

The details of the painting are best appreciated by looking at the photograph; there is a background of rosettes or flowers enclosed within a cable-like border; and superimposed on these, a round object on a stand, with the hind quarters of a cloven-hoofed beast; the forequarters are strangely confused. It was Mr. Nick Adams, the Unit illustrator, who first noticed the head of a unicorn pointing back towards the stand.

Miss Pamela Tudor-Craig however was able to find a parallel in the Dame à la Licorne tapestry in the Musée de Cluny, Paris, which is dated to *c.* 1500 A.D., and we are indebted to her for the following details. The tapestry scene is very similar to the wallpainting, especially in that the unicorn has cloven hooves, but in the tapestry the tail is different. The strange confusion of the beast's foreparts could be explained by its holding a banner, or resting its front legs in the lap of a virgin — both known symbols from medieval art. The round object on the stand is a mirror. The rosettes are obviously part of a separate scheme of decoration, and as they underlie the beast they could well be of *c.* 1430 AD. It is highly improbable that the beast scene is earlier than 1480 or later than 1520; it is possibly part of a grander layout depicting the five senses or bestiary topics.

#### DISCUSSION

The obvious question to be asked is why the painting was either deliberately hidden, or deliberately preserved in an inaccessible place. One speculation — which the writers stress is theirs alone and should not be laid at the doors of any of the authorities consulted! — is that, if the unicorn was indeed represented as resting in the lap of a virgin, this may have been taken as having Roman Catholic connotations; for both the unicorn and the mirror were used in religious art as symbols of the Virgin Mary. At the time of the Reformation or the Civil War it may well have been considered dangerous to have such a painting in one's home; but sentiment or artistic appreciation might have prevented outright destruction. There are plenty of examples, including some from Norfolk, of statues and images of Mary being hidden without damage in bricked-up alcoves,<sup>1</sup> or even reverently buried in churchyards, and a similar explanation seems very possible for this wallpainting, which as far as the writers are aware is unparalleled in Britain.

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<sup>1</sup>For a recent published example, albeit of St. Paul, see Cheetham F.W., 'A medieval English alabaster figure of St. Paul' in *Norfolk Archaeology* XXXV (1970), 143-4.

#### A PARTY AT NORWICH IN 1562

by Dennis E. Rhodes

In Francis Blomefield's *History of Norfolk* we find the following account of what must have been a colourful and notable event in the social history of the county in early Elizabethan times:

This year [he does not state which year, but the previous event recorded by him was of 1561, suggesting that this also took place in 1561; as we shall see, the true year was 1562] the Earls of *Northumberland* and *Huntington*, the Lords *Tho. Howard* and *Willoughby*, with many other lords and knights, came to *Norwich*, to visit the DUKE of *Norfolk* there, and were all lodged with their retinue at the *Duke's palace*; and during their stay, they diverted themselves

with shooting and other martial exercise on *Moushold-Heath*; and it being at the time that the MAYOR's *feast* was to be held at the *New-ball*, *Will. Mingay*, Esq., then Mayor, invited them and their ladies to the feast, *John Suckling*, baker, *Tho. Layer*, *Christopher Layer*, merchants, and *Laurence Wood*, scrivener, being the four *feast-makers*.

At the entertainment the Duke and Dutchess of *Norfolk* sat first, next sat the three Earls of *Northumberland*, *Huntington*, and *Surrey*, then the Lord *Thomas Howard*, the Lord *Scroop* and his lady, the Lord *Barthlet* and his lady, the Lord *Burgavenny*, with so many other lords, knights, and ladies, that the *ball*, although it is so very large, could scarce contain them, and their retinue, yet by the good management of the *feast-makers*, all things were kept in order, and the nobility expressed a great deal of satisfaction at their generous reception.<sup>1</sup>

Blomefield then goes on to give us a list of the mouth-watering food and drink which the party enjoyed, with the ludicrously low cost of each item.

