

EFFIGIES IN ENGLISH CHURCHES ATTRIBUTED
TO BERNINI.¹

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Art critics frequently tell us that the gulf between the intellectual outlook and the realised achievements of Michael Angelo and Bernini is immeasurable; yet they remind us that Michael Angelo let loose a flood of exaggerated expression and that Bernini's affected fluttering mannerism was the legitimate outcome of the 'Light and Morning' and the 'Last Judgment.'² The divergence, however, sprang largely from other causes. It was a period of reaction, upheaval, and ferment; changes were taking place in the distribution of power throughout Europe; the outlook of Catholicism, the chief mental force of the time, was very different from what it had been. The Society of Jesus had been recognised, the basis of intellectual thought and activity was unsettled, and other complex movements combined to force the arts and sciences into untrodden ways. Even sculpture, which is one of the arts least responsive to external influence, was affected. Bernini came into a world swept by a political and religious hurricane. The Jesuits seeing that a new form of ecclesiastical art was required, decided to replace the simplicity and purity of the Quattrocento Tuscans by a religious art which should appeal to the average man of their day. The calm and reposeful dream of an earlier school was forced to give place to vigorous movement, with drapery fluttering in imaginary gusts of wind. Michael Angelo's groups might, indeed, be full of action, but they were in repose; the new era required that sculpture should express not only action but movement, and Bernini was at hand to impress his undoubted genius upon this new development.

¹ Read before the Institute, 1st April, 1914.

² See W. G. Waters, *Italian Sculpture*, 22.

Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini was born in Naples in 1598, and some have declared that the extravagance in his temperament was due to his southern origin. He early devoted himself to sculpture, and in his eighteenth year finished his admired group of Apollo and Daphne, which gave promise of greater excellence than was afterwards realised by the artist. His career extended through no less than nine pontificates. His greatest achievement in architecture is the colossal colonnade of St. Peter's at Rome, begun in 1667 under pope Alexander VII. In 1663 he accepted the invitation of Louis XIV and resided in Paris for eighteen months. His visit proved highly remunerative and, laden with gifts, he returned to Rome, where he died in 1680, leaving a fortune of £100,000 to his children. He possessed a rapid hand and a sure eye, and his statues exhibited such delicate finish that the work of the file was never apparent. His earliest statues were his best, and they show a wonderful balance and fine proportion, as well as a very real sense of the beautiful. His technical skill was marvellous, he possessed a perfect mastery of material, and few sculptors have been able to rival his wonderful dexterity. "Bernini carried plastic brilliance," says the earl of Crawford and Balcarres, "to its utmost limit. Long ago Nicola Pisano had humanised the outward form of mankind, Michael Angelo vitalised it, then the magician Bernini galvanised it; he rivets our attention by the facility with which he could render in marble what Donatello would not have dared to attempt in terracotta, while engaging the whole sphere of sculpture as a vehicle for the artistic interpretation of emotions, far beyond anything previously attempted."¹ As a portraitist Bernini took a high place. Congruity and correspondence between the various features governed by the laws of structural cohesion in physiognomy were his study, and his work always shows the personal note. There is no doubt that Bernini ought to have made more portraits, for it is in portraiture that he excelled. In this branch of study he showed not only respect for truth; but his eclecticism was curbed and kept

¹ *The Evolution of Italian Sculpture*, 325.

under control. His portrait of Francesco d'Este in the museum at Modena is superb, and those of cardinal Scipione Borghese in the Accademia at Venice and of Constanza Buonarelli in the Bargello at Florence are full of force and power : even his celebrated statue of David must be classed as a portrait-study where the master feature is the mouth. Lord Balcarres reminds us that Bernini's genius was too robust, and that he was endowed with too much common sense to fall into excess, but, none the less, he was living on the edge of a precipice at a time when portraiture became inadequate, and when sensationalism and declamation replaced more abiding moods. His portraiture, it must be remembered, represents one phase of reaction, and his appeal to nature was coloured with romanticism.¹ When he returned to realities his portraits were excellent.

Bernini never visited England, and he executed little work for Englishmen. However, he made a bust of Charles I from three portraits by Vandyck sent by the king to Rome, and Charles was so well pleased with the likeness that he sent Bernini a diamond ring from his own hand, worth 6,000 crowns.

