

THE LETHIEULLIER TOMB AT CLAPHAM

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The vault containing the remains of eleven members and descendants of the Lethieullier family of Clapham lies in the north-east corner of St Paul's churchyard. The altar tomb which surmounted it has vanished, having been destroyed by vandals in 1963. Already it was in a poor state; the slab had been broken into four pieces and the iron railings had been removed during the second world war. Fortunately, in 1960, Mr E. E. F. Smith had carefully transcribed the names of the deceased and their inscriptions so that, apart from one unrecorded burial, there is no doubt as to who had been interred in the vault. These inscriptions are included in an appendix.

William Lethieullier, who commissioned the vault and tombstone in 1726 shortly before his own death, was a member of a rich merchant family which made its living by trading with Turkey. These merchants were descended from Huguenots who had come to England from Frankfurt (whither they had fled from France) in the 17th century. William was the sixth son of John Lethieullier of Lewisham and a younger brother of Sir John Lethieullier, Sheriff of London. He had married Mary Powell, a niece of Sir Peter Daniel of Clapham, and sometime after his death she and her husband had taken the lease of his 'Great House' which stood on the site of the present Grafton Square.

From the time it was completed until the middle of the 19th century, William's widow and his descendants discharged their duties faithfully in respect of this family tomb. They also preserved the cor-

respondence concerning it and the bills from the workmen who carried out its repairs. John Loveday of Caversham (1711-89) eventually became the surviving trustee, inheriting the earlier letters and accounts and succeeded in due course by his son and his grandson.

The first of these manuscripts is a receipt from the rector of the former church, Holy Trinity, Clapham—Dr Nicholas Brady. It was written a month before he died at Richmond where he also held the living. His son, Nicholas, rector of Tooting, was married to William Lethieullier's youngest daughter, Martha.

'Received of William Lethieullier Esq April the fourteenth 1726 fifteen Pounds fifteen Shillings as a full Consideration for Liberty to build a Vault for the use of himself and Family in the East End of my Church Yard of Clapham containing twelve feet four Inches from out to out one way, and eleven Feet four Inches from out to out another way, with some Space to be allowed for Steps leading into the said Vault—I say received by me N. Brady D.D. Rector of Clapham in Surry. £15.15.0'. (Fig. 1).

On 14 May 1726 another receipt was delivered to William from the churchwardens.

'We Thomas Cox and Samuel Stevens Churchwardens of the Parish of Clapham Doe Acknowledge to have Rec^d this 14th day of May 1726 of William Lethieullier Esqr the sume of Thirty one pounds and ten

Received of William Lethieullier Esq
 April the fourteenth 1726 fifteen
 Pounds fifteen Shillings as a full Consi-
 deration for Liberty to build a Vault
 for the use of himself and Family in the
 East End of my Church Yard of Clapham
 containing twelve feet four Inches from
 out to out one way, and eleven Feet four
 Inches from out to out another way,
 with some Space to be allowed for Steps
 leading into the said Vault. — I say
 received by me

N. Brady D^d Rector
 of Clapham in Surrey.

£15:15:0

Fig. 1 Lethieullier tomb: Receipt from Nicholas Brady, Rector of Clapham.

shillings in full of the Consideration Money (Apointed and Agreed to be taken by the Parish at a Publick Vestrie holden the 11th day of April last) for a peice of Ground part of the Church Yard lyeing at the East end of the Church and Containing in Length twelve feet and four inches from out Side to out Side and Eleven feet and four inches wide from out Side to out Side with a Convenient Space for Stepps leading into the Vault or burying place to be there built for the use of the said William Lethieullier Esqr and his family. Wee say rec^d for the use of the said Parish—£31.10.0.'

The rector's death on 20 May came at rather an awkward moment. The pre-

vious day a lawyer, Charles Woods, had written to the younger Nicholas Brady in some urgency.

'... Herewith you will receive the Citation as desired, which must be published and read in the Church on Sunday next and the Gent that reads it, must be desired to subscribe his Name at the bottom of the Certificate wrote on the back thereof, and you must not faile to send it me on Monday next in the Morning because I must return it on Monday in the afternoon at the Court, otherwise it will be of no force. As to the inserting the Curate or Lecturer instead of the Rector the Court would not come into it and as the Citation was decreed before the Death of the

Incumbent wee may tell him to appear, pray dont fail to return the Citation as above . . .'

