Proc. Hampshire Field Club Archaeol. Soc. **62**, *2007, 143–167 (Hampshire Studies 2007)*

THOMAS BERTIE, BISHOP'S MASON, AND THE EARLY TUDOR RENAISSANCE STYLED TOMB OF RALPH AND EDITH PEXALL AT SHERBORNE ST JOHN, HAMPSHIRE

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ABSTRACT

The collection of early Tudor Renaissance works in Winchester, especially those in the cathedral, has long attracted academic interest but this has been to the detriment of a group of monuments across the county of Hampshire that have largely been ignored. This paper explains one of the more complete monuments of this group, describes its connection with the Renaissance-styled presbytery screens in Winchester cathedral and other monuments in this group, and shows that they can all be dated to the period of c. 1520–35. The overall homogeneity of style that can be seen in the execution of the decorative carving on all of these works suggests a single workshop produced them, and that an individual mason, identified here as Thomas Bertie, was responsible for the running of this workshop during this period. The stylistic quality of this work has been compared to contemporary work in France, but doubts are here cast on this ascription.

INTRODUCTION

When architectural historians discuss the early Tudor Renaissance, they tend to point to the terracotta medallions of the Caesars made by Giovanni da Maiano in 1520–21 for Cardinal Wolsey, to embellish his magnificent palace at Hampton Court, or otherwise they highlight the brick and terracotta-built, country houses of Henry VIII's courtiers, such as Richard Weston's house at Sutton Place outside Guildford (Blomfield 1897; Gotch 1901; Howard 1983; and Thurley 2003). Alternatively, attention is directed to the East Anglian terracotta tombs, for example that of Sir Henry Marney erected at Layer Marney in Essex soon after his death in 1523 (Baggs 1968). Virtually unnoticed in this narrative is a group of monuments of similar date in Hampshire. These can be stylistically connected to Renaissance work in Winchester cathedral, in particular the Renaissance friezes and tomb panels in the presbytery screens that were completed during the 1520s (Biddle 1993, 268–74). While these screens have been discussed in some detail, a series of monuments across Hampshire, covered with Renaissance-styled carving, have attracted little or no attention. Amongst these are the tomb and monumental setting for Sir Ralph and Edith Pexall at Sherborne St John, a village that lies a few miles to the north-east of Basingstoke, a study of which forms the first part of this paper. The second part of the paper will explore the possibility of linking all these works to a single mason. He was almost certainly the bishop of Winchester's mason. He is identified as such – but not actually named – in the will of Mary Lisle, as the designer and builder of a similarly styled Renaissance tomb at Thruxton. He can perhaps be identified as Thomas Bertie.

The church of St Andrew, Sherborne St John

Nikolaus Pevsner, when he visited the church of St Andrew, was most taken by the brick-built south porch, that has above the doorway an inscribed plaque that bears the date 1533 (Pevsner and Lloyd 1967, 500–01). In the jambs of the door case is early Renaissance decoration which, as will become clear, is typical of the style that pervades these monuments (Fig. 1). Within the church, Pevsner noted the monument and tomb of Sir Ralph Pexall and his wife that is set in the north wall of the chancel, mentions

Fig. 1 St Andrew's, Sherborne St John, the south porch showing the Spier's dedication panel above the door and the Renaissance decoration in the door case spandrels

what he describes as 'dainty details' above it and some 'minimum Renaissance decoration' on their tomb chest (Fig. 2). Although offering a connection to the monument at Thruxton, Pevsner offered no parallel to the frieze that tops the south presbytery screen in Winchester cathedral. Pevsner observed that what he called the Brocas chapel was Perpendicular, but did not notice the letters **R** and **P** on the label stops on the exterior of the chapel's east window (*VCH*, iv, 168); these surely indicating Ralph Pexall. The description of the Pexall monument in the *Victoria County History of Hampshire* is rather fuller, and makes a point of stressing a connection to be seen in the carving of the effigies at Sherborne St John and those at Thruxton – in both cases the chest tombs bear effigies of husband and wife, the men in armour and their wives sumptuously dressed – remarking that these were 'evidently by the same hand' (*VCH*, iv, 169). There is however no comprehensive description here of the Renaissance character of this work, and similarly no connection is made with the Renaissance work in the cathedral presbytery.

The church was heavily restored in the nineteenth-century. The upper stages of the fourteenth-century tower being rebuilt in 1837, and its spire added a little later, the north aisle added in 1854, and with further restorations taking place later in the century. In 1884 the west wall of the Brocas chapel was breached, and an arch was inserted opening into the north aisle. A plan, drawn by the architect J. P. St Aubyn in 1884 proposing these last re-arrangements to the church shows the original outline of the Brocas chapel (www.churchplansonline.com). It has been suggested that the chapel was perhaps originally built in *c.* 1420, and possibly altered or refurbished in the early sixteenth-century, as the east window clearly dates to the latter period. In his will, proved 17 July 1509, William Brocas asked that ' … my bodie to be buried in a chapell in the northside of the Chauncell in Shirbone' (National Archives PROB 11/16; Burrows 1885, 171). As noted earlier, the window label stops on the exterior of the chapel carry Ralph Pexall's initials, this suggesting that the chapel was perhaps not built until after William died. It therefore seems possible that William's widow Mary (she died *c.* 1512) along with Ralph Pexall and his wife, the Brocas heiress, Edith Brocas created a family mausoleum or chapel into which they then gathered many earlier family memorials, these mostly in the form of brasses with the earliest dating from *c.* 1350 (*VCH, iv*, 169). This echoes the decision of the Lisles, who left money in their wills for an ambulatory chapel to be built onto the north side of the church at Thruxton, a small village a little to the west of Andover, in north-west of Hampshire.

The Lisle chapel has however the benefit of documentary evidence, in the shape of the wills left by Sir John Lisle and his wife, Mary.

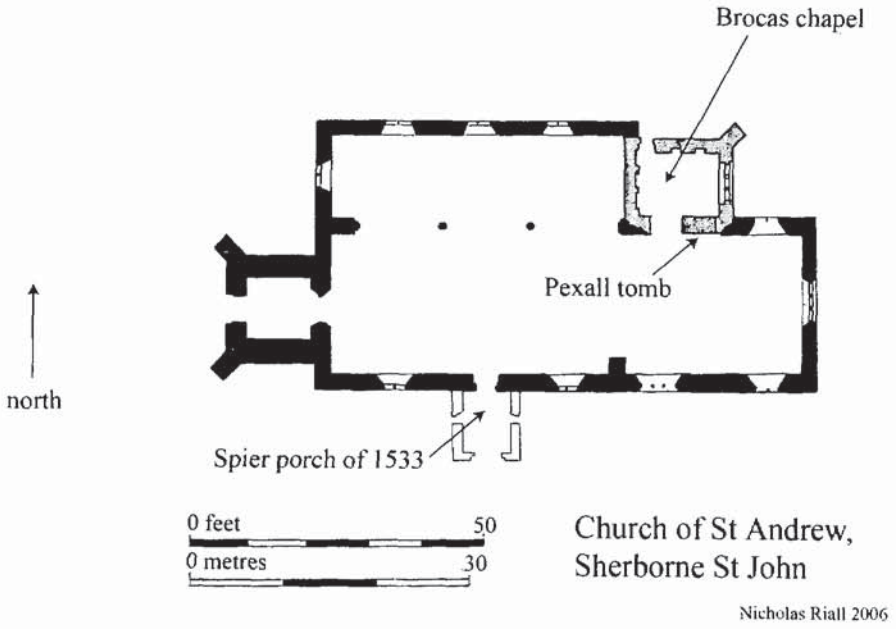

Fig. 2 Plan of the church of St Andrew's, Sherborne St John (after J. P. St Aubyn, 1884)

Sir John's will was written in 1520, this included instructions for 'the making of an ambulator chapel unto the honour of God and our blessed Lady Saint Mary virgin mother of our Savyour Ihu Crist', later in the will this is referred to as a 'chappell or ambulator' (National Archives, PROB 11/21). Lisle died early in 1524, his wife surviving him only by a few months, herself dying sometime in the summer of the year. Her will is important for what it tells us about the author of their tomb and chapel. She left instructions to the executors of her will, dated 1524, to 'cause to be made a Chapell or an ambulatory after the plott and bargayn made by my husbonde wt my lorde of Wynchestre's mason'. A few lines later Mary makes a further request by asking ' ... I will that myn executors doo make and finisshe all the ornaments that I have gevyn to the church and chapel of Thurston and sett upon evy oon of them my late husbondes armes and myn as my executors shall thinke expedient' (*VCH*, iv, 389, n.66; Smith 1989, 301–02; and Riall 2007c). The Lisle chapel was demolished in the late 1790s to furnish materials for a new church tower, but the remnants suggest it was essentially Perpendicular in style, although it was furnished with a striking Renaissance-styled frieze in the battlements, now relocated on the church tower (Riall 2005a, and Riall, 2007c). The interesting point is that both families created for themselves substantially large monumental tomb settings, alongside which they erected small chapels, and, given the stylistic connections between the workmanship of the tombs and their surrounds, it is conceivable that the chapels were designed and built by the same mason. Their choices were paralleled by the Pauletts of Basing, who also buried their dead in substantial monuments, built in same late Perpendicular style that underlies the Pexall and Lisle tomb settings, inserted into the walls of the chancel in the church alongside their Basing home (Pevsner and Lloyd, 1967, 89; Crook 2002). The earlier sixteenth century tombs at Basing quite probably precede those of the Pexall and Lisle, but only by a matter of a year or two (Crook 2002, 102–05); the earlier tombs at Basing having no Renaissance details,

although the later sixteenth-century tombs, on the south side of the chancel, exhibit the strapwork style typical of the period.

