

From the *Transactions* of the
Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

**A Sixteenth-century Monument in Westbury on Trym
church**

by I. M. Roper and C. R. Hudleston
1931, Vol. 53, 207-214

© The Society and the Author(s)

A SIXTEENTH-CENTURY MONUMENT IN WESTBURY-ON-TRYM CHURCH

by IDA M. ROPER and C. ROY HUDLESTON

BIGLAND¹ ascribes the curious mural monument at the east end of the north aisle of Westbury-on-Trym church to Miles Wilson, and his daughter Elizabeth. He gives part of the inscription and describes two of the three coats of arms, but he has given us no description of the three figures painted on stone, which form the most important part of the monument.

Since his day these figures have been concealed from view by the panelling and the seats, and the only portion of it now visible is a semicircular hood-moulding, nearly six feet from the ground. Within this arched recess a death's head is painted, and round it are the words:—
IN MEMORIA ÆTERNA ERIT IVSTVS (*sic*).

At the base of the arch is the following inscription:—

Here lye buried the bodyes of Miles Wilson late of Redland gente and of Elyzabeth his daughter maryed somtime to Roger Revell gente which twayne as they lived and dyed in the faythe of Christ Iesvs so do they lye here bvryed together until the time of the coming of ovre mercyful saviour Christ Iesvs which comminge we hope for as they did to be.

This is all of the inscription which can be seen, but it is continued on the portion of the monument now hidden.

Our member, the late Mr H. C. M. Hirst, made an examination of this concealed portion, when a part of

¹ *Monumental Collections, Gloucestershire*, vol. 3.

the panelling was taken down, and we have been enabled to make a further examination thanks to the kindness of the vicar of Westbury, the Rev. Dr H. J. Wilkins, who had the panelling temporarily removed. When this was done it revealed a mural monument with fluted pilasters, forming a setting to a painted panel on which are depicted on the left a coat of arms (coat no. 1 which will be described later), and below it the figures of a man and woman lying side by side on a tall sarcophagus with canopy. On the left is another coat of arms (no. 2), and below it is a cadaver lying on a similar tomb. At the base, at an equal distance between the two tombs, is a third coat of arms (no. 3).

The figure of the man is $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, and that of the woman 10 inches. He is represented with short hair and pointed beard, and in a suit of Elizabethan armour, with breastplate, hinged brassarts and large trefoil coudes, two tassets of almayne rivets strapped over puffed breeches, genouillères with trefoil side-pieces and ridged sabbatons. Round the neck is a ruff of a single fold. The woman is in a richly embroidered gown, ruff and tight-fitting Paris hood, and the feet in pointed shoes are shown amidst the folds of the garment. The hands of both figures are raised in prayer.

The cadaver, which is $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, lies on loin bands thrown back and falling down the side of the tomb; the legs are slightly raised, and the hands are crossed in front. On a panel at the base of the tomb are the words MILES WILSON DECEASED . . . OF APRIL 1567. The inscription is now very faint, but Bigland gives the date as 13 April, and adds the further inscription:—ELIZABETH REVELL DECEASED THE 28 OF JULY 1581, which can no longer be seen. Possibly it was in the four lines at the base of the monument of which only a few words can be read:—in line 1 . . . SPOUSE . . . THINGES FIRST BEGUN . . . line 2 . . . SADDE . . . and line 4 . . . ALWAYS (?) WITH CHRIST TO RAYGNE . . .

Between coats 1 and 2 is a small panel on which are the concluding lines of the inscription, of which the visible part has already been given. The words are :—SHORTELY EVEN FOR HIS ELCTS SAKE AS HE HATH PROMISED.

The monument is painted brown, and at some time the figures were gilded. It is in fairly good condition, though at the base of the monument the paint has peeled off. The stone pilasters are broken away at the base.