The letter was sent from Doctors Commons on 19 May 1726. On 9 June Charles Woods sent a receipt for eight guineas to William Lethieullier by the hands of Mr Brady. It was the charge for obtaining a faculty for erecting a vault or burial place.

William Lethieullier died on 17 September 1728 and his vault was ready for his reception. The bill for the monument above it, however, was not sent to his widow by Thomas Dunn until May in the following year (Fig. 2).

Mad^m Lethieullier To Tho. Dunn Dr
1729
May 15th To An Alter Tomb Sett up in
Clapom Church Yard with a Black
Marble Ledger Workt with a Drip

Mould and Statuary Marble Pannels on each Side & Ends with a Coat of Arms Carved in a Large Sheild at one End Base Mold Plinth one Astrogale Step of Portl ^d and a Purbeck Step at the Bottom	£ s d 45 0. 0
To Cutting 279 Letters on D ^o and Stopping y ^e same at 2p	2. 6. 6.
To a Mason 2 Days & a Lab ^r 1 Day Cutting holes for Iron Work and Running them with Lead	0. 8. 2.
To Cartidge of D ^o Tomb	<u>1. 4. 0.</u>
	£48.18. 8.
abattment per agrement	<u>1.18. 8.</u>
	£47. 0. 0.

Rec^d of Mad^m Lethieullier of Clap^m Forty Seven
pound in full of above bill and all Accts per me
Tho: Dunn. £47.

To which Mary added her note—'I
payed 47£'. On the following day she
received the bill for the iron work
from John Robins of London.



Plate I Lethieullier tomb: Old Clapham church; wash drawing of 1796 by W. F. Zincke.
(London Borough of Lambeth)

Mad^m Lethieullier

To Tho: Dunn D^r

1729

May 15th To An Altar Tomb set up in Chapom
 Church Yard With a Black Marble Ledger
 Work with a Drip Mould and Saturnary
 Marble Cannells on each Side & Ends - } 45. 0. 0
 with a Coat of Arms Carved in a Large
 Shield at one End Base Mold Plinth one
 Astrogeal Step of Port^l & a Furlock Step at
 the Bottom

To Cutting 279 Letters on D. at 3. ff ^{and stopping up same} - 2. 6. 6
~~To Putting Lead with Gravel~~ ~~2. 6. 6~~

To a Mason 2 Day & a Lab^r's Day Cutting
 holes for Iron Work and Running them - } 0. 8. 2
 with Lead

To Cartidge of D. Tomb - 0. 4. 0

~~L 47 18 8~~

L 45 18 8

Receipt & agreement - 1-18-8

L 47 0 0

Rec^d of Mad^m Lethieullier of 47
 Forty Seven pound in full of above bill
 Call Act true
 Tho: Dunn

Fig. 2 Lethieullier tomb: Bill from Thomas Dunn for the construction of the tomb.

1729 Madam Leitheullier To John Robins Dr	
May 16 To Iron worke for a toomb in the Church Yard of Clapham framed in a top & bottom railles and a gate and frontispiece to the Same w ^{ch} 27 cwt. 2 qr. 10 lb att 4d per lb	£ s d 51.10.
To a lock and key to the Same	0.10. 6.
To 1 cwt.2 qr.14 lb of Lead to fastne the Same at 16s per hundred	1. 6. 0
To Carridg of the Same	0. 7. 0.
To 4 men 2 Dayes a fixing up the Same	1. 0. 0
	<u>£54.13. 6'</u>

On 9 June 1729 Mary was sent the receipt (Fig. 4) for 'fifty two pound in full of y^e Bill & all Accounts per me John Robins' to which she added her note on the back 'I payed but 52£'. The number of letters cut, in Dunn's bill, roughly fitted the long inscription to William Lethieullier.

It was not long before the vault was opened again to receive the coffin of Edmund Tooke who had married William's eldest daughter, another Mary. He was Clerk to the Salters' Company and died on 7 November 1729.

The vault, altar-tomb and railings were complete and Mary Lethieullier made a careful reckoning of what they had cost. Her spelling was very much like that of her daughter, Sarah Loveday.

