a misfortune peculiar to themselves.

It was in 1922 that I first noticed the signature of William Stanton on a monument of 1665, and on looking up the *Anecdotes* could only find that *Thomas* Stanton, a statuary, made a tomb in the church of Stratford-upon-Avon, which Vertue says is in 'good taste.' This entry occurs under the date 'William III,' and on looking up Vertue himself I found that the passage ran as follows: 'In the church a young man and woman, hand in hand, she Judith Combe this monument erected about 40 or 50 years ago [Vertue was writing in 1737]. The Sculpture tolerable taste. Tho. Stanton, fec<sup>t</sup>. Holb., Father of William, whose son — Stanton now living.'<sup>2</sup> It was something of a surprise therefore to discover that the date of the monument is 1649, so that Vertue was nearly half a century out in his dates. Redgrave, of course, copies Walpole, not Vertue, and says nothing of William or of '—Stanton now living'; but he adds a reference to some fine monuments to the Lytton family at Knebworth, a visit to which showed that they dated from 1705 and 1707 respectively,<sup>3</sup> and were signed by *Edward* Stanton, clearly Vertue's '—Stanton now living' in 1737.

Here at any rate were works by Vertue's three generations, all of them signing 'of Holborn,' and all obviously running

<sup>1</sup> Read at Burlington House, May 8th, 1929.

<sup>2</sup> B.M. Add. MSS. 23,072, fol. 30a.

<sup>3</sup> He had obviously come across the

account of these works contributed to the *Gent's Mag.* (1790, ii, p. 985), and omitted to note that two are quite accurately stated to be signed by Edward Stanton.

a family business; and when *English Monumental Sculpture* came out in December, 1927, I was able to straighten out the family a little and to give some account of the works of all three, of which we then knew nearly sixty. I was wrong in saying that William was Thomas's son, but that was a venial sin: Vertue was so clear upon the point, and the family epitaph had not yet turned up to give the facts. But the omission of the great Culford monument from the scanty list of Thomas's works was a crime, not a blunder: the agreement was published by the Historical MSS. Commission among the Gorhambury Papers as far back as 1909, and I ought to have known it.

Still, even so recently as the beginning of March, the prospect of delivering a paper on the Stantons was a gloomy one, since, though more works by them had been discovered, the greater part of the information I had acquired since 1927 was due not to my own researches but to those of the late William Myddelton, a member of the Chirk Castle family, who in June last, after some correspondence in *The Times* about another sculptor, wrote to ask me what I knew of William Stanton, from whom his ancestors had commissioned a small tablet in 1678. On my telling him what I could, he most generously placed at my disposal the result of his own unpublished researches, namely, that William was Master of the Masons' Company in 1688 and 1689; that he took the oath of allegiance to William III in 1696; that he voted in 1701; and that he made his will, a copy of which Mr. Myddelton sent me, in 1703. There were also a number of isolated notes about every Stanton he had come across in London records, and two of these, 'Thomas Stanton died in 1674,' and the words, 'Stanton v. Platt,' I was able to run down later, though the rest proved to be irrelevant.

Furnished with these facts I wrote to the Clerk of the Masons' Company; but the access to their papers, most kindly granted me, did not prove as fruitful as I had hoped. The learned historian of the Company, however, Mr. Edward Conder, sent me a document of the first importance in the shape of a list of all the Masters of the Company from its incorporation in 1620 to the present day, among them all three Stantons; still, there was obviously much to learn, and as a last resource I went to the Department of MSS. to

see whether there were any Stanton letters in the British Museum and to investigate a statement in Cunningham's *Handbook of London* that the monument of Bishop Burnet in St. James's, Clerkenwell, a good mural one with reliefs of books, a mitre and a pen, was 'cut by Mr. Stanton, a stone-cutter, next door to St. Andrew's, Holborn,' the reference<sup>1</sup> given being 'Le Neve MS., British Museum, fol. 108.' I hope, I think, it is the worst reference on record. There is more than one Le Neve MS. in the British Museum; there is more than one Le Neve; and as the titles of Peter Le Neve's MSS. seemed promising, I glanced through them in vain before beginning on the voluminous works of John. But I had gone through 13 volumes of his *Monumenta Anglicana* before, in the 14th, I found the promising words, 'Stanton MS.' attached to the text of several epitaphs; the fifteenth volume positively bristled with them, and on fol. 1 of the sixteenth was the following note:—'That the reader may understand to whom I am indebted for any inscriptions not hitherto printed, he is desired to observe that those marked *MS. Stanton* are from Mr. Stanton a stone-cutter next door to St. Andrew's Church in Holbourn, by whom the said Monuments were set up.' Four other sculptors were similarly consulted, and save in the case of James Hardy, whose work I had then never seen, I had the satisfaction of finding that, as in the case of the Stantons, monument after monument in Le Neve's lists—I speak of course of unsigned works—had been rightly attributed to them in our own lists on the ground of style alone.

Having copied the entire list of Stanton's works, no slight task, since they fall not far short of 200, I looked up the printed text of *Monumenta Anglicana* to find that the notes on these sculptors were all duly inserted—it is the earlier volumes that have never been published—but that the text of a supplementary volume, which includes works executed between 1650 and 1711 omitted from the former volumes, was not represented in the MSS.; and in this supplementary volume I found what I had long since sought in vain in their parish church, the epitaph of the Stanton family. 'Cut upon an altar-tomb in the North Church-yard,'

<sup>1</sup> It is signed by R. Hartshorne, one of Stanton's assistants, just as the Margaret Powell of Sir Henry Cheere at Hampton is

signed by one of his. The generous master gave his subordinates their chance, but the work, designed by him, counted as his.

where even nineteenth-century epitaphs are fast becoming illegible, it must have perished long ago, since there is no trace of it in all that grave-paved area; Le Neve's text, published years before the death of Edward Stanton, therefore remain our sole authority.