Edith Brocas and Sir Ralph Pexall

William Brocas bought the manor of Beaurepaire in 1353, and his descendants held it for over five centuries. The manor had once formed part of the larger manor of Sherborne St John, originally held by the St Johns, and from which another and rather more famous manor and house was also spilt – The Vyne. By the early 1500s, this was the home of the Sandys family, Sir William Sandys being a prominent courtier at the court of Henry VIII and, in 1523, becoming Lord Sandys of The Vyne. The Brocas family did not achieve such prominence. In 1506 William, the last male heir of the Brocas family of Beaurepaire (Hampshire) and Little Weldon (Northamptonshire), and the hereditary holder of the office of keeper of the king's buckhounds (Burrows 1886), died leaving his estate to his wife Mary and thereafter to his two daughters, Anne and Edith, aged respectively about twelve and nine (National Archives, PROB 11/16; *Inquisitions Post Mortem*, 22 Hen VII, under 277, 296, 341, 393 and 492; see also *VCH, Surrey*, iii, 1911, 51–2). Mary appears to have been briefly married to John Tuchet (Lord Audley) who held commissions of array and of peace in Hampshire through to the 1520s, Mary dying before July 1512 (*L & P*, I/I, 1316, (35). Anne died in 1514, having married George Warham – a nephew of Archbishop Warham, who was chancellor 1502–15 – but producing no heir, leaving Edith the sole heir to the Brocas estates (*L & P*, I/II, 3582 (20), 16 Dec 1514). Edith was married to Ralph Pexall in *c.* 1512, and by him had two sons, John and Richard, the first dying whilst young – these details appearing on a brass alongside that of William Brocas and now in the Brocas chapel (*VCH*, iv, 169). Edith herself died in 1517, and the Brocas estate passed to Ralph Pexall, and thence to their son Richard (*VCH*, iv, 166).

At the beginning of the sixteenth century there were no major baronial families domiciled in Hampshire. The county was dominated, as it had been for several hundreds of years, by ecclesiastical figures and corporations. Foremost amongst these were the bishops of Winchester, the priory of St Swithun's (from after the Reformation, Winchester cathedral) and the abbey of Hyde, with their lands set alongside substantial tracts of land held for the crown in demesne or as forest. On the other hand there were many families of local gentry: such as the Brocas, Frosts, Nortons, Lisles, Paulets, Pexalls, Sandys, and others, whose fortunes and lands waxed and waned over the centuries. These families rarely rose to positions of great national prominence. Almost exceptionally, Sandys of The Vyne and Paulet of Basing achieved such distinction, and were ennobled later in the sixteenth century, but the majority remained 'low-key' county gentry.

Although the Brocas family had achieved some distinction before the arrival of the Tudors, the senior male line died out in 1506, and their line was carried on through the marriage of a younger daughter to Ralph Pexall. He too typifies this general character of Hampshire gentry. Often to be found embroiled in the affairs of the nation, particularly in times of national emergencies such as the various invasion scares of the 1510s, occasioned by Henry VIII's aggressive foreign policy towards France, but at other times involved in commissions of array and in judicial matters. The early details of Pexall's career are obscure but by the beginning of the Henry VIII's reign, Pexall was one of the six clerks of the chancery (*L & P*, I/I, 438 (3) m.7). In 1522 he was appointed to the office of Clerk of the Crown (*L & P*, III/II, 2145 (6), 6 March 1522). It may have been through Archbishop Warham's patronage that the Brocas heiresses came to be married to George Warham and Ralph Pexall: George having a family connection, whilst the antecedents of Ralph remaining unknown (Burrows, 1886, 190–91). Pexall was regularly listed as a commissioner of the peace for Hampshire in the grants issued by the Crown (*L & P*, I/II, pp. 1537–38, for 1509–15, where Pexall is listed in years 4–6; *L & P*, II/I, 170, 6 Henry VIII, for 1515–16; *Ibid.*, 670, 7 Henry VIII, for 1516–17; *L & P II/II*, 3917, 9 Henry VIII, for 1518–19; *L & P* III/II, 2862, 14 Henry VIII, for 1523–24; *L & P*, IV/I, 895 (12), 16 Henry VIII,

Fig. 3 Architectural fragment in the north wall of the Brocas chapel

for 1524–25; *Ibid.*, 2002 (11), 17 Henry VIII, for 1525–26; *L & P*, V, 166 (15), 22 Henry VIII, for 1531–32). He was also a commissioner of peace for Surrey in the years 1514–17 (*L & P*, I/II, p. 1545) and 1528 (*L & P*, IV/II, 5083 (11) , for Devon in 1522–26 (*L & P*, III/II, 2415, (6), *L & P*, IV/I, 137, (18), *Ibid.*, 2002, (6), and for Middlesex 1531 and 1532 (*L & P*, V, 166, (8); *Ibid.* 1694, ii). Pexall was several times nominated to be sheriff of Hampshire, appearing on the sheriff rolls in 1527, 1529 and 1530 (*L & P*, IV/II, 3581 for 1527; *L & P*, IV/III 6072 for 1529; *Ibid.*, 6721 for 1530); he was awarded this office in 1532. Ralph Pexall was listed amongst the commissioners for Hampshire charged with collecting the subsidy (*L & P*, III/II, 3282, at p. 1364, for 1523; *L & P*, IV/I, 547, at p. 235, for 1524). In a similar fiduciary capacity, Pexall was appointed 'feodary and receiver general of the crown lands in Hampshire during pleasure', and 'with authority to deliver all minor heirs to Sir Thomas Lovell and Sir Richard Weston, keepers of such heirs' (*L & P*, III/I, 206, April 1519). Pexall, whose effigy placed on top of his tomb is presented to us in armour, may in his military capacity have been involved in Henry VIII's campaign in northern France in 1513–14, but we have no details of his actual service.

Pexall did not remain a widower for long, marrying in *c.* 1520 Joan, the widow of William Fulford of Devon, and following her death later in the 1520s, marrying thirdly Ann, daughter of Richard Fitzwilliam of Laughton, Yorkshire but neither of these marriages produced offspring (Burrows 1885, 192). Ralph Pexall died in July 1537 (his death was noted soon afterwards in a letter from Thomas Pope, the subsequent Clerk of the Crown, to Cromwell; *L & P*, XII/II, 274, 17 July 1537), probate being granted for his will 12 February 1538 (National Archives, PROB 11/27), confirmation of this coming in a grant of 12 February 1538 wherein, 'Ric Pexsall livery of lands as son and heir of Ralph Pexsall and his wife Edith daughter and heir of Sir William Brocas' (*L & P*, XIII/I, 384 (60). Pexall's will reveals additional details of his life. At some point in the 1520s he acquired a London house ('a mantion in ffletestrere'), and also the manor of Swakeleys in Ickenham, Middlesex, and had changed his mind about his final resting place. He asked in his will, 'to be buried within the Blackfriars in London in the south side of the church'.

THE BROCAS CHAPEL

The Pexall monument occupies the west bay in the north wall of the chancel and is mostly contained within the width of the wall. It is likely that the chancel wall was in fact breached for the purpose when the Brocas chapel, attached to the north side of the church, was built (Fig. 2). We have no clear documentary evidence to show when this chapel was erected – aside from the will of William Brocas of 1509, alluded to above, which mentions a chapel – and our only guide is the presence of Ralph Pexall's initials on the window label stop. This indicates a date in the first quarter of the sixteenth-century as an appropriate time for the construction of this chapel, or arguably, its refurbishment. Several architectural fragments have been built into the north wall of the Brocas chapel, and these all exhibit an effusive, early Tudor Renaissance style. It is not known where these pieces originated from, or what their original purpose was, although as one of them has a moulding

that approximates to some form of jamb, it is possible that some of the pieces were originally part of a door case (*VCH*, iv,169–70). All three pieces are different. The top piece lies on its side and should be rotated so that the moulding is on the right and the carved detail on the left. The carving features a pair of slashed volutes with ball terminals, above what would seem to be a stylised pomegranate, which is surrounded by leafy cartouches and with flowers beneath (Fig. 3). The other pieces are sections of frieze or panel-work, and these very clearly feature a repeated rose set in the manner of a Gothic vine-trail. The rose here is almost certainly intended to have been a heraldic Tudor rose. It is possible that these pieces are the remains of an architectural work now lost, perhaps the original surround to the chapel window or (perhaps the more likely as these pieces show no signs of weathering) the surround to a door or screen into the chapel. The exterior of the chapel has lost considerable portions of its original stonework, the wall parapet and any potential decorative furnishings having been replaced in the nineteenth-century with coursed brickwork.