Nicholas Stone, junior, the second son of Nicholas Stone, the celebrated English sculptor, was sent to Rome by his father in 1638 with his brother Henry. He studied under Bernini, and during his residence in Rome he kept a diary which is preserved in the British Museum.² The young sculptor says :

“Oct. 26, 1638. Arrived at Rome, I waited on Cav. Bernini at St. Peters. He favoured me so far as to show me the statue that he had under hand, in the church, and told me that for a while he should be busy there, but when he had done, and that he was at his house, I should be welcome to spend my time with other of his disciples.”

In December, 1639, he writes :

“I went to Saint Peters, and with me Cav. Bernini from the church to his home ; and I showed him some drawings that I had copied after Raphael's, with three or four of architecture of my own *capriccio*. He was very well pleased to see them, and told me that in 15 days hence he should have finished the statue then under hand, and then if I would come to him he would have practise upon some things that he had, and I should see his

¹ *The Evolution of Italian Sculpture*, 124.

² Harl. MS. 4049.

manner of working, and then worke myselfe: in the mean time, he says, I would advise you, as you have begun, to continue in drawing with chalke, being very necessary."¹

In one of the notes to his edition of Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting* Dallaway remarks that Nicholas Stone, junior, mentions in his diary having been at work on the effigy of lady Berkeley for her monument in Cranford church, and Mr. E. Beresford Chancellor says that this effigy "is supposed to have been the sculptor's earliest performance in Bernini's school."² Mr. Walter L. Spiers has most carefully read and re-read this diary and I have also examined it for many hours, and we are of opinion that Dallaway mis-read the diary. Other authors have copied his mistake and it has, therefore, become unfortunately recognised that Nicholas Stone, junior, made lady Berkeley's effigy while he was a student in Bernini's school in Rome. The diary, however, states that on the 6th November, 1638, he received from England (from whom he does not say) "3 schuchcons of arms to be inlaid in marble for the monument of my lady Berkeley." These escutcheons, it will be noted, were sent already made excepting for the inlay. This work he entrusted to a Signor Domenica, one after the other, on 25th January, 28th April, and 29th June, 1639. For the first his bargain was 22 crowns, the second 15 crowns, and the third 30 crowns, which sums were advanced by Nicholas from time to time. When finished, he shipped them to England, 17th September, 1639.

The monument to lady Berkeley in Cranford church, Middlesex (plates I and II, no. 1), is against the south wall of the sanctuary. It consists of a table-tomb³ with a white marble effigy⁴ placed on a black marble slab.⁵ The inscription is on the wall above the monument. It is supported on either side by scrolls, and a swan, the crest of the lady's family is placed in the broken pediment. The effigy portrays lady Berkeley in a shroud, and as the

¹ A volume of sketches by Nicholas Stone, junior, is preserved in the Soane museum.

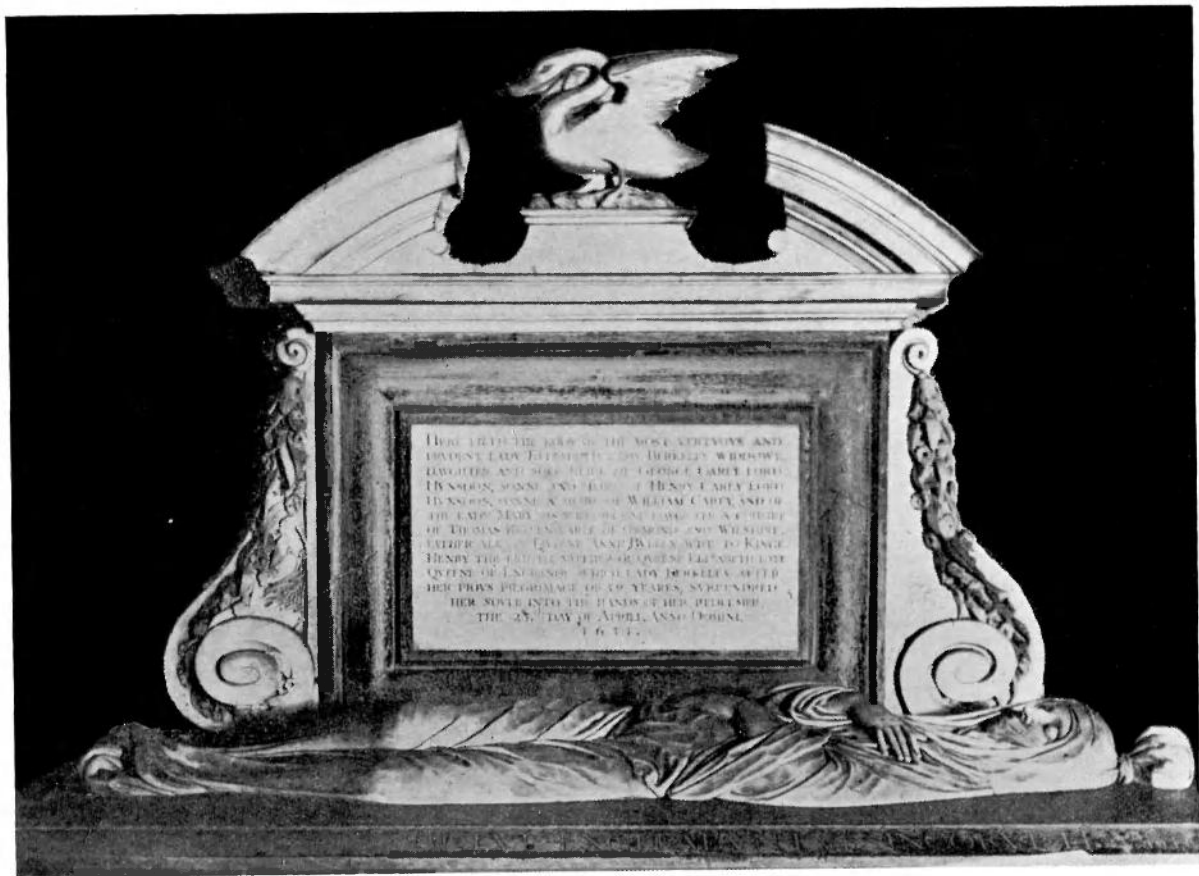
² *Lives of the British Sculptors*, 43.