THOMAS STANTON, Citizen and Mason  
of *London* dyed the 24th of May 1674. Aged 64.  
FRANCES, his wife dyed Februr' y<sup>e</sup> 24th. 1689.

Aged 90.

EDWARD, his brother dyed June y<sup>e</sup> 17th 1686, aged 90.

WILLIAM STANTON, Citizen and Mason of *London*

(son of the aforesaid EDWARD STANTON) Born

Aprill the 6<sup>th</sup> 1639, dyed May 30th 1705.

SAMUEL, Son of EDWARD STANTON and SARAH

his Wife dyed Aprill 7th. 1706.

Aged one Year & 3 Weeks.

DOROTHY STANTON wife of the above said

WILLIAM STANTON dyed May 7th. 1707.

In the 67 year of her age

She was a prudent tender Wife & Mother.

EDWARD STANTON (son of EDWARD & SARAH

STANTON) dyed the 9th. of february 1712

Aged 3 Years 8 Months.

And SARAH their daughter dyed 9th. Novem<sup>r</sup>

1714. Aged 8 Months 24 Days.

SARAH Wife of EDWARD STANTON & Daughter  
of SAMUEL FULKS Dyed Octo<sup>r</sup>. 6th. 1712. Aged

38 Years 11 Months 9 Days

MS. Stanton.

*Thomas Stanton*, then, 64 at his death in May, 1674, was born in 1610-11, and as his wife was ninety in February, 1689, she must have been born in 1598 or 1599 and was, therefore, eleven or twelve years older than himself. What is more, William was not his son, as Vertue says, but his nephew, son of an Edward Stanton who may have been the man who in 1670 signed an agreement to make the famous clock and chimes for the second Royal Exchange, which have a niche in the history of irony from the fact that they were playing :

' There's nae luck about the house,  
There's nae luck at a'

when they crashed into the burning Exchange—the House with a capital H—in the disastrous fire of January 10, 1838.

Since Thomas Stanton rose to be Master of the Masons' Company, we may take it that he was first an apprentice, then a freeman, in the usual way; and the signature of the Combe monument shows that he was by 1649 the head of an important business, since signatures, especially with place-names added, are excessively rare at the time. In 1650 he signed the mural monument to Sir Thomas Lyttelton at Worcester, and that of Thomas Windham (d. 1651) at Felbrigg is almost certainly his; but they are minor works, and it is not till 1655 that we hear of a really important commission, from Dame Jane Bacon of Culford Hall, Suffolk for a monument (Pl. i), to be done 'according to the best skill of a stone-cutter, alle in whit and black marble, without the addition of any other ston whatsoever,' to herself and her late husband. It was to be 'tenn feet high and seven broad,' 'as it is now drawne and depicted in a paper drafte demonstrating the same, to which the said Dame Jane, for avoyding mistakes, hath sett to his hand.' Stanton was to receive £300 for the work, Lady Bacon being responsible for fetching 'the several pieces and materialls thereof from Ipswich, and delivering them att the same church, and allowing bricke and mortar for the dowe[ll]ing thereof; 'but the sculptor, who had £100 on account, was to be paid his last £200 only on 'the draft [being] compared with the monument aforesayd, and agreeing with the same in every particular according to the true construction thereof'.<sup>1</sup> Such insistence on minutiae is unusual, and suggests that Lady Bacon was gey ill to please.

Details of the monument are unfortunately not given, and the inscription is irritatingly lacking in dates; but it is clear that the recumbent figure is that of her first husband, Sir William Cornwallis, as her famous second husband, Sir Nathaniel Bacon the painter, has a bust in the same church which, though documentary evidence is lacking, may also be the work of Stanton.

The composition of the group, with Lady Bacon holding a delicious baby on her lap, one daughter on one side, three children—the first, holding a rose, almost as charming as her baby sister—on the other, is most remarkable: full length frontal portraits are very rare in English art

<sup>1</sup> At Gorhambury. *Hist. MSS. Commission Report*, 1906, p. 54.

of the time, the most important being those of Margaret Legh at Fulham (1613), a work of the Johnson School, and the great Bacon at Gorhambury (Pl. ii), erected by Lady Bacon's father, Sir Thomas Meautys, Bacon's secretary, in which the frontal composition and arch with plain keystones are so like the Culford tomb that the work may well have come from the same studio; and though the date of its erection is not on record, Meautys's biographer sees reason to suggest 1640-1 as probable. Sir Henry Wootton, who wrote the inscription *sic sedebat*, died, it is true, in 1639; but the phrase may only imply that he saw the design, and for political reasons its erection may well have been postponed until Meautys's knighthood proved that he was secure of royal favour, and so able to commemorate the disgraced Chancellor of the previous reign.<sup>1</sup>

The recumbent effigy of Sir William Cornwallis is a late and stiff example of the unfortunate conception described by Webster as the toothache monument. The disguised tombmaker is discoursing of 'fashion in the grave' to the Duchess of Malfi:—

— Princes' images on their tombs  
Do not lie as they were wont gazing on heaven,  
But with their hand under their head, as if  
They died o' the toothache; they are no longer fashioned  
With their eyes fixed upon the stars, but as  
Their minds were wholly bent upon the world,  
The self-same way they seem to turn their faces.

The scheme appears in the 1570's and is fairly common even during the reign of James I; but it was rapidly superseded by the much more dignified effigy reclining on its elbow, and I have only seen a few examples, two from the same hand, other than the Culford monument. But if Stanton were old-fashioned in this matter, he is thoroughly alive and original in the group above, and in his use of Ionic columns and broken voluted pediments prophesies of details which we shall meet with time and again in the work of his family.

There can be no doubt that the monument erected in 1648 to Sir Henry Audley at St. Michael, Berechurch,

<sup>1</sup> I am informed that when this monument was moved to its present position, a deputation of Baconians attended in the expectation of finding the MSS. of Shakespeare's works

hidden in the pedestal. In its present position the work is hard to photograph, and the illustration here given is from a good watercolour drawing in the British Museum.