	£ s d
'Whot y ^e volt has cost 1728 early for bringing briks sand and horsage	2.19. 2.
briklayer maicking y ^e volte	15. 1. 6.
to y ^e parish for y ^e ground	31.10. 0.
to dockter brady for herbage	15.15. 0.
for the facultye	8. 8. 0.
funirall dues	1. 8. 0.
dun the Stonecutter	47. 0. 0.
tO robins y ^e Smyth	52. 0. 0.
to hill for briks to stand on	0. 7. 0.
a plank 3s:6d: Jones y ^e carpinter	2. 3. 6.
for painting ye iron work	1. 5. 0.
hills work under y ^e volt	9. 11. 3.
1729 on y ^e 8th of Novemb' y ^e vestery met and I payed 2 ginis more for ye ground	2. 2. 0.'

Mary's total reckoning came to £188.2.8. though it was really

£189.10.5. She added a note on the dimensions of the vault (already given) and concluded 'The vault was begun y^e 27th of June munday 1726'.

The vault was not opened again until 1741 when Mary's own coffin was lowered into it. She had died on 9 October at the age of eighty-five. The care of this burial place passed on to her two elder daughters through a clause in her will.

'I do hereby order and direct that my executrixes and the survivor of them do take due care in keeping our family vault in Clapham Churchyard in good repair, as there shall be occasion, at the charge of my estate; and that they and the survivor of them do for that purpose retain and set apart fifty pounds out of my estate to go to the Executor or Administrator of such survivor for that purpose for ever.'

The elder executrix was Mary Tooke, widow of Edmund. She lived in Hackney and, until her death ten years later, she took the greater responsibility for the care of the vault, her sister Sarah being much further away at Caversham. After her death on 30 September 1751 her daughter, Mrs Anne Bootle, sent very careful accounts to Sarah which showed that the cost of repairs to the tomb, weeding, and painting the railings in 1749 had come to less than £6. There was an additional item of £5.9.0. recently paid to Windsor, the undertaker.

'This last was when the Vault was opened for Mama that my Grandfather and Grandmother's Coffins was new outward-cased and new planks laid. Anne Bootle.'

Sarah reinvested the money in new South Sea annuities which after brokerage resulted in a capital sum of

£47.17.8. The dividends were used for payment for repairs to the vault and tomb for the next hundred years.

The tomb was opened again in 1754 when Elizabeth, the only unmarried daughter of William and Mary Lethieullier, died on 16 October at the age of sixty-six. Her sister Anne, Lady Hopkins attended the funeral and evidently was not pleased with what she saw. She wrote to her sister, Sarah, on 19 December 1755 enclosing a receipt for £1.15.9.

'There were repairs about the Vault which wanted doing which I ordered to be done, which came to a Guinea, which I am to be paid out of the interest of the money which my mother left to repair it.'

To which John Loveday added a note—'This is a just demand and it must be paid'. Lady Hopkins, Widow of Sir Richard, was a rich woman, but affairs of this kind were very strictly managed. William Pinder had done the work by the order of Mr Brady,

Nov: 5. 1755	
Done at the Tomb Belonging to the Family of the Leitheuillers in Clapham Church Yard	
To Cutting 118 Letters in a Black Marble Ledger att 1d $\frac{1}{2}$ per Letter	£0.14. 9
To a Mason 6 Days, to Repairing and Cleaning the Tomb at 3s per Day and to finding Sundry Utensils for fitting in the Peices and Making it Compleat	0.18. 0
This Guinea to be paid back to my Lady out of the Interest money.	0. 3. 0
	<hr/>
	£1.15. 9

It is noticeable that Pinder's charge for cutting letters was a good deal less than Dunn's in 1729.

Sarah Loveday died in 1761 and was buried at Caversham. Her son, John, now became the sole trustee under the terms of his grandmother's will. On 7 March 1760 he had

'put into Cousin Bromfield's hand

2 bills for the care and repairs of Clapham Vault, amounting to the sum of £2.6.3. which sum I also put into her hands and she will get me 2 receipts for the same. I also paid her 2d for the penny postage of 2 letters to be written on the occasion.'

The penny post operated in London at this time. Cousin Bromfield was Sarah, the younger daughter of Edmund and Mary Tooke and sister of Anne Bootle. It seems that she had taken on the responsibility of caring for the vault but later delegated this task to her husband, Philip. From 1765 until his death in 1767 the correspondence concerning it was entirely between him and John Loveday. Mr Bromfield took his duties very seriously.