THE PEXALL MONUMENT

The Pexall monument itself occupies about a half of the chancel bay, leaving space beside the west end of the tomb chest for access from the chancel into the Brocas chapel (Figs 2 & 4). The monument comprises three main elements: the tomb chest, the Pexall effigies and the monumental surround with its frieze. The stone used for this setting, like all the settings in this series, is a fine grained limestone that is almost certainly Caen stone, a material that was extensively used in Bishop Fox's remodelling of the east end of the cathedral in the years up to the mid 1520s.

The tomb chest stands on a stepped plinth, has a series of carved panels contained within a framework bounded by simple roll-moulding on the north and west faces, and is capped with a large cover slab. This has a two-line inscription, contained between further mouldings, that together form a cornice (Figs 5 & 6). The inscription reads as follows: *Conditur hoc tumulto Radulphus noie Pexsal armiger et simul hic cojugis ossa jacent Edithe heredis nuper ac pulcherrima proles Guillelmi armigeri Brocas Beaurepaire.* This identifies the tomb as that of Ralph Pexall and his wife Edith (née Brocas), their identity being further confirmed by the heraldic details displayed on the tomb-chest, along with their initials carved in the spandrels of the monumental arch above. However, as noted earlier, Pexall asked to be buried in the Blackfriars in London thus it is possible the tomb only holds the remains of Edith. The script used for this inscription is much the same as that to be seen on the frieze over the screens bounding the south side of the presbytery in Winchester cathedral. This script is seen as a conscious departure from the series of Gothic black-letter scripts, and is one that became popular in the early part of the sixteenth-century (Gray 1986, 147–50), although it was soon replaced as a favoured script for display-inscriptions by a more classical Roman script, one which appears in the stringcourses of the north presbytery screen in the cathedral.

The main point of interest concerning the Pexall tomb-chest is the treatment of the panels on the north and west faces (the south face is blank, while the east face abuts the east pillar of the tomb canopy arch). The north face has three larger panels set between four narrow, rectangular panels that are framed by very plain and distinctive roll-mouldings (Figs 5 & 6). The central panel of the north face shows what is a now blank plaque, with classical cartouches top and bottom, and a rather curious tassled edge bounding either side that would have perhaps been more appropriately placed at the top and bottom. This plaque may originally have carried an inscription, similar in manner to that on the south face of Bishop Pontoise's tomb in the north presbytery screen of Winchester cathedral (Fig. 7). To the left, in the larger panel, is a shield charged with the Pexall arms supported on either side by Renaissance details, while the larger panel to the right displays a second shield that shows Brocas quartering Roche (as identified in *VCH*, iv, 169). This second panel shows the shield placed on top of an arrangement of urns and volutes that point into each

Fig. 4 The Pexall monument, from the south

of the diagonals (Figs 6 & 10). The composition is completed by four smaller frames that are in effect synonymous with the pilasters that appear in the Renaissance work in the St Cross stallwork (Smith and Riall 2002, 125–156) and, more closely because of their style, in the stallwork created for Prior Silkstede in the south transept of Winchester cathedral (Riall 2003, 209–225; and see Biddle 1993, fig. 19.4). Each pilaster comprises a candelabrum capped by a stylised flower, the candelabra being composed of a series of urn-like motifs that are stacked one on top of the next. In the typical manner in which this style was often executed – and we can variously term it Renaissance, *all'antica*, antique or classical – no two of these pilasters is exactly similar. Thus cross-comparison between each of these panels reveals some small detail that marks it out as different to the next. This is also a characteristic feature of the larger panels and, as will become clear, the Brocas-Roche panel can be compared with analogues from other tombs in

this series, but it nevertheless also remains singularly alone as a separate design.

The end panel of the tomb chest offers a similar arrangement of large panels, separated by smaller pilaster-like panels that feature the flower-topped candelabra noted above (Fig. 5). The two larger panels show a pair of shields, which here carried a painted, rather than carved, charge. It is not known if the paintwork on the tomb-chest is original, or possibly touched up in modern times, or the result of intervention at an unknown date. The inscription and paintwork on the Norton tomb at East Tisted, in the south-east of the county near Alton, can be shown to be at least partially the result of modern conservation, as part of the inscription which can be read today was noted as missing in an earlier description of this tomb (*VCH*, iii, 34; Riall 2007a).

The Pexall effigies

The effigies of Ralph and Edith Pexall are shown lying full length on top of their tomb-chest, with Ralph on the north side of the tomb. The effigy of Sir Ralph is somewhat damaged. He is shown in his suit of armour – complete with his sword, shield and gauntlets – upon which are residual traces of crimson or cerise paint that might intimate these effigies were once painted. Of some interest here is the treatment of the knee guards as these have Renaissance details, a feature that is paralleled at Thruxton where the effigy of Sir John Lisle, also shown dressed in armour, has some Renaissance detailing amongst the carving. Pexall's elbow guards feature a star-shaped device, but this reflects his personal badge, which was a moor's head with a radiating sun behind, rather than this being an *all'antica* motif. Edith Pexall is depicted wearing a highly decorated kennel head-dress and hair net, a pleated chemise with a long-ribboned girdle from which hangs a purse, while her feet are covered by an underskirt. Both effigies are shown with their hands clasped together over their chests and, between their fingers, they hold their hearts. The carving style of these effigies is, as the account in the *Victoria County History of Hampshire* noted, strikingly similar to that of the Lisle effigies at Thruxton and it follows that they were surely all carved by the same hand. Less obvious is the parallel to be drawn with the donor plaque at East Tisted, which shows the Ascension of Christ, flanked by Richard and Elizabeth Norton who are shown kneeling at prayer desks with, behind them, their many sons and daughters. The execution of the carving of this plaque, and in particular the details of the armour and dress work by the two main figures, is close to that of the Pexall and Lisle effigies (Riall 2007a).

The monumental surround and frieze

The Pexall effigies, and their tomb-chest, lie beneath a four-centred arch that is capped by a stringcourse with shields, and above which is a heavily carved frieze (Figs 4, 8 & 9). The arch soffit and jambs are panelled in blank tracery that is typical of the early Tudor court style and which is characteristic of the transformations of the east end of Winchester cathedral in the years up to *c.* 1525, carried out during Bishop Fox's episcopate (Smith 1989; Draper and Morris 1993, 189). This connection is further emphasised by the stringcourse and frieze present at Sherborne St John.

A particular feature of this group of monuments is the treatment and decoration of arch spandrels. At Sherborne St John, the arch spandrels are filled with Renaissance motifs that are stacked upon each other, candelabra-fashion, in a horizontal arrangement culminating in a floral spike. As with the pilasters on the tomb-chest, each of the spandrels is somewhat different one from the next, although each conforms to a general stylistic design. In each of these spandrels the *all'antica* work emerges from behind a lozenge, upon which are carved the initials **R E**, for Ralph and Edith (Fig. 8). The initials are linked together by a cord that may here be identified as a lover's knot. However, it should be noted that in the cathedral the letters **T S**, for Thomas Silkstede, and **H B,** for Henry Broke – successively priors of St Swithun's – are also linked by similar cords, thus the motif may simply be just that, a motif used decoratively rather than having a particular significance.

Fig. 5 The Pexall monument, from the north west

The *all'antica* work of the tomb arch spandrels is echoed in the door case of the south porch (Fig. 1), where similar motifs emerge from behind shields that bear the initials of the James and Jane Spyre (or Spier), who are identified in panels attached to the south porch and the

south door as the donors of this work (*VCH*, iv, 168: Pevsner and Lloyd 1967, 501).

The stringcourse above the arch, which is formed from a series of rectangular stone blocks, is relatively plain with a wide, unadorned field that has a plain roll-moulding along the bottom and a rather more complex moulding along the top (Figs 4 & 8). At each end is a small shield set within the width of the stringcourse, while at the centre is a larger shield complete with helm and mantling, there once more being traces of paintwork on these. The shields again display the Pexall and the Brocas-Roche arms. This arrangement of large and small shields is paralleled by that at the cathedral in the presbytery screens, and at Thruxton and East Tisted, although in this last setting the main shield occupies a separate plaque that was set quite separately above the whole monument, there being no frieze.