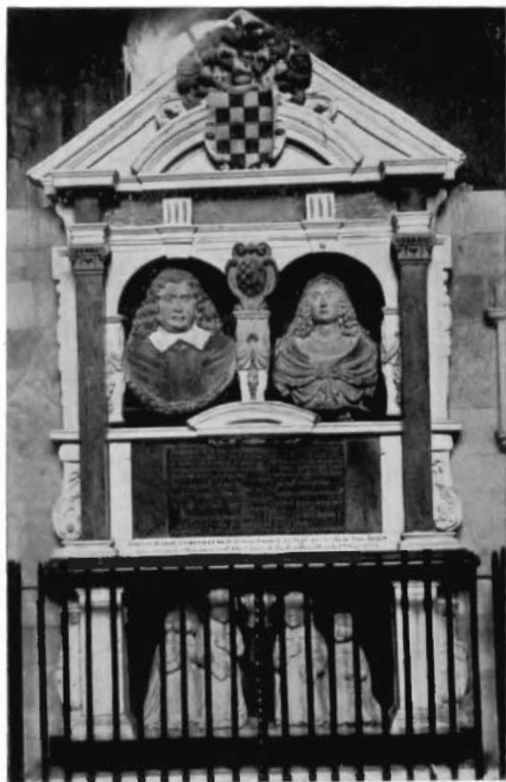


MONUMENT OF DAME JANE BACON AND HER FIRST HUSBAND,  
SIR WILLIAM CORNWALLIS  
BY THOMAS STANTON. CULFORD, SUFFOLK



A. MONUMENT OF FRANCIS BACON  
PROBABLY BY THOMAS STANTON. GORHAMBURY





B. THE ST. BARBE MONUMENT  
PROBABLY BY THOMAS STANTON, ROMSEY

Essex, is also the work of Stanton: lettering and effigies alike suggest it; the volutes and swags at the sides recur on the Combe monument; and there is an effort at his favourite frontal position in the figure of the child holding a skull upon the base. Now a large and homogeneous group of earlier monuments of similar character, all in Essex, those of the Smiths at Theydon Mount, the Everards at Great Waltham, the Hicks at Leyton, the Drurys at Maplestead, the Holfords at West Thurrock and the Dennys at Walthamstow all appear to emanate from one studio, and the last-named is known from the agreement to be the work of Bartholomew Atye and Isaac James, the latter the master of Nicholas Stone.<sup>1</sup> Is it not possible therefore that Thomas Stanton was trained under one or other of these masters, and that, though as late as 1655, the effigy of Sir William Cornwallis was a recurrence to that early training?<sup>2</sup>

The style of the Combe monument suggests that Stanton also executed the St. Barbe monument at Romsey (1655) (fig. 3), with its frontal busts and children, a posse of boys to compare with the group of girls at Culford; that at Berkhamstead of 'two sweet and loving brothers' died in 1657, half-figures holding hands as on the Stratford monument; and possibly also an earlier and most interesting work, the monument to Sir Edward Stanley (d. 1638) at Chelsea church, where the children suggest the Culford tomb, and the very singular urn is identical with that at St. Michael, Berechurch, which we have seen reason to attribute to him on other grounds.

Thomas was Master of the Masons' Company in 1660, and one may surmise that he soon afterwards ceased to take much active share in the business, since as early as 1665 we find his nephew's name on monuments; nor did the family apparently keep a record of his works, since none is given in the list supplied to Le Neve by his great-nephew Edward.

*William Stanton*, born on April 6th, 1639, was almost certainly his uncle's apprentice and assistant, as he was his successor both in the business and as Master of his Company. He was five and twenty when he applied for a marriage licence in 1666; his wife Dorothy was about a year younger

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, June 16, 1928.

<sup>2</sup> All the monuments alluded to are illustrated in Chancellor's *Essex*.

than himself; and the terms of his will show much reliance on her affection and discretion.

He was one of the company who, as Ashmole's Diary records, met 'at the Halfe Moone Taverne in Cheapside' on March 11th, 1682, 'at a Noble dinner prepared at the charge of the New-accepted Masons,' of which Company he was Master in 1688 and 1689; took the oath of allegiance to William III as sole monarch early in 1696;<sup>1</sup> in 1701 was among the members of the Company who are recorded to have polled;<sup>2</sup> and on June 15, 1702, had the pleasure of seeing his two sons admitted to the Freedom of his Company. I am permitted to quote the following entries from the Company's Court Book, which is unfortunately too late to contain the entries of the admission either of Thomas senior or of William:

'15th Junii, 1702.

'This day Thomas Stanton son of William Stanton Citizen and Mason and one of his Assistants was admitted gratis into the freedome of this company by patrimony pursuant to a former order of this Court and was sworn accordingly.

'The same day Edward Stanton another sonne and late apprentice of William Stanton by Indentures, dated the nynteenth of June 1694, was likewise admitted gratis into the freedome of this Company in p'suance of the aforesaid order.'

which order must have been recorded in another volume no longer in possession of the Company.

On July 23rd, 1703, he made the will I have referred to:

'I William Stanton, Citizen and Mason of London appoint my loving wife Dorothy Stanton to be my sole executrix and I tye and oblige her to pay unto my son Thomas Stanton £400 with the interest according to a Bond gave for the same upon Marriage of Mary Platt and I also give my said loving wife all my goods, etc., my party ground in Lam Alley<sup>3</sup> and all my personal estate. By reason that I have already gave my son Thomas Stanton his portion larger than my present circumstances can allow I order two thirds of what I give unto my loving wife if she dye without will unto my son Edward Stanton but if my loving wife be sensible and make a will then it to be at her disposall as she pleases to my two sons. I also give unto my two sons and their two wives £—a piece to buy them mourning.—July 23rd, 1703. Witnesses, John Sumners.

Samuel Davy.

Robert Swift.'