'London 6 April 1765

... I did not intend troubling you till I could have sent you an Account of the Vault being finished but the Daughter of the late Clerk at Clapham brought me a Bill for the Cleaning and Weeding the Vault for four Years from 1760 to 1763 both Inclusive at five shillings a Year and the present Clerk has been with me for two Years upon the same Account. They were sent to me by Mr Brady who a little while ago was attending a funeral there (suppose it was his Mother's). I told them that I could say Nothing to it but would let you know of it and very likely should receive your Orders to pay them both and also whether you would have it Continued.'

The parish clerk was John Taylor. On 5 June John Loveday was sent his receipt for ten shillings for two years' cleaning and weeding. John added a note to say he had also sent twenty shillings for the preceding four years.

All would have gone smoothly had it not been for the apparent perfidy of the Revd Nicholas Brady whose wife, Martha, had died on the 23rd day of the previous February. It seems that no arrangement had been made for putting her remains into the vault and Philip wrote on 13 April in some alarm.

'... I but this Morning was informed that Mr Brady had your Vault at Clapham opened and has there deposited the Remains of his late Wife and as I find he expresses a very great Regard to her Memory thought it very likely he might order the Mason to engrave something concerning her upon the Tomb Stone which he could not possibly do without erasing some of your other Relations. I immediately wrote to the Mason that the Vault was the sole Property of you and from whom I received my orders to act, that unless he had any Directions from me he should only Copy the words from the old Tomb Stone and not add any other Name whatsoever as I being Entrusted by you in this Affair and also as it were upon the Spot thought it very proper to let you know of this and hope you will approve of my Conduct. . .'

John kept a copy of his own reply on 20 April.

'To be sure, nothing that has been inscribed upon the tombstone must be erased upon any consideration whatever. Though the *top covering* stone be filled with letters, I presume any future epitaphs of the family may be inscribed on the *sides* of the tomb; for we all know many similar instances. If that will not do, I am intirely with you (Sir) that nothing however must be altered that is already established;

so I thank you heartily for the trouble through your goodness devolved upon you in this affair.'

Philip wrote again on the same day, 20 April. To his horror the person whose epitaph was being interfered with was his own mother-in-law.

'... I wrote to you this Day sevenight to let you know Mr Brady had ordered your Vault to be opened and he had therein deposited the Remains of his late Wife and as I did suppose he would have some Inscription put on the Stone for her and I knew there was no room without either erasing some of the old Names of making some alterations on the Tomb, I wrote at the same time to the Stone Cutter not to do any thing further till I have heard from you since which he has been with me and says Mr Brady has given him Directions to take away the Stone at the head of the Vault which is carved and within the carved work is engraved the name and age &c of Mrs Tooke to be quite taken out and another large Plain Stone to be putt in the Room of it in order to have his Wife's Name &c added to it. The Stone at the foot has the same sort of carving as the above and incloses the family Arms. The Top Stone is quite Done but cannot be putt in till I have your Answer in Respect of the Above; as to what Alterations he may have ordered within the Vault I have not enquired, but I have often heard your Grandmother had always given a strict charge not to have one Coffin put upon another and Lady Hopkins said when her sister Betty was Buried there was but just Room for one more; therefore 'tis Natural to suppose that he either has or will Con- trive to make room for himself to Lye with his Wife. I thought it very

May 18th 1765

Repairs done to the Vault of W. Lethieullier Esq^r
 in Clapham Church Yard

By Benj. Pickersgill Mason at Vauxhall

A 24 New Black Marble; moulded Leidger, with the
 old Inscription recut on ditto, the Inscriptions on
 the side pannels reblack'd, The Arms Clean'd and
 Blazon'd; with a new piece of Statuary join'd to the
 broken parts of ditto, The Steps and Body of the Altar
 Toomb clean'd and Mended, the iron rails twice
 Painted, The whole Complete in A Workmanlike
 manner. Comes to - - - - - £20

Fig. 3. Lethieullier tomb: Bill from Benjamin Pickersgill for repairs to the monument.

proper you should know of this Affair
 and hope to have a Line from you.'
 To which John replied next day, 21
 April

'What I am for is that the inscription
 for my aunt Brady should be
 engraved on one of the *long sides* of
 the tomb; then the arms will stand,
 as they now do, at one end; and Aunt
 Tooke's epitaph at the other end.
 There are no rules of direction left
 with regard to the vault, but what
 occurs in the Will; but as my Grand-
 mother might express herself in con-
 versation against placing one coffin
 upon another, *that* may be carefully
 observed with regard to her own
 coffin. But surely it need not
 influence the placing of other coffins
 for a husband and wife; as it is highly
 probable that matter was all talk-
 over between my late deceased Aunt
 and her surviving husband.'