³ The table-tomb (6 ft. 6¾ ins. by 2 ft. 10 ins.) has three white marble fluted pillars on the front and two at each end.

Two shields of arms are on the front and one at the western end. The monument is so near the east wall of the church that no decoration was placed on the eastern end.

⁴ Length of effigy: 5 ft. 0¼ ins.

⁵ 6 ft. 6¾ ins. by 2 ft. 10 ins.



MONUMENT TO LADY BERKELEY IN CRANFORD CHURCH, MIDDLESEX.



NO. I. EFFIGY OF LADY BERKELEY IN CRANFORD CHURCH, MIDDLESEX.



NO. 2. EFFIGY OF LADY LUCY IN CHARLECOTE CHAPEL, WARWICKSHIRE.

figure is in grave-clothes only her nose and eyes are visible.¹ The attitude is graceful and easy, and the hands are placed in a natural position on the breast. The whole piece of sculpture is most reposeful and very beautiful.

Lady Elizabeth was the sole heiress of George Carey, second lord Hunsdon. She was born in 1576, and at the age of twenty married Sir Thomas Berkeley, dying in 1635. She was the great-granddaughter of William Carey, the husband of Mary Bullen, whose sister, Anne Bullen (Boleyn), was the wife of Thomas Bullen, earl of Ormond and Wiltshire, and thus she was cousin, once removed, to queen Elizabeth. She was named Elizabeth after the queen who was her godmother. The manor and estates of Cranford passed by her marriage into the Berkeley family, and are still a portion of their possessions. Lady Elizabeth's mother was the daughter of Sir John Spencer of Althorp, and wife of Sir George Carey. Edmund Spenser, the poet, was her kinsman, and she took a deep interest in his literary labours. Nash, the satirist, eulogises both mother and daughter, and the rhyming poem called *The Tragedie of Marian, the faire Queene of Ieury*, published in 1613, was her work.

The three shields of arms² on the monument have lost a large portion of the beautiful inlay of coloured marbles made by Signor Domenica for Nicholas Stone, junior, who shipped them to England in 1639. The coat of arms of the Carey³ and Bullen⁴ families may, however, be still seen.

The effigy has an Italian feeling, and there is nothing in the monument itself to connect it with Nicholas Stone and his school, while the arrangement of surrounding the table-tomb with columns is not one that Nicholas Stone or his followers ever adopted in any of their monuments. The effigy has been attributed to Nicholas Stone, junior, through a mis-reading of his diary, and, in fact, it is not at all likely that a young student of twenty could have finished such an excellent work of art. Had he done so there is little doubt that he would have referred to it in

¹ Lysons, *Middlesex Parishes*, 25, describes the effigy as "the figure of the lady in a shroud, well executed in *alto rilievo*, in white marble."

² Each shield measures 1 ft. by 1 ft. 2 ins.

³ Argent on a bend sable three roses of the field.