<sup>1</sup> MS. lists of members of the City Companies who took the oath on Mary's death.

<sup>2</sup> MS. lists of members of the Companies who polled in 1701. For both these

references I have to thank Mr. Myddelton. The records are in the Guildhall.

<sup>3</sup> Evidently Lamb Alley no. 9, 'off St. Giles's Broadway,' in Dodsley's *London* 1761, vol. 3, p. 286.

The will was proved on June 2nd, 1705, three days after Stanton's death; within two years his wife Dorothy, the 'prudent, tender wife and mother' of the epitaph, had followed him to the grave; and Edward Stanton, owing, as we shall see, to his brother's going abroad, was left the responsible head of the business.

So far as I can ascertain, William Stanton is the only English sculptor of the seventeenth century any of whose letters are extant, and it is characteristic of the general lack of interest in English sculpture that, vigorous and instructive as they are, they should have been omitted from the two volumes of selections from the Hatton correspondence, published by Sir Edward Maunde Thompson for the Camden Society in 1878. Stanton's spelling is as weak as his style is the reverse, but his own work is so essentially scholarly, the lettering on his monuments so refined, that he cannot have been unlettered. The inscriptions on the fine mural monuments to the wives of Sir Samuel Morland in Westminster Abbey, indeed, could not have been the work of an uneducated man, inasmuch as they are cut in five languages, English, Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Ethiopic; the text of the two last I am wholly incompetent to check.

The first letter, dated 'London, June y<sup>e</sup> 17, 84,' is addressed: 'For the L<sup>d</sup> Hatton at Kirby present. To be left w<sup>th</sup> y<sup>e</sup> Poust Master at Stamford in Lincolnshire,' the monument in question being, as subsequently appears, to Lord Hatton's mother and first wife; in the end two, not one, were erected at Gretton.

Londo<sup>n</sup>, June y<sup>e</sup> 17, 84.

My Lord,

I have here sent y<sup>our</sup> Lordship y<sup>e</sup> Drauft with y<sup>e</sup> Inscription alter'd by S<sup>r</sup> William Duddale with his approbation by y<sup>e</sup> Drauft which hee likes very well if your Lordshipe pleas to have it done it shall be gon about with all expedition as posabell I have sarved [=saved] a good Ston Redy for it, if large it will be 40<sup>li</sup> not under to doe it well. If your Lordshipe pleases, I shall be in expectation of y<sup>our</sup> Lord Ships Comand with y<sup>e</sup> Return of y<sup>e</sup> Drauft and Inscription.

I rest,

Your Lordships Moust

Humbl<sup>e</sup> Servant to Comand,

W<sup>m</sup>. Stanton.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> B.M. Add. MSS. 29,560, 275.

At this stage, clearly, only one monument was contemplated; the next letter will show that two were now decided on. But before we go on to it, we must notice the employment of Sir William Dugdale to check not the arms only but the inscription itself. As in a letter from Lord Huntingdon to 'Mr. Cromp at the Heralds' Office' in 1698 mention is made of Cromp's checking not the arms only but the inscription of a proposed monument by Grinling Gibbons, it was clearly a normal part of a Herald's duty.

It is a month before the sculptor can answer his patron, and his second letter, addressed 'For the Right Honorable my Lord Viscount Hatton at Kirby,' is dated

'London, July 17, 84.

'My Lord,

'I recd yours in it your L<sup>d</sup> desiers y<sup>e</sup> least period for two Mon'ents to be wrought by y<sup>e</sup> papers your Lord Shipe recd from me without y<sup>e</sup> Armes one [= on] y<sup>e</sup> Tope with y<sup>e</sup> Supporters for to do it well as I know you would have y<sup>m</sup> down without many words they will coust your L<sup>d</sup> Shipe sixty pound both of y<sup>m</sup> and they shall be well worth it, and if your Lord Shipe thinke it to much when they be down you shall pay me less. If your Lord Ship please to have y<sup>m</sup> down (I) Intreat your L<sup>d</sup> Ship to send y<sup>e</sup> Draught with your order and it shall be down as soon as may be and as cheap as If you had burded all y<sup>e</sup> Town over. I rest your L Ships

Moust Humbl serv : to Command  
Wm. Stanton.

The word 'burded' or 'birded' is not to be found with this exact meaning in the O.E.D. but the late Mr. J. G. Gilson was good enough to verify the reading, and it is obviously equivalent to our 'hunted all the town over,' which, after all, is only another sporting metaphor.<sup>1</sup>

The next note, which is without a cover and dated 'Londo<sup>n</sup> Au y<sup>e</sup> 20th, 84,' is very brief:

'My Lord,

'I recd your Lord Ships leter—accordingly this is y<sup>e</sup> lenth and bredth of y<sup>e</sup> place for y<sup>e</sup> Inscription y<sup>t</sup> is two foot three inches brod and three foot hight beside y<sup>e</sup> Drapery. If your Lord Ship pleases to send y<sup>e</sup> Armes I am Redy for yt.

I rest your L<sup>d</sup> Ships Most

Humbl Servant to comand,

Wm. Stanton.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> B.M. Add. MSS. 29,560, 316.

<sup>2</sup> B.M. Add. MSS. 29,560, 347.

The last of the series dated 'Londo' Sept 1th, 84,' is sealed with black wax instead of red, the seal, the word Stanton in monogram, as Mr. Eric Millar tells me, being the same as before: the sculptor was therefore in mourning at the time.

' My Lord,

' I recd y<sup>e</sup> Inscription for your Lady and Lady Mother y<sup>e</sup> Ston is not as yett Ready for to put y<sup>e</sup> Inscription but y<sup>e</sup> other is all down Ready therefor I Intreatt your L<sup>d</sup> Shipp to send me y<sup>t</sup> with whatt speed you can y<sup>t</sup> this may be Ingraved as soon as y<sup>e</sup> Stone is Ready for it, about five or six weeks hence your Lordship shall have both y<sup>e</sup> Monments att Kirby If your Lord Shipe will be pleased to send y<sup>e</sup> Inscription y<sup>e</sup> next Return of y<sup>e</sup> waggon your Ld Ship have mad [made] one or two lines Six or Seaven Leters to long and on [=one] line to much for y<sup>e</sup> table; I rest your L<sup>d</sup> Ships,

Moust Humble servant to com'and,

Wm. Stanton.'<sup>1</sup>

The address is: 'For the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Lord Hatton at Kirby in North Hamptonshire, Urgent.'