Philip wrote again on 18 May

... 'Upon the Receipt of your last
 favour I sent for the Stone Cutter
 and told him you had no Objection
 to his complying with Mr Brady's
 Request if it could be done without
 leaving out any of the Old Names
 which he promised he could and has
 since done. He this Morning brought
 me your Bill the Amount whereof is
 Twenty Pounds exactly'...

The bill (Fig. 3) was from Benjamin
 Pickersgill, a mason at Vauxhall whose
 work had involved

'A 24 Ft New Black Marble; moulded
 Leidger; with the old Inscription recut
 on ditto, the Inscriptions on the side
 pannels reblack'd, The Arms Clean'd
 and Blazon'd; with a new piece of
 Statuary join'd to the broken parts
 of ditto, The steps and Body of the
 Altar Toomb clean'd and Mended,
 the iron rails twice Painted, The
 whole Complete in A Workmanlike
 manner. Comes to
 £20. —.—'

Besides this there was a bill for 6s.6d. from Thomas Polley for repairing the lock and providing two new keys and a staple. Philip Bromfield enclosed it on 7 August, having already thanked John for a covering draught on Messrs Hoare for £21.10.0. Pickersgill had said that if he had put down 'every article separate' it would have come to more, but would do so if it were thought needful. Bromfield also said that the late clerk's daughter had not called since he had had John's order to pay her. 'I gave the present one the Broken Stones it being usuall'.

Philip Bromfield died in 1767. He was not buried in the vault, but Nicholas Brady achieved this distinction at the end of the same year. He died on 11 December having been Lecturer to the parish of Clapham for nearly forty years.

The problem of the care of the tomb was discussed with John Loveday in the spring of 1768 shortly after Anne Bootle was laid to rest in it. Her husband, Captain Robert Bootle, had died ten years earlier and was buried elsewhere. Their only daughter, Mary, was married to Richard Wilbraham of Rode Hall, Cheshire, but in order that she could inherit Lathom House in Lancashire they had changed their name to Wilbraham-Bootle. She wrote to John on 19 May with a useful suggestion.

'... to inform you what I have ordered in regard to the Vault at Clapham, which has been and still is open, where my Mother's remains were deposited last Saturday; on inspecting it, the Coffin of my Grandfather Tooke is fallen to Pieces; as he was not Buried in Lead it makes it Necessary to have it inclosed again, for which reason I have directed a strong Elm Case to be made with a new Leaden Plate with the Inscription to signify who it is; the Undertaker would have persuaded me to

have it inclosed in Lead as it would then have lasted as long as the Rest, but I would not venture to go to that Expence as it would come to £7 and the Elm Coffin will not be above fifty shillings; though upon Enquiry I find it had a new Case about twelve years ago; as you, Sir, are the only surviving Trustee that is concerned about the Vault you will pardon me reminding you that now Mr Bromfield is dead who used to Inspect into the Care taken about it, it may perhaps be necessary to Appoint some other in his room; and as I now bear some interest in it on my dear Mother's account am ready to accept of that Office if you have no one that you better approve to undertake it. But at the same time I desire to be understood, not as Officiously imposing myself upon you as I design my Offer as a Compliment to you, who I am certain would Chuse to have the intentions of the Original design kept up, and a family that have formerly made a figure in that Parish should not in so few Years sink into Oblivion whilst there are any of their descendants remaining to keep up their Memory.'

William Newton, the undertaker, had charged only £2.10.0. for a double elm coffin, smoothed and varnished, with gilt handles, screws and a plate of inscription; but he added 12s for the mens' labour in carrying it to Clapham and moving the coffins in the vault. Mary Bootle wrote again in June to say she had settled with him and had paid the parish clerk, John Taylor, the sum of 15s for three years weeding—up to midsummer. He had asked for an extra half-year's pay and as it was only a half-crown she had allowed it.