The frieze that caps the Pexall work is set out on a further series of stone blocks, with the carved work of the frieze bounded along the base by a plain, square-cut moulding. The east end of the frieze is closed by this moulding on the south face of the monument, but the other three frieze ends are left open, which gives a slightly extemporary feel to the finished effect of this work. This 'feel' is underlined when the joints between each section of frieze is closely examined; the carving does not flow from one block into the next but rather the carving of individual motifs stops at each joint and is continued on the next section of stone by a slightly different motif; for example, the shield and urn at the first joint on the south face in fact being very different pieces of work.

The frieze itself comprises a repetitive and quasi-symmetrical sequence of *all'antica* motifs set rinceaux-fashion along a line (Figs 4, 8 & 9). Four main elements were used as the principal motifs: a winged putto head, shields with ribbons, a round-bodied fruit and slashed volutes. Taking the first complete motif on both faces as a start point, the sequence is as follows (Fig. 8): urn 1 with blank shield and swags above/slashed volute/urn 2 with a (?) fruit motif above/slashed volute/ urn 3 with winged putto head above/slashed volute/urn 2 repeated/ slashed volute/urn 3 repeated/slashed volute/ urn 2 repeated/ ... restart sequence with urn 1. Urn 2 is much the same across the frieze, but the fruit above is treated differently so that, characteristically of this *all'antica* style, no one motif is exactly the same as the next in the sequence – in fact, the differences, when the eye starts examining the work in detail, are quite pronounced. This change in detail is more apparent with the treatment to the urns under each of the putti. The detailing on the surfaces of these differs markedly, as does the stand on which each urn sits. The same observation can be made about the shields. As may also be seen from the St Cross frieze and the Silkstede canopy in the cathedral south transept, there is a quality of apparent harmony and metronomic symmetry which, on closer inspection, proves to be an illusion. The effect is somewhat spoilt by the mismatch evident in some of the frieze joints, where one half of a motif is of a disparate design to the other half. This echoes the non-matching nature of the frieze joints seen in the two friezes in the cathedral presbytery screens (cf Biddle 1993, 272–3). There does not seem to be any logical explanation for this, though it is hardly to be supposed that this was a deliberate design feature. Can we see this as potentially the production by stone masons of fashionable new decoration by the yard, in the same manner as wainscot that we know, from documentary sources, was produced and sold by the yard (Angela Smith pers. comm.)? The specialised nature of these friezes militates against such a conclusion, nonetheless the disconnected, unmatching nature of these friezes remains a problem that cannot readily be explained. The same sense of disconnect can be seen in the frieze that overlies the presbytery north screen, although the style of this frieze is very different. The Pexall frieze is close in style and execution to the main frieze above the presbytery south screen in Winchester cathedral (Fig. 10), but it remains uncertain which of these came first, the Pexall frieze or that in the cathedral; this problem is discussed further below.

Before leaving the Pexall frieze, we might note the treatment of the volutes. These emerge from behind each urn and, in a rather

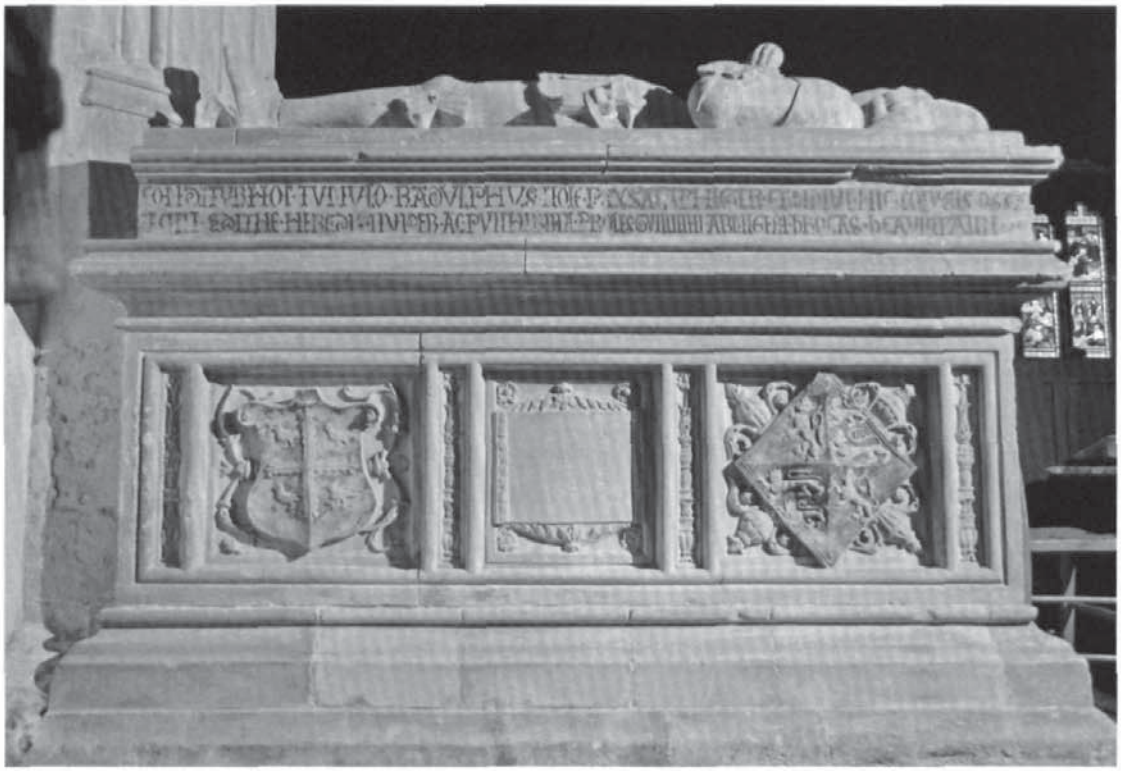

Fig. 6 North face of the Pexall tomb chest

Fig. 7 Winchester cathedral, north face of Bishop Pontoise's tomb

cramped fashion, are turned up and into the adjacent urn with a foliate neck at the top (Figs 8 & 9). Fashioning of this motif presages the sequence of stylistic changes that we can see in the treatment of the volutes in the presbytery north screen frieze and, additionally, those at Thruxton, and again in a chapel screen, for Prior Draper, at Christchurch priory. Even in so small a detail, we can see an evolving style and the search for a finished product, an ambition to evolve the taste for *all'antica* into a satisfying, aesthetically pleasing end product.

One of the problems discussed in relation to the cathedral friezes is that they appear to be architecturally incomplete (Biddle 1993, 269). When looked at through the lens of classicism, the friezes on the cathedral screens and in the funereal monuments for Pexall and Lisle, appear unfinished. David Park described the cathedral friezes as having '... a tacked-on appearance. Although the vocabulary is Italianate, the syntax – a frieze without a surmounting cornice – is not' (Parks 1993, 138, n.62). In only one instance, from this group of monumental settings, does a frieze have a capping cornice, and that is in Draper's chapel screen at Christchurch; here, somewhat ironically, a distinctly Tudor Court styled cornice – thus Gothic rather than specifically Renaissance – is used for the purpose. Only at Thruxton was there any attempt to create what amounted to a Classical setting, and even here, if that is how we should view this work, the frieze remained uncapped. In the context of these settings, there is no case that can or should be argued for seeing these works as a response to Classical architecture. The underlying work is in any event fully Late Perpendicular, sometimes described as the early Tudor Court style, and it is only the surface decoration which can be described as Renaissance. The fact of the matter is that this series of works was not in effect attempting to emulate any classical setting, but instead relying upon the use of classical ornament to provide an up-to-date and of the moment, stylistically acceptable, fashion. The *avant-garde* up-to-the-minute fashionableness of the Pexall tomb stands in contrast to the conservative and rather stiff early Tudor Court style, a final florescence of the Late Perpendicular, which can seen in the treatment of the two Paulet tombs in the north wall of the chancel in nearby Old Basing church – they are devoid of any Renaissance detail – that were built contemporaneously with the Pexall and Lisle tombs (Pevsner 1967, 89).

THE PEXALL MONUMENT – CONTEXT AND PARALLELS

As noted earlier, the Pexall monument forms one of a small group of works all of which are decorated with the same characteristic style of *all'antica* carving. The best known examples of this work are the friezes and tomb fronts in the presbytery screens in Winchester cathedral (Biddle 1993; Riall 2005a). Less known are tombs for the Lisles at Thruxton (Riall 2007c) and the Nortons at East Tisted (Riall 2007a), along with a chapel screen – on which is carved the date 1529 – that was created for Prior Draper at Christchurch priory although, as he outlived the Reformation, he was ultimately buried elsewhere.