⁴ Argent a chevron between three bulls' heads coupé sable.

his diary, and the shipment of it to England would have been a more important item of information than the consignment of the three shields of arms dispatched from Rome for the monument at Cranford. No documentary evidence is forthcoming to show who made this remarkable effigy of a distinguished lady who died in her sixtieth year ; but the family originally responsible for the erection of this monument still hold the tradition that the effigy was the work of Bernini.¹ Charles I commissioned Bernini to make his bust from paintings by Vandyck sent to Rome : may not a similar order have been given to the famous Italian sculptor for this effigy. Possibly the painting of lady Berkeley by Daniel Mytens was also sent to Rome to be a guide to the sculptor in his delineation of her features. This effigy possesses the feeling of Italian workmanship, and the beautiful execution of the face and hands leads one to conjecture that Bernini was alone responsible for its production, for few sculptors except Bernini could impart to marble the look and texture of skin.

One small point remains to be considered. The effigy is in two pieces and the division is at the neck. If it had been deliberately cut in the studio to facilitate the transit, then surely it would have been severed across the waist instead of just below the head. It may, however, have been cracked on its journey to Cranford.

Under the heading of Charlecote church, Warwickshire, Samuel Lewis, in his *Topographical Dictionary*, remarks that "it contains some monuments to the Lucy family of which one, of statuary marble, to the memory of Sir Thomas and Lady Lucy, is a celebrated work of art by Bernini of Rome." The monument referred to (plate III, facing p. 77) stands against the north wall in the Lucy chapel, and consists of effigies of Sir Thomas (plate IV, no. 1, facing p. 78) and lady Lucy (plate II, no. 2, facing p. 69) under a canopy supported by black marble pillars and wall brackets. In the broken pediment is a shield of arms of the Lucy and Spencer families, and skulls are placed at the corners of the canopy.

¹ Lady Berkeley's son, George, lord Berkeley, was a distinguished scholar at Oxford, a great linguist and a patron of art. It is known that he travelled a great deal in

Italy, where he most probably made the acquaintance of Bernini and commissioned him to execute his mother's monument.

In the year 1862 Mrs. Lucy prepared a history of the Lucy family which was printed and is now preserved at Charlecote. As Mrs. Lucy had access to many valuable documents we feel that her statements are of considerable weight and importance. All the matters she refers to cannot now be corroborated, as some of the documents are no longer existing. The following paragraphs relating to this monument are extracted from Mrs. Lucy's book :

“Lady Lucy sent the portraits of herself and Sir Thomas (the very portraits, I believe, which now hang in the library at Charlecote) to the celebrated Bernini, at Rome, with an order for him to execute the finest monument he could sculpture in marble of full-length figures of them both, taking their likenesses from the portraits sent. The monument cost her 1,500 guineas. It is in the Lucy chapel at Charlecote, a most beautiful work of art.”

“It represents Sir Thomas in armour, lying full length with his lady lying by him, dressed in the fashion of the day, under a canopy of white marble, supported by four black marble pillars, at the back of which the good knight is represented in basso-relievo on his favourite horse, the primary cause of his illness and death. In the centre is a long Latin inscription and elegy to his memory, and on the other side his Bible and different books he took most delight in. On the top of the monument there is a large shield with the Lucy and Spencer arms.”

Here we find a definite statement that the widow of Sir Thomas Lucy arranged with Bernini for a monument containing effigies of herself and her husband for the sum of 1,500 guineas. It is also stated that portrait-paintings of herself and Sir Thomas Lucy were sent to Rome so that Bernini might execute the likenesses with some degree of correctness. Without documentary evidence we are at a loss to know what exactly took place. Nicholas Stone once made a bargain for a tomb with the famous Lucy Harrington, wife of Edward earl of Bedford, for the sum of £1,020, and although he entered it in his notebook, yet for some reason it was never carried out. It is possible that Mrs. Lucy may have seen the copy of the order sent to Bernini, and not have seen the documents which showed some alteration in the original commission. The highest sum Nicholas Stone actually received for a tomb was £600 for the Spencer monument in Great Brington church, Northamptonshire.¹ Bernini's fee for the Lucy monument is much higher, but Bernini had a world-wide

¹ *Arch. Journ.* lxix, pl. xx, facing p. 267.

reputation, and, as we have already observed in the earlier part of this paper, his portraits were famous. Bernini at the date he received the order from Charlecote was about forty-two years of age. Lady Lucy knew that the great Italian sculptor made fine portraits, as she sent paintings of herself and Sir Thomas Lucy to Rome.