John Loveday did not accept her offer to be his official representative at that

1729 Madam Lethieullier

To John Robbins . . . Dr^d

May 16 To Iron worke for a tomb in the Church to S^d }
 Yards of Clapham framed in a top & }
 bottom rails and a gate and front pieces } 51 " 10 " 0
 to the Same wth 27 " 2 " 10 at 1/2 p^{er} lb . . . }
 To a lock and key to the Same 0 " 10 " 0
 To 1 " 2 " 1/4 of Lead to fasten the Same }
 at 16 p^{er} hundred } 1 " 6 " 0
 To Carriage of the Same 0 " 7 " 0
 To 4 men 2 Days at fixing up the Same 1 " 0 " 0
 £ 54 " 13 " 0

Received of Mad^m Lethieullier of Clapham
 Fifty two pound in full of y^e Bill & all Accounts

John Robbins

Fig. 4. Lethieullier tomb; Bill from John Robbins for work on the tomb.

time, partly because Mrs Bromfield was still able to attend to the matter. She was helped by his son, John, between the years 1772 and 1777 when he was resident in Doctors Commons. By the time Mrs Bromfield died in 1780 the younger John had married and settled at Williamsote in Oxfordshire. So when Mary Bootle tried again in 1780 her offer was accepted.

The tenth family coffin to be placed in the vault was that of William Brady, son of Nicholas and Martha, who died on 12 September, 1773, at the age of fifty. In 1774 the old church of Holy Trinity was closed and a faculty was granted on 14 February by the Commissary of Surrey for the erection of a new parish church on Clapham Common. It was not until 1814

that St Paul's was built on the former site. Meanwhile the parish clerk was in charge of the old churchyard.

After 1780 Mrs Bootle's letters were directed to Dr John Loveday at Williamscothe. He could not have had a better deputy. When she was not in the country she lived in Bloomsbury Square and was thus able to keep an eye on the state of the tomb, either through her own visits or those of her servants. In February, 1781, Edward Mitchell scraped, cleaned and painted the ironwork at a charge of 18s 9d; two years later William Hughes cleaned out and covered over the vault and supplied a number of oak planks for the sum of £2.5.2. Otherwise the clerk continued to keep the place tidy for 5s per annum. Dr Loveday seems to have questioned the date of payment of this small sum in 1784 and Mrs Bootle explained that she usually paid it at Lady Day as she was out of town at Midsummer; but from that time the clerk was paid in the proper month. On 28 February, 1789, she wrote 'Our Steward last Week surveyed the Mansion of our departed Ancestors; all was neat, clean and in good repair'.

However in 1792 there were some structural problems as she disclosed in a letter of 16 March.

'... the clerk of Clapham called here this Morning to inform me that the Wood Work of the Vault is intirely rotten and has given way so that our respected Ancestors are now exposed to the curiosity of the passengers who may be disposed to gratify it by free entrance, the Vault being near the foot path; the Man has for the present laid some boards loosely for immediate protection, but a repair is necessary to be done immediately; as my trusty Steward is dead, who I used to employ on such occasions, I have no body I can send to examine it and

therefore must trust to the honesty and Judgement of the Clerk and Carpenter who live att Clapham; but I would not take upon me to give any orders till I had acquainted you as perhaps you may have somebody you would wish to employ on the occasion; and from the Man's account I should suppose it might be a considerable Sum that would put it in order again. I promised him I would write to him when I received your directions and the sooner they are sent the better. . .'

Quick action was taken and she wrote again on 26 March

'... The Business is all set right about the Clapham Vault and I here send the bills and all particulars inclosed; it is now bricked up instead of being done with Wood, which is much more durable and it will last many years; should it be required to be opened it could not before without the assistance of a bricklayer and carpenter both; now it may be done by the bricklayer only. I sent my Servant to see its situation previous to its being done and he was clearly of opinion that it had better be bricked. The bill is £2.10s and Mr Taylor, the Clerk, had added coach hire and intimated a hint for something for his trouble; I gave him half a crown for the latter with which he seemed quite satisfied; this with the 5s due Midsummer next makes 12s 2d and altogether £3.2.2. As I look upon you to be a responsible Man in the Mercantile World stile, I beg you will give yourself no trouble about the payment till opportunity offers as your credit is very good. I rather suppose this Trust will give you no further trouble for some Years as it seems done substantially new; and while I live I will readily be your