The Ladies Hatton, whom these mural monuments commemorate, were killed by one of the most extraordinary accidents in history. In December, 1672, Lord Hatton, as Governor of Guernsey, was residing at Cornet Castle when during a terrific thunderstorm the powder magazine was struck by lightning and a large part of the building wrecked. The dowager Lady Hatton was killed by the fall of her ceiling; the younger Lady Hatton by the fall of another on her way to the nursery; and in the nursery was found the dead body of the nurse, struck to the ground with one child on her arm, her other hand resting on the cradle containing another: she had died in the act of trying to save the children, both of whom, amazing to say, were alive, though the baby's cradle was deep in rubbish, and the elder child's toy, a silver cup still clasped in its hand, was completely flattened out of shape. The heroic nurse, Catherine Willis, was buried at St. Peter Port; the ladies' bodies were transferred to Westminster Abbey, and their monuments, as we have seen, erected at Gretton. The inscriptions on these twin curtain tablets, with their coronets and heraldic devices, refer to the *clades horribilis* of the disaster; but the works are unhappily unworthy of the sculptor.

<sup>1</sup> B.M. Add. MSS. 29,560, 343.

It is hard to give an adequate account of William's very various work. The earliest signed monument which I have seen is a collective one at Bengoe (1665), and such mural tablets form the bulk of his work, signed or unsigned. Good examples are the later Sir John Brownlowe at Belton and the Abigail Newton at Heydour, strongly suggestive of the monument of Provost Allestree at Eton; but he also executed busts of the Dormer family at Quainton<sup>1</sup> and a singular monument at Hurst, near Reading, to a loyal Cavalier, Sir Richard Harrison, and his family after, 1683,<sup>2</sup> described by Lysons as 'executed with much spirit in white marble by Stanton. Sir Richard is represented in armour, kneeling on one knee, his lady reclines, with one arm on a stool, and in the other holds a broken cord.' Lysons ignores the scheme, a variation on the kneeling figures of Jacobean days, long out of fashion, and the rather grotesque figure of the son; the execution indeed is greatly inferior to the design, and as both the lady and the son, *minus* the prayer desk, are repeated in the tomb of Sir Samuel Jones at Courteenhall, we may safely ascribe that work to Stanton also, and to the same assistant, a far less accomplished artist than his master, who certainly carved the exquisite figures of the young Noels at Exton (Pl. iii). There is something of John Bushnell in the sweeping lines of the drapery and the elaborate greaves upon the legs of the dead youth; but you can see the boy under the periwig, and the finely chiselled features and the tenderly carved babies are Stanton's own, and to him, I suspect, may also be attributed the dismembered monument of the Atkins children at St. Paul's, Clapham, which, as old prints show, stood under an arch of the same type as the tombs at Hurst and Courteenhall.

In 1699 William signed an agreement, printed in Whitaker's *History of Whalley*, to erect three altar tombs for the sum of £253 to members of the Sherburne family at Mitton, Yorks. (Pl. iv), two having a single figure, one with two, and these works are probably his greatest title to fame. They are absolutely simple and deeply impressive; that they are said to be the latest cross-legged

<sup>1</sup> They are so like those on the Wiseman monument at Great Canfield, a photograph of which I owe to the kindness of the

Rector, that we may safely attribute that to him also.

<sup>2</sup> *Magna Britannia, Berks*, p. 30.



MONUMENT OF THE HON. JAMES NOEL AND HIS BROTHERS  
BY WILLIAM STANTON. EXTON





MONUMENTS OF RICHARD SHERBURNE (D 1690) AND OF  
RICHARD AND ISABEL SHERBURNE (HE. D. 1693)  
BY WILLIAM STANTON. MITTON, YORKS



MONUMENT OF THOMAS, LORD COVENTRY  
BY WILLIAM STANTON. ELMLEY CASTLE





B. MONUMENT OF LADY HENRIETTA WENTWORTH  
TODDINGTON, BEDS.  
BY WILLIAM STANTON

effigies in England may be due to the fact that the Sherburnes were an old Catholic family and desired to retain the devout attitude of the past. They are most difficult to photograph, but Mr. Hindle Higson's fine prints give some idea of their dignity. A general view of all three forms the frontispiece to *English Monumental Sculpture*.<sup>1</sup>

Stanton, like Nicholas Stone, must have had a large establishment, since like him he was prepared to undertake the duties of a mason on a large scale. In the 1680's he was employed by Sir Christopher Wren to build Belton House, the details of which, together with the very large sum—£4,921 6s. 6d.—paid him, are given in Lady Sybil Cust's *Records of the Cust Family*. So many works obviously by him are to be found in the neighbourhood that I wrote to the late Sir Lionel Cust to enquire whether any unprinted records of them were in existence; he was good enough to look up Lady Sybil's papers, and discovered that the monuments of 'Old Sir John' at Belton (d. 1679), and of Elizabeth, Lady Brownlow, at Old Somerby were both by Stanton, to whom we had already attributed them, and that he received £166 17s. for one, £100 for the other. The very fine mural monument to the later Sir John (d. 1697) has already been mentioned, but this earlier Sir John, with its admirably worked-out scheme of two half-figures holding hands above a delicately draped base is most interesting as a recurrence to the scheme of the Combe monument (*English Monumental Sculpture*, Pl. iv), though the stately architectural background is of the new age. So similar is the lovely Cooke monument at Tardebigge that we may assign that work to William also.