The frieze over the Pexall monument is a close analogue of the frieze over the presbytery south screen, in Winchester cathedral (Biddle 1993, 271–73, Fig. 19.12). This frieze has two distinct forms (Fig. 10): the majority of it is formed from a design that incorporates winged putto heads, ribboned shields and urns set in a rinceaux of rolled and slashed volutes that have a cornucopia quality about them. In bay 3 of the screen (Fig. 10), the putti and shields are abandoned in favour of a multiplicity of vulning pelicans along with roses and pomegranates set amongst the volutes – these indicating Bishop Fox's loyalty to Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon. It is the first, more populous, design that is closest to the work on the Pexall monument. However, the spiky feel of the secondary south frieze, and in particular the treatment of the upper part of the figure of eight pattern of the volutes, is a design feature that can be seen in the Silkstede canopies and also appears in the panels of the Pontoise and Pexall tomb chests (Figs 11 & 12); therefore it would seem that the entire series is

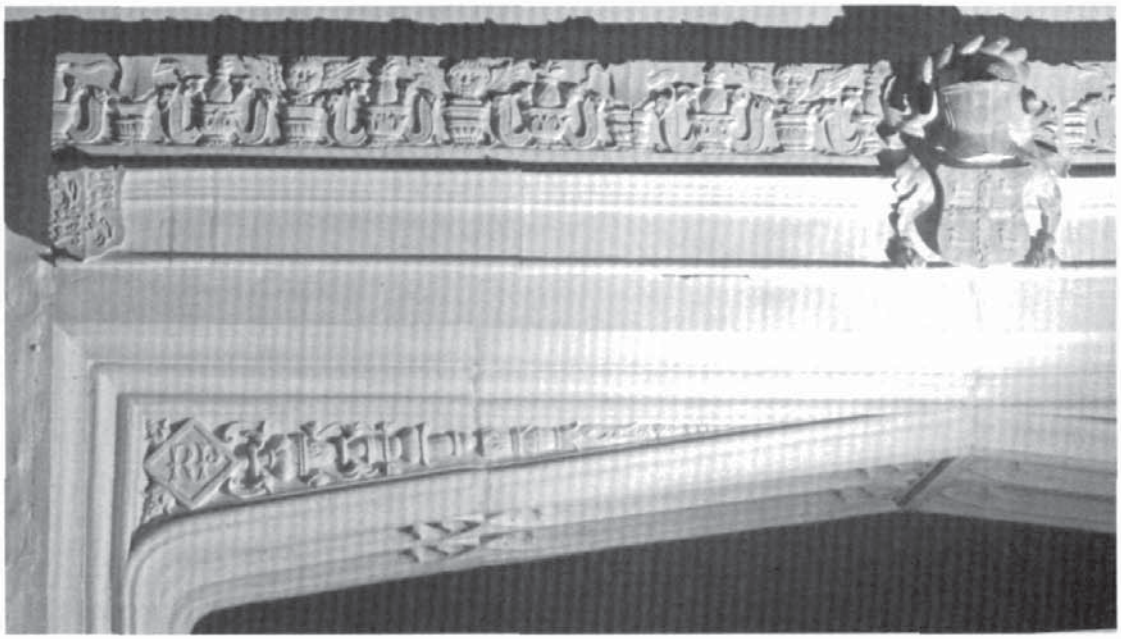

Fig. 8 Pexall monument, the south face of the Renaissance canopy over the Pexall tomb chest, showing the west side.

closely related in both the terms of stylistic development and evolution alongside, clearly, their date.

A key element in all of this work is the tomb of Bishop Pontoise (bishop 1282–1304). When the north presbytery screen was created this tomb (Fig. 7), as with all the tombs along the line of both screens, was taken down and rebuilt, with new facing panels being applied in place of an earlier tomb chest. Pontoise's tomb was presumably already a chest-tomb, as the lid on the sixteenth-century work appears to have been retained from the Gothic-styled original. The new chest tomb provided a relatively plain chest with a large rectangular panel across its centre that is bounded by a series of plain roll mouldings within which are a series of heavily carved Renaissance-styled panels. There is a larger central panel with smaller, square panels either side, each one divided one from the other by small vertical panels, or pilasters. All six of the larger panels are clearly different, each representing an individual design while the eight pilaster panels each contains candelabra constituted from a range of *all'antica* motifs and each of which, on close inspection, is clearly different one from the next. These candelabra owe much to the pilaster designs present in the Silkstede canopies that stand in the south transept of the cathedral (Riall 2003, 216–19), and the design for the Pontoise tomb may well be based in part on that work. The general layout of the Pontoise tomb, its large centrally placed rectangular panel with its crisply cut and simple mouldings within which there is a wealth of *all'antica* detail, along with the extensive area of plain stonework – that is to say undecorated – offers a template upon which all the rest of this series of tombs was based. The right-hand panel in the north face of the Pontoise tomb offers a typical panel (Figs 8 & 12) that was used as the basis for the design of the Pexall tomb chest panels (Figs 6 & 11), as well as those for the Lisles (Fig. 13) and the Nortons (Fig. 14). A

Fig. 9 Pexall monument, detail of the frieze, south face – west end

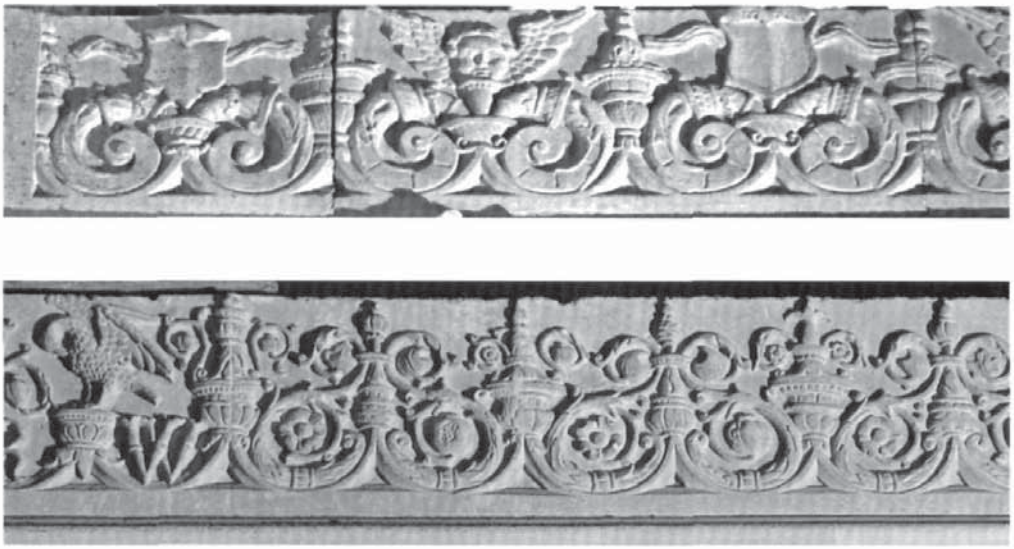

Fig. 10 Winchester cathedral, south presbytery screen frieze, bay S1S and, below, a variation of the main frieze theme in bay S3S

notable aspect of this work is the level of undecorated stonework, and this is especially striking when seen in the context of the Lisle tombs at Thruxton, where two fifteenth-century chest tombs present tomb fronts that are covered from edge to edge in carved (Gothic) detail that are in striking contrast to the simplicity of the later Renaissance panels. The distinctive layout of these panels, the use of similar motifs – and especially so the use of urns set along the diagonals through these panels and pointing into the corners of each – alongside the similarity of the treatment of the friezes and the arch spandrels, as well as the overall design of these monuments, strongly suggests a single source of design and workmanship.

Dating the Pexall monument.

The inscription on the Pexall tomb was noted earlier, but this unfortunately offers no date for either of the two burials. However, the style of the script matches that on the south presbytery screen, which carries an inscribed date of 1525. Back at Sherborne St John there are two other plaques, and both of these are dated: that over the door of the south porch 1533 (Fig. 1), while that over the south door has 1534 (*VCH,*

iv, 168). These inscriptions were executed in a classical Roman script, as are the inscriptions on the north presbytery screen. The use of this classical script would suggest that the script form seen on the presbytery south screen and the Brocas tomb had by the 1530s been superseded by a more classical attuned style. However, as Gray points out, this Romanesque-Gothic script remained in use until late in the century (Gray 1986, 148–150).

Sir Ralph Pexall died in 1537–38, and his will was proved 12 February 1538, whilst Edith his wife died in 1517. There is however no direct documentary evidence relating to the Pexall tomb that offers either a date for when it was erected, or indicates who designed and built it. The clearest indication of date for the Pexall tomb derives from the parallels to be drawn with the work in Winchester cathedral, especially the frieze over south presbytery screen. Both of the presbytery screens bear the date 1525, but it has been suggested that work may have continued on these screens until the later 1520s, only coming to a halt with the deaths of Bishop Fox in October 1528 and that of his steward, William Frost in 1529 (Biddle 1993, 271–73). The presence of the initials **H B,** in the spandrels on the north face of the door through the north screen, indicate that this work was provided through the patronage of Henry Broke. He was elected prior following the death in 1524 of Thomas Silkstede. This suggests that the door case dates to the middle of the decade, but this could still be accommodated by a completion date of 1525. The juxtaposition of the Pontoise tomb chest in the north screen to Prior Broke's door brings with it the implication that this tomb is earlier, and the fact that the tomb was used as the model for the Pexall, Lisle and Norton tomb chest designs is suggestive of an earlier date for the Pontoise tomb chest.