A new and important, if brief, account of this same party having recently come to light in a most unusual place, it has seemed worth while to transcribe and comment upon this note, which not only tells us the names of a number of the other guests, but also provides the exact date upon which the party was held. This note, which does not appear to have been published hitherto, is to be found written in a contemporary hand in a printed book now in the library of Brasenose College, Oxford. The work in question is the three-volume edition of the *Repertorium morale* by Petrus Berchorius, printed by Anton Koberger at Nuremberg and completed on 4 February 1489, in folio.<sup>2</sup> Inscriptions show that the work was given to Brasenose by John Hafter (possibly Haster), who was a Fellow of the College and Vicar of St. Mary Magdalen, Oxford, from 1504 until his death about April, 1511. Brasenose having been founded in 1509, Hafter was one of its earliest benefactors. Nine of his incunabula are still in the College Library. But a mystery here confronts us: for if Hafter gave all three volumes to Brasenose by 1511, how could the second of them have belonged to a parish rector in Norfolk some fifty years later? Perhaps it is a made-up set, volume two having a different provenance. The fact is that written on the verso of the last printed leaf of the second volume is the following note of ownership:

'Sum Liber Sketi Rector(is) de Tasburgh.' There are a number of decorations and a row of capital letters from A to H, which amount to no more than pentries, and a few more words in a later hand.

We know from Blomefield<sup>3</sup> that John Skete (or Skeet) was Rector of Tasburgh in Norfolk from 1561 to 1563. Lower down the same page, in what may well be his hand, is written:

'Be yt remembred that in A<sup>o</sup> Dni 1562 the V Daye of June in the fforth yeare of the Raynge of our moste dread souereyng Lady Quene Elysabeth the most parte of the nobles & peers of this Realme met at Norwich being the head Cytie wythin the county of Norfolk whose names are here wrytten.

The Duke of Norfolk	Therle of Surrey
Therle of northumberland	ye lord wyllobye
Therle of Huntington	the lord Tho. howard
Therle of Westmorland	The lord wentworth
The Lord Nevell	Sir Henry Perse
The Lord Shefeld	Sir Robert Wingfeld
The Lord Bartlet	Sir Chryst. Heydon

The Lord Scrope	Sir T. (?) Wodhous
Sir owyn hopton	Sir Edmon wind[sor]
Sir Wyllyam Buttes	Sir Rych. Fulmerston
Sir Raph Chamberleyn	(This last surname is almost illegible)

Although Blomefield gave the impression that this party took place in 1561, we can surely believe the Rector of Tasburgh, living not more than ten miles away from Norwich, and jotting down his notes almost immediately after the event, that the true date of the assembly was June 5th, 1562. It may even be that he had been a witness to some of the entertainments.

In fact the full contemporary account of the feast has survived in the records of St. George's Guild in the Norfolk Record Office, from which it is clear that Rector Skete's list is only a partial one, since he gives twenty-one names, whereas the official guest-list, beginning with 'The Duke of Norff. his grace, w<sup>th</sup> my lady his wyfe, the Lorde Philipp Erle of Surrey, his Sonne, the lorde Thomas howarde his seconde Sonne', then goes on to enumerate no fewer than sixty-nine important men, not to mention any of their wives.<sup>4</sup> At least seventy-three people sat down to the feast; but here we should remember that the Duke's two sons were rather young for such an occasion, Philip Howard (1557-1595) being five years of age, and Thomas Howard his younger half-brother by a different mother (1561-1626) being a one-year-old baby.

June 5th, 1562, was a Friday, and it was on that day that the feast itself took place. On the following Monday, the 8th., a congregation was held; and it was no doubt the official list of this, dated the 8th of June, which Blomefield used, as his initials and sign appear, dated 1744, on the first page of the volume now preserved in the Record Office at Norwich.<sup>5</sup> Master Skete's short account was evidently independent of the official list, and based on his personal recollection of events. Its importance lies in the fact that it is contemporary, and was entered in a place where no-one interested in Norfolk history would ever think of looking for it: in an incunabulum now at Oxford.