His latest certain work, the very impressive monument of Lord Coventry (d. 1699) at Elmley Castle (Pl. v), bears a singular inscription: 'This tomb was carved to the church of Croome d'Abitot, there to be erected: but the Earl of Coventry, son to the right honourable the deceased, denying it to be set up, the Countess Dowager, at whose charge it was made, being then wife to Thomas Savage, Esquire, it was by his order brought to this place, Anno Domini 1700.' The architectural quality of this work is as

<sup>1</sup> One is reproduced by permission from the *Burlington Magazine*, which (Oct. 1928) contains an account of the identification of

one of the terra-cotta models for these figures.

high as the portrait is excellent; the earthly coronet is laid aside for a vision of heaven; but the most remarkable features of the work are the noble angel figures at the sides, whose serious abstract beauty, and the sweep of their great gilded wings, is unlike any English work of the period known to me.<sup>1</sup>

The contribution made by Le Neve to our knowledge of William's work is disappointing, since many of his signed works, and more, presumably, of his unsigned, are not recorded. Edward Stanton, who sent in the Stanton MS., may not have had full notes of all his father's works, since he left blank the places where many even of his own monuments were erected; but the omission may in part be due to Le Neve's method of signing the inscriptions he chronicles with the name of his first informant. An example may make this clearer. One of the five sculptors who supplied him with lists of their works was Francis Bird, described in the press at his death as 'the most famous Statuary that this Nation ever had'<sup>2</sup>; but Bird's most famous monuments, those of Drs. South and Busby in Westminster Abbey, are not quoted by Le Neve from the Bird MS. but under the names of the antiquaries who sent him their inscriptions. By reading the entire text of Le Neve for the period therefore one might well find some or most of the dozen signed and unsigned works which we knew before I discovered Le Neve's lists, but for this, frankly, I have not had time.

The most interesting of Le Neve's contributions to William's work—contributions, that is, to my own imperfect list—are the tomb of Edward Waller at Beaconsfield, an obelisk bearing coats of arms set upon a beautifully draped base, with admirably proportioned flaming urns at the four corners, and that of Thomas, Lord Rivers, at

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written, I have seen, thanks to my friend Miss Philip Morgan, the Lucy monument at Brecon, which is not only mentioned in Le Neve's list, but gives us one of the best standing figures of the age, as well as the recumbent effigies of the parents which, unlike the standing figure of the son, are executed in alabaster and infinitely less effective owing to the deeply coloured red veins which ruin the outline in a photograph. The work nevertheless is among Stanton's best (Pl. vi, A). Another

interesting work is the fine mural monument to Lady Henrietta Wentworth at Toddington, Beds (Pl. vi, B); the central vase, with its lovely flower wreaths, now lies beside it with a broken foot, and the head of one angel and the pipe of the other are also missing, but the proportions and such details as the mouldings are exquisite. The theory that it is a work of Bushnell's is as apocryphal as its supposed cost, £2,000 (*Gent's Mag.* 1818).

<sup>2</sup> *Weekly Register*, Mar. 6, 1731.



MONUMENT OF RICHARD SHERBURNE  
BY EDWARD STANTON. MITTON



MONUMENT OF GENERAL LUKE LILLINGSTON AND HIS WIFE  
BY EDWARD STANTON, NORTH FERRIBY



Macclesfield, a work which, as Le Neve's MS. notes, was 'erected in y<sup>e</sup> Moneth of September, 1696' and which even Earwaker, the Victorian historian of Cheshire, who does not name the sculptor, praises highly. The periwigged effigy, a vivid portrait as usual, reclines under a canopy with looped-back curtains, a device also found at Ravenstone, Bucks, and at Great Stanmore, but somewhat suggestive of a four-poster bed; I cannot therefore rank it with the Dormer, Brownlow and Sherburne monuments, or—in its own kind—with the Coventry tomb, with its glorious architectural setting. William's work may be seen in places so far removed as Monk Wearmouth in Durham, Bruton in Somersetshire, where his bust of the founder of the Saxey hospital is far from being his best work, and Belton in Lincolnshire; the fact is eloquent of his forgotten reputation, and whether he is executing cherubs or flower garlands, angels or urns, men or women, his gifts of style and proportion are very noble. And he hardly ever classicizes. Only one figure, that of Henry Atkins, and the greaves of young James Noel, suggest the pseudo-Roman of Cibber, Bushnell and Grinling Gibbons; Hogarth's perception of the English taste for resolute portrait art has rarely been better justified.

Vertue's silence about the work of William and Edward Stanton is hard to account for. True, his tours did not happen to include the churches in which their best works are seen; but as he knew of them, one would have expected something more than the brief note I have quoted, in which he did not even trouble to fill in the Christian name of the living Stanton, whose home was not a mile from his own. Where sculpture is concerned it was the new men, like Rysbrack and Scheemaker, or the eccentrics like Bushnell, as to whom odd stories were current, that really interested him, and we must remember that the bulk of his notes were made when Edward Stanton's original work had almost ceased, and he and Horsnaile were the heads of what had become a mason's rather than a sculptor's business.

We have met *Edward Stanton*, just out of his time and admitted to the freedom of his Company in June, 1702. He was apprenticed to his father therefore in 1694, and was presumably born in 1680 or 1681; he was married to

Sarah Fulkes, two years his senior, in 1703; lost several children, and his wife, between 1706 and 1717; in 1719, when he became Master of his Company, was a Captain in the Train Bands; and in 1723 subscribed to Dart, his coat of arms appearing along with those of other subscribers when the book, after long delay, was published. That he was a courteous man who took a profound interest in his art may be inferred from the portentous list of works with which he supplied Le Neve; and I fear we must add that he was not always business-like, since he frequently forgot where the very monuments he was noting were erected, though we have in many cases been able to fill in the blanks. Before 1721, when their joint names begin to appear on monuments, he had entered into partnership with Christopher Horsnaile, the mason later responsible for much of the structure of the Mansion House; but I only know half a dozen works with the double signature, none of them of the portrait type; the best is that of Bishop Fleetwood at Ely (d. 1723) the latest that of Sir Richard Sherard at North Witham (d. 1730).<sup>1</sup> The big commissions in fact were now going to the new men, Rysbrack and Scheemaker; the divorce between the sculptor and the mason—originally a member of the Masons' Company—was beginning; and the old tradition of the union of both professions in one person was becoming out of date.