We can perhaps refine the dates by looking to the work at Thruxton, where a monument was built for the Lisles, one that is closely similar to that erected for the Pexalls but with a frieze that matches that over the cathedral north screen. Fortunately, we do have some documentary evidence for the Thruxton work, that provided by the Lisle wills. Sir John Lisle and Mary Lisle both died in 1524, but their wills demonstrate that they wished to have an chapel or ambulatory built, together with a tomb for themselves. Furthermore, Mary Lisle's will mentions many pieces of work carved with the arms and badges of her husband's and her own families, and that these had already been given to the church. These would appear to relate to the pieces of stonework used to create the two arches on the north side of the chancel at Thruxton. The first to provide access to the Lisle chapel, and the second the arch that stands above the Lisle tomb-chest. This would suggest that these pieces were carved before 1524, in at least 1523 or perhaps earlier still; and it should be remarked here that Sir John Lisle's will was written and signed in 1520, which raises the possibility that preparations for the Lisle chapel and monument started not long thereafter. As noted earlier, the *all'antica* detail in the arch over the Lisle tomb matches the detailing in Prior Broke's door, and also the stylisation of the frieze over the presbytery north screen. This would tend to reflect a possibility that the dates on the presbytery screens should be seen as completion dates, and that work on these screens was brought to a finish in 1525 and not, as Biddle intimates, later in the decade (Biddle 1993, 273–74).

As Biddle mentioned, the frieze over the south presbytery screen 'seems to look back' stylistically, with the usage of putti – here in the form of winged putto heads – losing favour as a fashionable motif perhaps before the middle of the 1520s (Biddle 1993, 274). The presence in the presbytery south screen frieze of Bishop Fox's personal badge, a pelican vulning, also hints at an earlier date and certainly points to a completion date earlier than 1528. Nonetheless, we are left with the difficulty that, lacking firm documentary evidence, we are unable to assert a precise date either for the presbytery screens or the Pexall tomb. That said, we might additionally contemplate an emotional response to this particular problem. Edith Pexall was very young when she died in 1517, less than twenty years old, and it is altogether possible she died in or following childbirth. It seems legitimate to suggest that her husband would have been

Fig. 11 Sherborne St John, tomb chest panel from the N face of the Pexall tomb

Fig. 12 Winchester cathedral, tomb chest panel from the N face of Bishop Pontoise

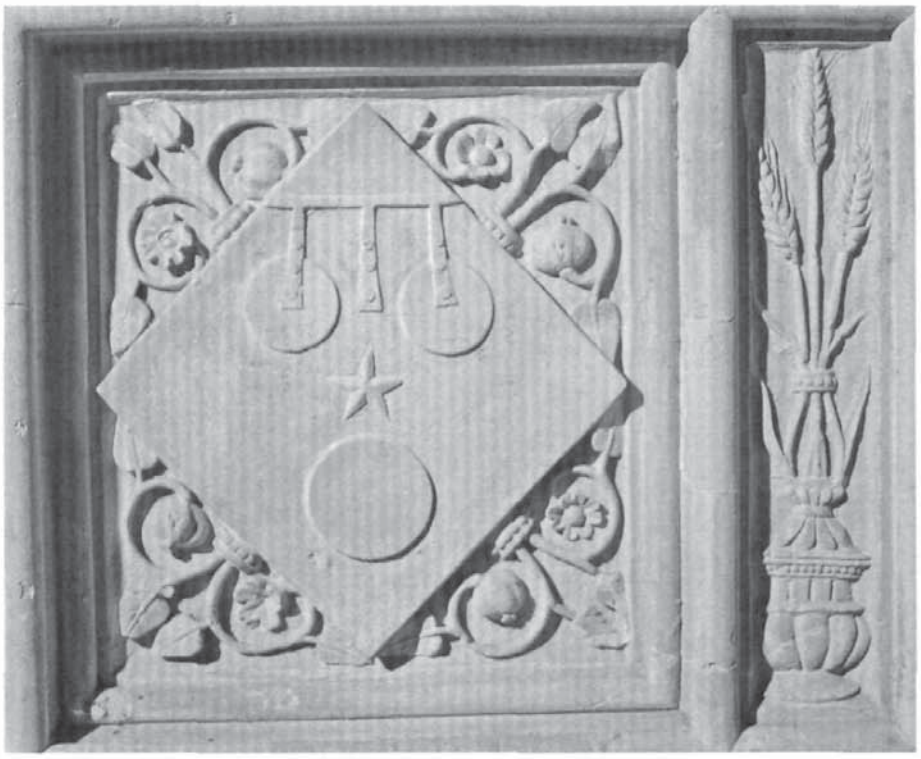

Fig. 13 Thruxton, tomb chest panel from the N face of the Lisle tomb

moved to commission a tomb and a monumental setting for his wife (and himself) sooner rather than later, and on this basis a date of *c.* 1520, or alternatively in the early 1520s, would seem appropriate.

THOMAS BERTIE – MASON AND ITALIANATE CARVER?

This assemblage of six quite substantial pieces of work – tombs and chapels for the Pexalls and Lisles, a tomb for the Nortons, a chapel screen for Prior Draper and the two presbytery screens in the cathedral – all of which are pervaded by a recognisably similar style, one that can be identified as characteristically all of its own, brings with it possibilities for identifying both the individual mason(s) who carried out this work, and the workshop from which it emanated. The presence in this assemblage of a large body of work from the cathedral indicates that any putative

Fig. 14 East Tisted, tomb chest panel from the Norton tomb

workshop that created this material is likely to have been closely associated with the cathedral itself. A point that can usefully be added here is that this assemblage constitutes that which has survived, for it is probably the case that other funereal monuments, in a like style, may well have been erected in monastic settings, but none of which would necessarily have survived the Dissolution of the monasteries.

As we have seen, the work at Thruxton was, or so the Lisle wills suggest to us, designed and created by 'my lorde of Wychestre's mason' and it is likely that all these works should be attributed to him, or otherwise his workshop (and see Riall 2007c). An early question that has to be posed is to ask whether the bishop's mason could also be the same man who worked for the prior and chapter of St Swithun's. In this instance, with an all-powerful bishop who had for most of his career been close to the king, the answer must surely be in the affirmative. It is Bishop Fox's pelican device we see adorning the early sixteenth-century work in the east end of the cathedral, especially so the presbytery aisles and south screen, not that of Prior Silkstede or his successor Prior Broke. So that, in this instance, it would seem to be the case that the bishop's mason and the priory's mason can be seen as one and the same man. A major problem in this context is that the earliest surviving building account for works in the cathedral from this period dates from 1532/33, all the building account records of Fox's extensive works on the cathedral having been lost. The *Custos Operam* roll for 1532/33 records that 100*s* was paid to Thomas Bertie (spelt in the document as Bartewe) for repairs effected to the arch over the shrine of St Swithun (Kipling 1892, 222; and see Biddle 1993, 274). The document goes on to record that Bertie was being paid an annual retainer as the prior's mason – this giving the sense that Bertie was not employed on a full time basis by the priory, but was given a retainer so that the priory either had first-call on his services or could have their own work prioritised ahead of other clients. This, as John Harvey suggested, can be taken to suggest that Thomas Bertie had for some time been retained by both the priory as well as by the bishop. Harvey also identified Bertie as the man who was the author of the presbytery screens (Harvey 1984, 32–33). However, he was not convinced that Bertie was the creator of the Renaissance work on these screens, and it was his opinion that these were the product of unnamed 'foreign carvers'.

The spelling of Bertie's name in the *Custos Operam* roll highlights an additional problem, the variation of the spelling of this name. However, as there was no other mason of this period who worked in the Winchester area (insofar as it is possible to be certain of this) whose name corresponds to the various spellings of Bertie, the several references to this man suggest they relate to just the one person. Harvey writes of Thomas as Berty but, given that the family name has been perpetuated down to the present day as Bertie, this seems incorrect (*Complete Peerage*, under Bertie).

Harvey established that Bertie was the son of Robert Berty, also a mason, of Bearsted, Kent, who died in 1501, at which date Thomas was under twenty years of age. The earliest documented reference to Thomas Bartue shows him living in the High Street, Winchester (Biddle 1993, 274) where, during Christmas 1517, his son Richard was born. In 1520, Thomas Berty was granted a plot of land at New Bridge, Winchester (Harvey 1984, 32). Ricardus Bartewe, or Barthewe, as he was given in the university documents, was admitted to Corpus Christi college, Oxford, in 1532/33 (Round 1910, 33–5). This was Bishop Fox's foundation, and it seems highly probable that Richard's place at this college was made possible through Bishop Fox's patronage. We can be sure that this Richard was the son of Thomas as later in Richard's life, following his marriage to Katherine Willoughby – Charles Brandon, the duke of Suffolk's widow – he was contemptuously referred to by the earl of Arundel as meanly born (see *Complete Peerage*, under Bertie; Round 1910, 23–54 at p. 25; and see Wabuda 2004).