A recently published work on Norfolk history and politics of the time makes the significance of the feast quite clear.<sup>6</sup> Thomas Howard, the Fourth Duke of Norfolk, born in 1536, lived mainly in London, but remained intimately involved in local affairs in Norfolk. In this very year of 1562, as Earl Marshal of England, he became a privy councillor, and rode through the City of London on 8 October, attended by a hundred horsemen and other servants. He was only twenty-six years of age. But he stood somewhat aloof from Court, preferring his life in the country. In 1563 he was elected to St. George's Company, but in the previous year, as we have seen, the Company had decided that it was politic, as well as most pleasant, to spend the necessary sum of money to entertain him, with so distinguished a gathering of his relations and friends and the chief nobility of England, to the sumptuous feast of 5 June.

Let us now examine the identity of some of the other guests mentioned by Skete as well as in the official list. Apart from the Duke himself and his immediate family, there was another Lord Thomas Howard present, known as Viscount Bindon. He was the son of the Earl of Surrey and Third Duke of Norfolk, who had died in 1554. This Thomas Howard was born probably in 1528 and died in 1583. The Earl of Northumberland was Thomas Percy, the Seventh Earl, destined to be beheaded in 1572 at York, the same year in which the Fourth Duke of Norfolk was himself beheaded. 'Sir Henry Perse', also present at the party, was no doubt the Sir Henry Percy, brother of the Seventh Earl of Northumberland, born

about 1532 and knighted in 1557. He was officially known by 1576 as the Eighth Earl of Northumberland. He was found dead in the Tower on 21 June, 1585.

The Earl of Huntingdon was Henry Hastings, Third Earl (1535-1595), and the Earl of Westmorland was Henry Neville, Fifth Earl (1525?-1563). 'The Lord Nevell' must be identical with the man whom Blomefield calls 'Lord Burgavenny', that is, Henry Nevill, Earl of Abergavenny and Lord Nevill, who died on 10 February, 1586/87.<sup>7</sup> John Sheffield, Second Baron Sheffield, died in 1568. Henry le Scrope, Ninth Baron Scrope of Bolton (1534-1592), was a soldier who was chosen as Marshal of the army sent to aid the Scottish Protestants in March 1560; he became Governor of Carlisle and Warden of the West Marches in 1562. Thomas Wentworth, Second Baron Wentworth (1525-1584), was Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk and Suffolk. Sir Ralph Chamberlain is not in the Dictionary of National Biography, but we find a mention of him in the article on Wentworth, to whom Chamberlain was a subordinate as lieutenant of the castle of Calais. Among those knighted the day after the coronation of Queen Mary (2 October 1553) were 'Sir Edmond Wyndsor, Sir Raff Chamberlen and Sir Robart Wyngfelde', three of the guests whom we find at the Norwich party in 1562.<sup>8</sup> Another was Sir Roger Woodhouse; while among the twelve Norfolk men who sat on the jury to declare the poet Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, guilty in 1547 (his alleged offence of treason having been committed in Norfolk) were William Wodehouse and Christopher Hayden.<sup>9</sup> The first name of the Woodhouse on Rector Skete's list is not clear, but the official list shows that he was Sir Thomas, vice admiral of Norfolk and Suffolk, who died in 1572.<sup>10</sup> As for Sir Christopher Hayden or Heydon, he seems to be identical with the Norfolk jurymen of 1547. He was deputy lieutenant, then joint Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk, an M.P. and a sheriff. He lived from about 1519 to 1579.<sup>11</sup> He is not the same man as the author of *A Defence of Iudiciall Astrologie*, published at Cambridge in 1603, who was not knighted until 1596. Sir Richard Fulmerston of Thetford (c. 1510-1567) was M.P. and Treasurer to the Fourth Duke.<sup>12</sup> Sir Owen Hopton, Sheriff, was another client of the Duke. Later he became Lieutenant Governor of the Tower, and several references to him can be found in Gerald Brenan's *History of the House of Percy*.<sup>13</sup> He died on 25 September 1595.<sup>14</sup>

Richard Bertie, born in 1517, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, must be the same Lord Willoughby who was also among the guests. He sat in the parliament which assembled on 11 January 1562/63 as one of the knights for the county of Lincoln. He was in Queen Elizabeth's retinue when she visited Cambridge in August 1564. He died on April 9, 1582, aged sixty-four.