agent, feeling myself interested in its protection, my amiable and beloved Mother being one of the venerable remains, with a dear boy of my own I have deposited. In future most probably some of your descendants may by either profession or Connection settle in London, as I hope the aversion to the dear smokey Metropolis will not continue to descend from Generation to Generation and then the Trust can easily be executed; the accumulated interest of fifty pounds bequeathed, as there has for many Years been no deduction but 5s per Annum, will supply a fund for occasionally an extraordinary repair. . .'

John Taylor's bill included 'time and trouble'. John Loat's was for 'turning a Arch over Vault. . . Brickwork & Center &c'.

This is the only record of a child having been buried in the vault. Mrs Bootle had, altogether, fourteen children of whom eight survived. As she said later that he had been buried in 1776 he must have been the heir, born in 1769, who was the twelfth child. Two more sons, who lived, were born in 1771 and 1773 respectively.

The clerk did not appear to collect his pay in the springs of 1801 or 1802 and the money remained 'wrapped up' for him. Mrs Bootle wrote from Lathom House on 17 July, 1802.

. . . 'I sent to enquire after the old Clerk at Clapham in the month of April and heard that he was bed-ridden and had been some months, so consequently not able to discharge the trust of attending to the state of the Vault. I have not given him his fee these two Years, nor do I think that he deserves it; and as in all probability there must be a new Clerk chosen in his place it is my intention when I go to Town again

to go to Clapham and settle with the new Clerk about it; my Messenger brought me word that excepting weeds being grown up about the Monument all seemed tight and in good repair . . .'

She wrote again on 2 May 1803, having visited the tomb herself.

. . . 'Having an acquaintance at Clapham which on Saturday last I went to see, I was induced to go myself and look at the Monument of my Ancestors, which I found in a very decaying State; the locks and rails eaten up with rust and some of the Stones in the Pavement that surrounds disjointed; the ill-health of the late Clerk, I suppose, occasioned this neglect as it certainly has had little or no attention paid to it; having heard that there is a small sum appropriated to the keeping the Monument in repair I settled that the rust should be scraped off and the whole new painted and the Stones put close and mortared between; as to the lock as it has now no occasion to be opened I ordered an Iron band to be put on which can be taken off as occasion requires and be less expence than a lock and not liable to be out of order . . .'

She concluded by asking that her own remains might be deposited there, were she to die in London, 'near my Dear Mother's Coffin and a sweet boy I have buried there in the Year 1776'. If she were to die in Lancashire she would lie 'in the Burial place of the Wilbrahams and where my Husband lyes . . . I have a great dislike to the trouble and expence of long journeys for the dead'. In the event she was buried near her husband at Astbury close to Rode Hall in the year 1813.

Richard Wilbraham-Bootle had died in 1796 and his widow had taken a house on her son's estate at Lathom. Distance and

increasing years made the management of the vault more difficult for her, though she usually returned to a house in Bedford Square in the winter months. However a friend had come to the rescue, a resident of Clapham called William Prescott. She wrote on 30 May 1803 to say she had discovered that he had paid the clerk, without her knowledge, for the last three years. In September the bills for new improvements were made out and delivered to Colonel W. Prescott. They comprised 2s 6d to Benjamin Cooper for ironwork, 6s 6d to Henry Pratt for pointing the tomb and underpinning the curb and 10s 6d to J. Comley for painting the railing.

Mrs Bootle was more explicit about Colonel Prescott when she sent these bills to Dr Loveday on 13 April, 1804.

‘ . . . I have at last got from my friend the account of expences attending the Vault at Clapham. The cheques are not ruinous, nor will the Vault &tc require any thing more (accidents excepted) for many Years; the sum set is £1.4.6 . . . My friend, Coll. Prescot is a very respectable Character and has very civilly undertaken to be himself the Surveyor and thereby you are lighten from the heretofore Annual expence of 5s. which was formerly paid to the Clerk for Overlooking the Spot. The old Clerk is dead and his successor litterally fulfils his agreement by *Overlooking* the Monument, by which means some of the brickwork got loose and it was going fast to decay. Mr Prescot will now look and not overlook it occasionally himself; when I can depend upon him that every thing will be kept right . . . I forgot to mention that Mr Prescot has lived many years at Clapham and is a loyal active Officer amongst the Volunteers there, which entitles him to

the Appellation of Coll . . . ’

Her last letter on 27 April 1804 emphasized once more her disapproval of the clerks.