Thomas Bertie seems therefore to have arrived in Winchester at the time that work began on Bishop Fox's project of re-building the presbytery aisles and the construction of Bishop Fox's chantry chapel. This chapel was designed by

William Vertue, perhaps assisted by Humphrey Coke (Lindley, 1988; Smith 1988; Wilson in Marks and Williamson 2004, 244 and Fig. 109), and the probability is that if Thomas Bertie was employed on this project, then it was in a junior capacity. More likely is that Bertie was occupied with the completion of the presbytery aisles, and making a start on the planned transformation of the cathedral transepts. This work was abandoned before 1520, and it may be that Bertie was not involved in any major work on the cathedral until sometime in the 1520s, when work began on creating and installing the presbytery screens. Lacking detailed documentary evidence for work on the cathedral through the 1520s, and aside from the one document that suggests to us that Bertie, if indeed it was he who was the bishop's mason that was contracted to build a tomb and chapel at Thruxton for the Lisles, then it is not until the 1530s that we find a more substantial record of Bertie's work as a mason.

The Dissolution of the monasteries brought with it opportunities for skilled masons such as Bertie. In the spring of 1538 he found himself working for Thomas Wriothesley at Titchfield, where he converted the former monastic buildings into a country house (Hare 1997, 17). Soon after, and in common with a number of other leading architects and masons, Bertie was involved in the creation of a string of artillery forts along the Solent for the Crown, including the forts at Calshot and at Cowes (on which, see Biddle in Colvin, 1975). Bertie's work culminated with the building of an artillery fort at Hurst, to which he was later appointed captain. Only minimal traces of the Renaissance style appear to have been applied to the décor of the artillery forts – seemingly confined to the pilasters of the frames that surrounded the royal coats-of-arms that were displayed above the main entrances into the forts at Hurst and Calshot. There is no trace of any Renaissance detail at Titchfield. He died in 1555.

Thomas Bertie was evidently as mason of some stature in the 1530s, reliable enough to be entrusted with a major commission to rework monastic buildings into a country home and a man to be entrusted with the responsibility of building artillery forts, although in this context Bertie would have been given plans and drawings created by other's hands from which to work. Is this sufficient to suggest that this same man ran the cathedral workshop through the 1520s, from which came not only the materials for the cathedral screens, but also the carved stonework for the series of tombs and chapels elsewhere across Hampshire? As mentioned earlier, the lack of an extensive documentary record inhibits our picture of the running of building projects that took place within the cathedral. It is therefore entirely possible that the work on the fabric, especially the masonry, of the cathedral had been contracted out to what had become an independent workshop, one that was not wholly tied to the priory and whose staff were not full-time employees of either the priory or the bishop. Such a scenario would serve to explain how it was that a Winchester mason's workshop was able to contract for pieces of work across the county, alongside undertaking projects within the cathedral itself. There is also the further problem of who designed and carved the *all'antica* detail. Without more specific documentation, it is probably impossible to be certain and perhaps the best solution to this problem is to suggest that while Thomas Bertie may well have been the master-mason who ran this workshop, he would perhaps have employed within it specialist carvers, who between them produced the various pieces of *all'antica* work and who also turned their hands to producing effigies, including those of the Lisles and the Pexalls.

STYLE AND CHRONOLOGY

Although the dating evidence is limited, it is possible to suggest an outline chronology for these works based on the limited documentary evidence and supplemented by considerations of style.

Le style de Gaillon

One of the more interesting aspects of this assemblage of work is its style. Biddle describes this style as *le style de Gaillon*, his estimation being

based on Anthony Blunt's ground-breaking article, which linked Franco-Italian stylistic influences to the development of the Renaissance style in England during the 1510s and 1520s (Biddle 1993, 274; Blunt 1969, 21; and see Riall 2007b). Significantly absent from Blunt's discussion is any mention of the frieze above the St Cross stallwork. This work is strikingly similar to that of the chapel furnishings from the chapel in the château of Gaillon (Eure), which were created for cardinal Georges d'Amboise in 1508–09 (Smith and Riall 2002; and see Riall 2005a); these furnishings are now to be seen in the basilica of St Denis, Paris (Liou 1997). One particular aspect of these works is the very curious treatment of some of the fantastic creatures that appear in both of these works along with a select number of others including terracotta tombs, such as that at Layer Marney, across East Anglia. Some of the dolphins and some of the birds are displayed with horn-like protrusions emerging from their heads. That they probably were intended to be horns can be seen in the Gaillon work, where the very high quality of the carving shows a spiral-detail that captures the spirit of an animal's horns. In the frieze at St Cross these are relatively crude, and even more so in those shown in the Silkstede canopies (Riall 2003, Figs 4 and 9).

The château at Gaillon was extensively stripped of its sculptural programmes, including much of the architectural furnishings, following the French Revolution, the material being widely scattered although much was taken to Paris. The building, now in the care of the French state, is undergoing a programme of conservation and has been closed to the public for many years but, in 2000, for the month of August was opened to public inspection. Quite by chance the present author and Angela Smith were then engaged in research into the St Cross frieze and it was soon apparent from a personal examination of the buildings that the decorative style of the Gaillon stalls (and the subsequent St Cross work) was not reflected in the fabric of the château. Furthermore, Blunt's assertion that the *le style de Gaillon* can be seen in the cathedral presbytery screen friezes cannot

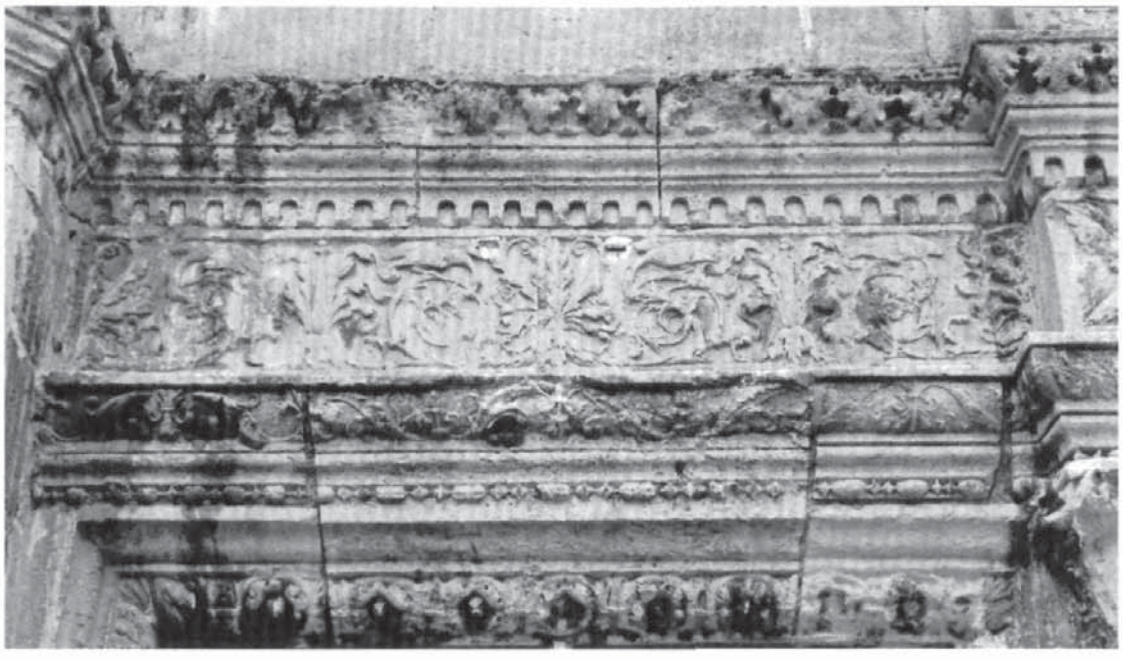

Fig. 15 Gaillon, Normandy: detail of Girolamo Pachiarotti's architectural ornament on the west gate pavilion

be substantiated. Indeed, the concept of this style as an individual and definitive stylistic trait needs to be approached with caution, because the work at Gaillon was clearly the product of many stylistic trends executed by both French craftsmen and by Italian artists, who had been brought specifically to Gaillon for their individual and particular talents (Liou 1997). A case in point is the western gatehouse, which was rebuilt between 1507 and 1509, where an Italian architectural sculptor, Gerolamo Pachiarotti, designed and directed the architectural embellishment in conjunction with a team of French masons who influenced this work with their previous experience of carving in the Flamboyant Gothic style.