More difficult to identify is Lord Barthlet, Bartlet or Bartlett, named both in Rector Skete's list and by Blomefield. No such family is mentioned in the Complete Peerage, and so one must assume that it is merely an alternative form of the name Berkeley: Lord Henry Berkeley (1534-1613) would surely have been invited since his wife was the Duke of Norfolk's sister. In any case the official list gives him as 'The Lorde Barkeley'. The pair were noted for their extravagant style of living. 'And thus lived this lord and his wife betweene London, the Dukes houses in Norfolke, Callowdon, and Berkeley, never longe at one place, the first thirteene yeares of Queene Elizabeth. In which their travells (if both together) they were seldom or never attended with fewer then one hundred and fifty servants.'<sup>15</sup>

Finally, one of the most interesting of the Norwich guests in 1562 is Sir William Buttes (Butt, Butts). He was the eldest of the three sons of the Sir William Butts who had been personal physician to King Henry VIII, members of an old Norfolk family. The father had died in 1545. The younger Sir William is presumed to have been born about 1510 or 1520, and was thus about forty to fifty years of age at the time of the party. His home was at Thornage in Norfolk. When he died on 3 September, 1583, it was the occasion for the publication of a small and beautiful volume of epitaphs, partly in English and partly in Latin, by various authors, edited by Robert Dallington and printed in London by Henry Middleton. The title is: 'A booke of Epitaphes made vpon the death of the Right Worshipfull Sir William Buttes Knight: who deceased the third day of September, Anno 1583.'<sup>16</sup> All the people of Norfolk are requested to mourn the passing of so noble a knight; and Thornage is mentioned twice in the last poem in the book, in these lines:

I cannot worthily commend his vertues rare,  
They be worthie of memorie, namely his godly care  
Which he had to maintaine, the preaching of Gods lore,  
Who willed it should still remaine in Thornage as before . . .

But Thornage thou maist say, and proue it true to be,  
Fewe townes like thee had such a stay, as this BVTTES was to thee.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>F. Blomefield, *History of Norfolk*, vol. III (1806), pp. 279-80.

<sup>2</sup>Hain-Copinger 2798 = 2801; Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke 3866.

<sup>3</sup>Blomefield, vol. V (1806), p. 213.

<sup>4</sup>Norwich City Records 17 b, Guild-book of St. George, 1452-1602, pp. 229-30.

<sup>5</sup>I am most grateful to the Norfolk Record Office for this reference and for much other help.

<sup>6</sup>A. Hassell Smith, *County and Court: Government and politics in Norfolk, 1558-1603* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1974), especially at p. 26.

<sup>7</sup>There is a portrait of him in Daniel Rowland, *An historical and geneological account of the noble family of Nevill* (London, 1830).

<sup>8</sup>*The Diary of Henry Machyn . . . from A.D. 1550 to A.D. 1563*. Edited by John Gough Nichols (London, Camden Society, 1848), p. 334.

<sup>9</sup>Gerald Brenan and Edward Phillips Statham, *The House of Howard*, vol. II (London, 1907), p. 431.

<sup>10</sup>A. H. Smith, p. 36.

<sup>11</sup>A. H. Smith, pp. 127, 163, 164.

<sup>12</sup>A. H. Smith, pp. 32, 37, 39.

<sup>13</sup>London, 1902, pp. 12, 24, 28.

<sup>14</sup>A. L. Rowse, *Raleigh and the Throckmortons* (London, 1962), p. 192.

<sup>15</sup>John Smyth of Nibley, *The Lives of the Berkeleys*, vol. II, ed. Sir John Maclean (1883), p. 285.

<sup>16</sup>S.T.C. 6199. This is a very rare book: the only copy in the British Isles is that in the British Library, while in America there are copies in the Folger Library, Washington, and the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

<sup>17</sup>I am very grateful to Dr. A. L. Rowse for kindly reading through this note and for making a number of useful suggestions. He has confirmed that Berthelet and Berkeley were forms of the same name in Elizabethan times.