Nicholas Stone, junior, studied under Bernini from 1638 until 1642, when he returned to England. Sir Thomas Lucy died in December, 1640, and probably the order for the tomb for Charlecote church was sent to Rome in 1641. It is, therefore, likely that Bernini consulted his English pupil, as to whom he should entrust with the structural portions of the tomb, for it is not likely these would be made in Rome. John Schurman had been one of Nicholas Stone's students who had set up on his own account, and young Stone would probably give his name to Bernini. The monument at Charlecote is not very satisfactory in design, but it certainly has a resemblance in some of its features to the Spencer monument at Great Brington. The circular arches, the corbelled-out pediment in the middle, and the somewhat ugly panel over it, are all reminiscent of this tomb, and when we know that Schurman carved the emblazoned panel for the Spencer monument we are inclined to suspect that he may have executed the structural portion of the Lucy monument. Schurman's work would probably be a copy to a large extent of work done by his master, Nicholas Stone. The features which are more particularly at variance with Stone's work are the capitals, the bas-reliefs, and the skulls. The date of this monument is some twenty-three years later than any instance of Stone using this emblem of death. He made use of it freely in his earlier work and was fond of it, but rarely employed it after 1620. It is, therefore, not likely that the structural portions of the monument came from Nicholas Stone's workshop in Long Acre, London. The probability seems to be that it is the work of John Schurman.

In Vertue's manuscript notes preserved in the British Museum is a list of works made by John Schurman, dated 1643. This list contains the following entry :

For the statue lying on a side representing Sir Thos. Lucy of Warwickshire, white marble	£	s.	d.
Polishing and glazing	18	0	0
	2	10	0

Schurman would be well acquainted with the effigy of Sir Charles Morison, bart. in the Essex chapel in Watford parish church, made by Nicholas Stone in 1630.¹ The pose and attitude of this effigy is altogether so similar to the one of Sir Thomas Lucy that we feel convinced Schurman took it for his model, and it can scarcely be considered a coincidence that both the effigies of the ladies of Sir Charles Morison and Sir Thomas Lucy are placed on their backs at a lower level than their husband's effigies. Schurman's effigy of Sir Thomas Lucy is inferior to the one by Nicholas Stone at Watford. We do not know who gave Schurman his commission for this effigy, but we do know that the price he received was several pounds more than Nicholas Stone paid to his workmen, John Hargrave and Richard White, for the effigies of lord and lady Spencer.²

The beautiful effigy of lady Lucy³ (plate II, no. 2) is a real work of art, quite beyond the power of John Schurman, and it is impossible that he could have executed it.⁴ The lady is represented lying on her back, dressed in an embroidered gown, laced bodice with edging of lace, and cuffs with a similar border of lace. On her head is a coverchief, and the left hand holds the edge of it, while the right hand is placed on her breast. Her neck is encircled with a pearl necklace, and a heavy chain of gold links and circular and rectangular stones rests on her shoulders. The head reposes on an embroidered cushion adorned with a two-handled jar from which conventional leaves and flowers are trailing. The artist has devoted his wonderful genius to reproducing the appearance of flesh in hands and face, although the material he works upon is marble. This exquisite workmanship indicates the hand of Bernini. The treatment of the hair is quite unlike anything that Schurman or any other member of Nicholas Stone's school ever attempted. They always depicted the hair of the ladies they represented in a series of small curls, while the effigy of lady Lucy portrays the hair in long, wavy, natural tresses. Any one looking upon

¹ *Arch. Journ.* lxi, pl. xii, no. 2, facing p. 249.

² £14 and £15 respectively.

³ The length is 5 feet.

⁴ Sir Thomas Lucy married in 1610 Alice, daughter of Sir Thomas Spicer, of Claverdon, knt.

this effigy is at once struck with the feeling that it is not only a fine work of art, but is probably the work of a great sculptor.

The sum of all these facts and conjectures seem to indicate that the widow of Sir Thomas Lucy negotiated with Bernini for a monument for herself and her husband. Portrait-paintings were sent to Rome to aid the sculptor in his delineation of the features. The price of 1,500 guineas was stipulated for, and we gather from Mrs. Lucy's book that this sum was paid. It seems probable that John Schurman was engaged to make the structural portions of the monument, and we know he made the effigy of Sir Thomas Lucy. Who paid him for his work is not stated, but we conjecture it may have been Bernini who employed him, and in all probability that famous Italian sculptor made the effigy of lady Lucy in Rome, and it was shipped to England somewhere about 1643.