‘ . . . No difficulties can arise . . . as I have signified to Mr Comley he has nothing more to do with it, Coll Prescott having kindly taken upon himself to look after the Vault occasionally without any gratuity, which is what has not been done for some Years back through the infirmity of the old Clerk and the carelessness of the Son . . . ’

Very little is known about the last nine years of Mary Wilbraham-Bootle's life. Dr John Loveday died in 1809. From then until 1835 an account was kept of the annual interest received, but there is no further mention of the tomb among the Loveday family papers until 1845 when his son, John, was living at Williamscoote. James Comley, the sexton at Clapham, sent a bill on 22 November of that year for the sum of £2.10.0. It was for cleaning the tomb and painting its railing. It was still called the tomb of the late William Lethieullier Esqr. By now the amount of the investment was £46.19.0. which provided an annual income of £1.8.2.

In 1854 the Clapham churchyard was closed for burial, but at what stage the Loveday family ceased to take responsibility for the state of the Lethieullier vault and tombstone is not known. The provisions of Mary Lethieullier's will had been carried out for at least four generations and her descendants had given the tomb a history of its own by carefully preserving the letters and bills which were connected with it, commemorating not only the family but also the many craftsmen who had contributed to its upkeep.

NOTE

The MSS referred to are preserved in the collection of Loveday Family Papers. Extracts from the Bromfield-Loveday correspondence have been published in Sarah Markham *John Loveday of Caversham* Salisbury (1984). The houses in which William Lethieullier and Colonel William Prescott lived are mentioned in E. E. F. Smith *Clapham*, London (1976).

APPENDIX

THE INSCRIPTIONS

TOP SLAB

Here Lies Intomb'd / Elizabeth 4th Daughter of / William & Mary Lethieullier / who Departed this life / the 16th of October 1754 in / the 66th year of her Age. / Also Anne Bootle Widow of / Robert Bootle Esq^r and / Daughter of Edmund & Mary Tooke / Departed this life May the 6th 1768 / Aged 62 Years / Also the Remains of the Reverend / Nicholas Brady L.L.B. / near 40 Years Lecturer of this Parish / Rector and Patron of Tooting in Surry / and Son of the late Reverend / Nicholas Brady, D.D. Rector of this Parish / and Minister of Richmond in this County. / Ob^t the 11th of December 1768 Aet 76. / Here lieth intomb'd William Brady / Son of the above Nicholas and / Martha Brady who departed this / Life The 12th of September 1773 Age 50 /

SOUTH SIDE

Under this Tomb lies interred the Body of / William Lethieullier Esqr / late of this Parish who Married Mary, / daughter of Henry Powell, of ye said Parish / Gent. by whom he had eleven Children, Seven / of which Survived him Viz. /

Mary, John, Sarah, Anne, Elizabeth / Martha and William. / He departed this Life the 17th of September / 1728 in the 81st [?] Year of his Age. /

NORTH SIDE

Here also Lyeth Intomb'd the Body of Mary, / Relict of the aforesaid William Lethieullier Esqr / who Departed this Life the 9th of October 1741 / Aged 85 Years / Likewise the Body of Mr Edmund Tooke / who Married Mary Daughter of the above / mentioned William and Mary Lethieullier / He Departed this Life the 7th of Novemb^r 1729 / Aged 73 Years.

EAST SIDE

Here lieth the Body of / Mrs Mary Tooke, Relict of / Mr Edm^d Tooke, Merchant, / who Departed this Life / Sep^r the 30th 1751 / age 75 Years. / Here lie interred the Remains of Mrs Martha Brady / Wife of the Rev^d Mr Nicholas Brady, / youngest daughter of William Lethueller [sic] and Mary his Wife / who departed this life 23 of Feb^{ry} 1765 / in the 74th year of her Age. /

WEST SIDE

Shield of arms. *A chevron gules between three parrots heads couped proper beaked gules—impaling—3 Tudor roses.*