But in the ten years after his father's death in 1705 Edward was producing one of the most amazing series of works which ever emanated from an English studio in so short a time; and so marked is his style that in the enormous list of his works, over 140 in number if we exclude his father's, supplied by him to Le Neve, every monument which we had conjecturally attributed to him has turned out to be his. This is much less surprising than it sounds, since where there are signed works of marked style and peculiar lettering to go on, it is perfectly easy, once these

<sup>1</sup> Since this paper was written, I have seen several fresh works by Edward Stanton, the most notable perhaps the Buckeridge tomb at West Ham, with its delightful childish busts. That of Meriel Williams at Mafod is a perfect instance of the smaller mural monument, and though it is unsigned, we could assign it to its author even without Le Neve's authority. That of Robert

Wynne of Gaithurn at Llanfair Talhaiarn. Flint, appears from the drawing made for me by my friend Mr. James Darlington to be an equally fine example of such a monument upon a larger scale, but short of enumerating the whole series, it is impossible to do justice either to William or to Edward Stanton.



BUST OF EDWARD TYSON  
BY EDWARD STANTON. ALL HALLOWS, LOMBARD STREET



MONUMENT OF SIR FRANCIS RUSSELL  
BY EDWARD STANTON. STRENSHAM



A. MONUMENT OF SIR WILLIAM LYTTON  
BY EDWARD STANTON. KNEBWORTH



B. MONUMENT OF SIR WILLIAM LYTTON  
(DETAIL)



MONUMENT OF SIR GEORGE STRODE  
BY EDWARD STANTON, KNEBWORTH

are mastered, to be sure about unsigned works. Every studio had its own style, its own type of lettering, and it is only a matter of practice to distinguish them. Still I feel ashamed to lay my results before the Institute, since there are nearly 90 monuments<sup>1</sup> on his list which I have not yet had any opportunity of visiting; and I can only apologise for presenting what is bound to be an imperfect account of his work. What I do know varies from the modest tablet such as that of Sir Roger l'Estrange in St. Giles's-in-the-Fields to the colossal monument with several figures; and few are more attractive than that to the last of the Sherburnes at Mitton, a child who died at the age of eight and is shown starting back from the skull and crossbones at his feet (Pl. vii), while child angels weep his fate and cherubs welcome him above; the noble Esmond-like figures of General Luke Lillingstone and his wife at North Ferriby (Pl. viii), Yorkshire, with their close parallels on the Bent monument at Amersham; the stately bust of Edward Tyson in All Hallows', Lombard Street (Pl. ix); the Sir Francis Russell at Strensham, with the kneeling wife pointing her husband, whose eyes are for her only, to the angels bearing the heavenly crown above him (Pl. x); and the astonishing tombs of the Strodes and Lyttons at Knebworth (Pls. xi, xii), which produced from a casual traveller of 1790 the paean to Sylvanus Urban which I have already referred to. Look at the character in the faces, the quality of the carving; and even if the angels hold lesser principedoms than his father's at Elmley Castle, they are still gracious and noble of form and face. And the sculptor was barely four and twenty when he received the commission. One monument, too late for Le Neve's lists because erected in 1719, cannot be omitted from this brief survey, that to the Bayntun family in St. Mary-le-Bow, with its noble half-figures of husband and wife holding hands under a canopy, with reliefs of flowers to right and left of the inscription. It is interesting to see this early seventeenth century scheme recurring in the reign of George I; and if the portraits are suggestive of the father's Brownlowe monument, the architectural setting shows the influence of Francis Bird without destroying the Stantonesque character of the whole.

<sup>1</sup> In my lecture I said 'nearly 100,' but since it was delivered I have seen ten more of his works in Northamptonshire alone.



Edward Stanton married again after his first wife's death, since that of his second wife is recorded in the *St. James' Evening Post* for May 25th, 1730<sup>1</sup>; he was working after that date, and as we have seen, Vertue speaks of him as alive in 1737. But though we know nothing of his last years, we have still to deal with the history of his brother the younger Thomas, who, as we have seen, was admitted to the freedom of his father's Company on the same day as Edward, and was obviously trained for the family profession. Why he did not follow it was a mystery which I confess I had not hoped to solve; but Mr. Myddelton's note on 'Stanton v. Platt' seemed worth following up, and among the Chancery suits of Michaelmas term, 1717, I found the explanation.

Thomas, as we have seen, married Mary Platt early in 1703, when his father gave him a bond for £400 and apparently a somewhat extravagant settlement besides (cf. his will, p. 156). In the year 1717 the Stantons brought a suit against Mary's trustee, Mr. Platt, a member of her father's family, in order to decide whether the real estate settled on her at her marriage by her father, whose sole heir she was, were to be counted as part of her father's estate or not. In 1683, in the case of *Civil v. Rich*, the customs of the City of London touching orphans had been stated in the same court: where an heir or co-heir had a real estate settled on him by the father and married with the father's consent, such child was debarred from claiming any benefit of the orphanage part of the estate unless a late writing under the father's hand and seal should declare that such a settlement is not to be brought into hotch-potch, i.e. to count among the securities available for equal distribution among the heirs. Mary Platt's settlement consisted of leasehold houses, settled on her for life under a trustee of her own family with remainder to her only son, Thomas Stanton junior. Husband and wife, we are told, had separated soon after marriage, and he had gone beyond sea, and the case was given in her favour. One must presume that her husband ultimately returned to London, perhaps after the death, since, though he clearly took no part in the family business, since Edward chose a partner

<sup>1</sup> Last Monday died at Hampstead, the wife of Mr. Stanton, a great stone-cutter by St. Andrew's Church, Holbourn.

from outside. Thomas Stanton, as the records of the Company show, was a member of the Court of Livery in 1731. He may therefore have taken up a nominal share in the business, by then almost wholly that of a mason, on his return from abroad.