The result of bringing Italian artists and sculptors to work alongside French craftsmen, especially masons and carpenters, was to produce a hybrid-style, one that saw the merging of classical motifs and designs into a Gothic framework (Fig. 15). Inevitably, there are individual motifs in common. These also appear, to name but two examples, in Francis I's magnificent stairs at Blois (Fig. 16), and in a series of screens that mask the chapels radiating from the ambulatory of Trinity abbey, Fécamp (pers. obs.), although these too are quite different in their overall style to the frieze designs in Winchester (Fig. 17). One of the more significant differences is that, in the French work, rinceaux have a more punctuated feel, with a definite sense of high-lighted motifs that are surrounded and supported by lesser motifs that are displayed in well-spaced and airy designs (Guillaume 2003; Thomas in Guillaume 2003). The French work moreover has an elegance of line and style, a wispy quality, and a lightness of touch that is entirely missing from English work. Furthermore, in settings within prestigious buildings, such as the royal palace at Blois or the cardinal's château at Gaillon, there can be seen a higher level of workmanship and quality of carving, both in the overall layout of individual designs and in their execution, alongside a more extensive repertoire of motifs and designs. That this should be the case for the French work should perhaps not necessarily surprise, especially so when work at the French royal palaces is considered. By contrast, the English work offers a constant repetition of the same set of motifs, even if there are subtle changes to the execution to individual elements that are closely meshed together. Furthermore, there is a heavy, rather cumbersome feel to these pieces – especially so in the case of the Pexall and south presbytery screen friezes – which is paralleled by inconsistent workmanship, including many mistakes in the layout of individual designs and a less-skilful accomplishment to some of the carving. This comparison of the qualities of the French and English work carries with the implication that it is unlikely, as Harvey and Blunt suggested, that foreign carvers were employed in the Winchester workshop to produce these works (Harvey 1984, 33; Blunt 1969, 22).

An outline chronology for early Tudor Renaissance work in Hampshire

Possibly the first Renaissance work in Winchester that was created on a large scale was the frieze that caps the stallwork in the chapel of the Hospital of St Cross (Smith and Riall 2002). This is characterised by a series of profile medallions set amongst a mass of fantastic creatures, most predominant of which are dolphins and birds, along with a profusion of putti. Additionally, there are a range of armorial and floral motifs that dangle along candelabra displayed down a series of pilasters. This work, heavily modelled on a set of stalls created before 1510 for Cardinal d'Amboise, was perhaps installed in 1517. The St Cross frieze was then emulated in a set of canopied stalls, or presses, that were created for Prior Silkstede; these being set up in the south transept of the cathedral soon after the creation of the St Cross work, and after Bishop Fox had abandoned his plans for the transformation of the cathedral's Romanesque transepts. Thus a date of *c.* 1520 would seem appropriate for Silkstede's Renaissance styled canopies. However, the men who carved Silkstede's canopies were quite definitely not the same team as those who had created the work

Fig. 16 Early Renaissance carvings in France: rinceaux from the escalier of Francis I at Blois

at St Cross; the workmanship in Silkstede's canopies is very inferior for the quality of their carving and the articulation of the designs.

The spiky arabesques in the frieze of Silkstede's canopies were absorbed into the design of the presbytery south screen frieze, but this second frieze is otherwise a novel design. The fantastic creatures that were a striking feature of the St Cross and Silkstede works are no longer utilised, nor are profile medallions re-used (indeed they reappear only once in this series of work, in the frieze that was designed for the exterior of the chapel at Thruxton but which now adorns the tower there). Also, many others of the motifs that appear in the St Cross work are similarly abandoned – a further noticeable example is the non-use of capitals: these appeared in both the St Cross and Silkstede frieze and only re-appear in the artillery fort plaques in the late 1530s or early 1540s. Additionally, the concept of a frieze constructed from a series of inter-related panels is also rejected in favour of returning to a Gothic standard – the rinceaux, although the decoration of this was re-devised utilising Renaissance motifs. The idea of using fantastic creatures that support centrally placed motifs, such as the rows of profile medallions in the St Cross frieze with their supporting creatures, is mostly rejected with the only instance of its re-use occurring

Fig. 17 Early Renaissance carvings in France: decorative panel from Fécamp.

Table 1 Construction dates and sequence of early Renaissance works, attributable to Thomas Bertie, in Hampshire

Site	*Date range*	*Most likely construction date*
St Cross, frieze over stallwork	1510–24	1517
Cathedral, Silkstede canopies	1515–24	1520–24
Cathedral, Presbytery south screen	1520–30	1520–22
Sherborne St John, Pexall chapel and monument	1519–1530	1518–22
Cathedral, Presbytery north screen tombs	1520–25	1520–22
Thruxton, Lisle monument	1520–27	1523–25
Thruxton, Lisle chapel	1520–27	1524–27
Cathedral, Presbytery north screen door	1524–25	1524–25
Cathedral, Presbytery north screen frieze	1520–30	1524–25
Christchurch priory, Draper chapel	1525–29	1529
East Tisted, Norton tomb	1520–40	1525–30

in the chapel battlement frieze at Thruxton, a further parallel between Thruxton and Silkstede's canopy being the use of griffins supporting shields or plaques (Riall 2007c). The Thruxton battlement frieze thus offering a link between Silkstede's canopies and the presbytery south screen, a view given some weight by the similarity of some of the floral motifs that appear in the Thruxton frieze, and which would seem to presage the design of the south screen frieze. However, the pilasters in the Silkstede canopywork were themselves a new introduction, there is no parallel with these to be seen in the St Cross work, and the assumption must be that they are a new, and imported design, though it is not known what their source is. The pilasters are echoed, and the motifs further evolved, in the designs used for the carved work on the case of Bishop Pontoise's tomb.

Next in this series comes the presbytery south frieze, in its two variations. The style of this frieze is then echoed in, or – alternatively – derives from, the frieze installed above the Pexall tomb. That over the Pexall tomb seems simpler, less contrived and may thus be an evolution of the presbytery south frieze, but we cannot now determine the sequence in which these friezes were executed. Nonetheless, there would seem to be a case to suggest, however equivocally expressed, that the presbytery south screen frieze and the Pexall frieze are earlier than the Pontoise tomb chest and the north presbytery screen frieze. Mary Lisle's will indicates that the style of the presbytery north screen can be dated to about 1523–24, and this must suggest that the dates set upon the presbytery screens themselves, 1525, actually records their completion (*contra* Biddle 1993, 273–74). The series is completed by Prior Draper's chapel screen, which carries inscribed upon it the date 1529, and the tomb for Richard and Elizabeth Norton that perhaps dates to the late 1520s or early 1530s (Riall 2007a). The early Franco-Italian style, as expressed through the frieze at St Cross, seems to have found little favour amongst the leading figures in Hampshire, or amongst the county gentry. Instead, a less uncompromising style was adopted, one that was in general terms based on the overall concept of the Renaissance style, but which was less intrusive, less intellectually demanding and which was fundamentally simpler.

Table 1 offers a tentative chronology for the sequence in which these pieces were constructed. The date ranges given here offer the main date bracket within which these pieces would have been created, while, in the right-hand column this range has been refined downwards to a tighter date-bracket based on the analysis outlined above.

Although the style faded away from Hampshire in the 1530s, there are examples at two of Thomas Bertie's forts. At both Calshot and Hurst, plaques that held displays of the royal arms are contained within classical frames, and these include candelabra filled with *all'antica* motifs. The Renaissance style returned with Philip of Spain in the 1550s, and, in Winchester, the best example of this is the frieze now displayed in the Westgate museum (Lewis 1996; Riall 2005b). A fine example of the later Renaissance style, including strapwork detailing, is to be seen in the pair of Paulet tombs on the south side of the chancel in the church at Old Basing, these housing the remains of the first and second marquises of Winchester, which were erected in the 1550s or 1560s, but these are a long way from the series of tombs covered in *all'antica* detail created during the 1520s.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper originated from the author's research for a PhD thesis, which was submitted to the University of Wales, Swansea, in September 2005, and I am most grateful to Dr John Law and Professor Stuart Clark for their supervision of my work, and to Dr Deborah Youngs for her comments on my draft chapters concerning Thomas Bertie and his funerary monuments. This paper has benefited from the interventions of an anonymous referee, and I am grateful to Professor Michael Hicks and Dr Angela Smith for their comments. I am most grateful to the Dean and Chapter of Winchester, and in particular Mr John Hardacre, for access to monuments and materials in Winchester cathedral; to the Rev. John Hamilton at Sherborne St John, and the Rev. Ann Mckenzie at Thruxton, for providing access to the monuments in their care, and for their enthusiastic support of my research.

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Abbreviations

L & P – Letters and Papers. Foreign and Domestic (ed Brewer *et al.*, 1862–1932); *VCH* – Victoria County History (Hampshire, unless otherwise stated).

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