But if the Stantons have been forgotten, the influence of their work remains. Among the monumental tablets selected for the inspiration of our war memorials in 1916 are four by William Stanton, namely, a tablet of 1690 in St. Mary Abchurch; one to William Paggen (1690) in St. Dunstan's in the East; one to Sir Richard and Lady Newdigate at Harefield, and one to Margarita Laurentia (1692) in Austin Friars; there is also one by Edward to David Bosanquet (1732) in St. Stephen's, Coleman Street; and as my son points out to me, the tablet to the engraver Wenceslas Hollar recently erected in the Crypt of St. Paul's is wholly Stantonesque, both in scheme and in detail. Truly their work lives after them and now, we may hope, their name too will abide. If there are still many gaps in their history, we must remember that what we do know almost amount to biography when we consider what we do not know of other Masters of the Masons' Company. Of the 193 sculptors who held that office—recognised heads, that is, of their profession—in the 200 years between the incorporation of the Company in 1620 and 1820, after which the professional character of the Masons rapidly disappeared, we know works by 34 alone, and some of those by whom we only know one inferior work, such as Abraham Storey, who was three times Master, in 1680, 1684 and 1685, must have been men of high distinction. Of the 34 of whose work we do know something, Nicholas Stone is world-famous; Joshua Marshall, author of many important monuments, is, thanks to his pedestal of Charles I's statue, tolerably familiar; and his father Edward, Wm. Woodman, Richard Crutcher and the Kidwells are alluded to in *English Monumental Sculpture*. Of the rest, the majority are known to us by one work only, although that work, as in the case of Thomas Stainer's monument to Dr. Christopher Turnor, President of Corpus, at Stow-nine-Churches and Crutcher's to Sir Robert Clayton at Bletchingley, are masterpieces of composition and expression. Yet we know no other work by either sculptor,

and nothing of their careers save the fact that they were Masters of their Company in 1709 and 1713 respectively. If we are still so ignorant of the acknowledged heads of the profession, our ignorance of their unbeneficed contemporaries may be imagined. It is useless to look for information in the Dictionaries, and it is usually only because I have happened to note their signatures that I can say anything about most even of these thirty-four. If we want another proof of how much remains to be done, we may note the fact which I have already referred to, that Le Neve asked for lists of their works from five contemporary sculptors, whom he clearly regarded as important, Stanton, Bird, Thomas Green, William Palmer and James Hardy; of the last named I previously knew nothing whatsoever except that he was Master of the Masons' Company in 1711; but as Le Neve gives ten of his works, he is now positively in the limelight compared with most of his fellow Masters.

The moral is obvious: we must aim at getting notes on all the sculptors' signatures to be found in English churches;<sup>1</sup> and once it is realised that a signed monument is as much a document as a signed picture, notes of signatures should be collected, preferably by the local archaeological societies, so that a corpus of signed monuments may gradually be formed. If this is done, we shall discover that what Horace Walpole said of the works of Gothic artists is equally true of that of their seventeenth and eighteenth century successors, 'that the persons who executed them had much more knowledge of their art, more taste, more genius, and more propriety, than we choose to imagine.'<sup>2</sup>

The subject of Le Neve's *Monumenta Anglicana* was epitaphs, pure and simple, and it is only the fortunate fact that he gives his authorities with such scrupulous care that has given us these new particulars about the work of the Stanton family, these confirmations of mere attributions, which I have laid before you to-night. Among the authorities so acknowledged is Mr. Le Neve, junior; we can only infer that his son visited churches and made notes to help him with his work, nor is the fact irrelevant, since

<sup>1</sup> And, one may add, on public buildings; thus the bust of Hugh Saxey on the Saxey Hospital at Bruton is signed by William Stanton.

<sup>2</sup> *Anecdotes of Painting*: State of Architecture to the end of Henry viii.

many of the monuments mentioned in this paper have been noted, drawn and photographed for me during the past four years by one to whom I may refer to, *Le Neve* fashion, as *Mr. Esdaile Junior*. Some of these I have myself not seen, and if I venture to lay his conclusions with my own, before the Institute, it is because, wherever he had noted an unsigned work which he has seen and I have not, and that work is mentioned by *Le Neve*, his attribution has been justified, as it was by *Sir Lionel Cust's* discovery in the case of the *Brownlowe* monuments at *Belton* and *Old Somerby*. I cannot therefore take to myself the whole credit of what I have here written, and I must also acknowledge our debt to the clergy—almost always strangers—whose kindness has been great; one can only hope that a time may come when an interest in our later monuments may no longer excite surprise even in vergers.

NOTE.—Since I first corrected these proofs, other works have turned up, four of which cannot be omitted. *Thomas Stanton's* noble half-figures of *Sir William* and *Lady Hewyt* (d. 1637, 1646) at *Sawbridgeworth*, in an oval under an oddly Gothic pediment, are of the first order; but of the eight new *William Stantons* three only can be recorded. The earliest is the huge and finely proportioned architectural monument of *Sir William Ellys* (d. 1680) at *Nocton*; the next that of *George, Lord Hewyt* (d. 1689), also at *Sawbridgeworth*, with a standing figure in armour against an architectural background flanked by military trophies; the third the delightful *Saunders* monument at *Flamstead* (undated, but about 1690), with its five kneeling figures of children upon an altar tomb, a sixth, the '*Anna parvula*' of the pathetic epitaph, who erected the monument, kneeling below. This lovely work, unnoticed in the *A.M.C.* volume on *Hertfordshire*, cost £1,500 according to *Chauncy*, and is one of the most interesting of its date in England.