No illustration is known and so far as we are aware no description of it has hitherto been printed. The first coat of arms is placed over what are apparently the figures of Roger and Elizabeth Revell. It is: Per chevron [sable and gules?], in chief two castles [now hardly decipherable, but Mr Hirst noted them in 1930] and in base a fleur-de-lis or, impaling, quarterly 1 and 4. gules, a fess or between three cushions argent, tasselled or; 2 and 3, sable, a chevron or between three boars' heads coupé proper.

This is said to be REVELL impaling WILSON and an unknown quartered coat. We cannot find that any family of Revell bore the arms, but a family of Wilson of Bocking, Essex, bore gules, a fess argent between three cushions argent charged with a fleur-de-lis gules.² It is curious that the family of Hutton of Hutton John, Cumberland, bore quarterly 1 and 2 gules, a fess or between three cushions proper. HUTTON. 3 and 4, sable, a chevron or between three boars' heads proper. THIRLWALL. This is possibly mere coincidence, and it must be borne in mind that there is no evidence that the coats have not been repainted. Indeed the gold is so fresh that it seems highly probable that someone has attempted to touch them up.

The second coat, which is over the cadaver, is the impaled coat in no. 1.

The third coat is at the base of the monument, between

² See *Visitation of Essex*, 1634, Harleian Soc., XIII, 525.

the two tombs. It is : or, a chevron gules between three covered cups, impaling a coat which is very faint. All that we can say is that the field is sable, and there are three charges on it, two in chief or. They might be roses but they are impossible to identify with any certainty. We can offer no suggestion as to whose coat this was.

With the exception of Bishop Carpenter's effigy this is the oldest monument in the church, and evidently the father and daughter who are thus commemorated were once of some considerable importance in the parish. Atkyns (*Glocestershire*, 1768, p. 422) says :

Redland is a hamlet within Stoke-Bishop, which formerly belonged to the abbey of Tewkesbury . . . after the dissolution of that abbey it came to the Wilsons : Egion Wilson and Dorothy his wife, and Miles Wilson, joined in levying a fine of the manor of Rydland alias Thridland to John Foxton, 6 Ed. vi. [1552-3].

The earlier registers of Westbury-on-Trym have been transcribed and printed by Dr H. J. Wilkins and from them we learn that Miles Wilson gent. was buried on 14 April 1567. There are other entries relating to the family. Myles, son of Brian Wilson was buried in 1578 ; Brian Wilson in 1581-2 ; Myles, son of Richard Wilson, in 1598.

The will of Miles Wylson, of Redlyande Glouc gent., dated 19 April 1567, is at Somerset House.³ The following is an abstract :—

Directs that his debts are to be paid and if his lands and tenements are not sufficient then the profits of the lordship of Horfilde are to be employed or the most part of them ; the lordship to be let or sold till his debts be paid.

Firstly my cosen Myles Wylson to be paid out of the commodities of the lordship such debts as I owe him—

³ P.C.C. 32 Stonarde. The grants of probate are in P.C.C. 11 Babington.

the debts are described in a paper in the custody of Mr Thos. Chester. To Elizabethe my wief £20 per annum or as much ground as shall be worth £20 for her life, even if she marry again, but no lands.

Item. I give her the use of my mansion howse of Redlande with the garden and orchard there as long as she does remain a widow. To my daughter Anne Willson als Smithe or by what name soever she is or may be called £20 from my lands if it may be spared and after my debts are paid £30 a year, or £40 if it can be spared but if not £20 till the sum of £300 be fully paid to her. My household stuff be divided indifferentlie betwene my wief and my saide twooe daughters Anne and Elizabethe by what name so ever they be or oughte to be called. To everyone of my sister Elline three children £20 a piece when my cosen Miles Wilson is paid £220 odd pounds. And I will that every of the said children have the reversion that after fallethe in Horfield. To Thomas Bow'ms after the three children of my sisters specified in the said paper of my own handwriting one coppie holde at Horfield by the discretion of my overseers for term of his life. To Johane Smith £10. To my brother George £20 a year for his life I forgive all sums he owes me. The residue to my daughter Elizabethe Wilson als Smythe and her heirs and for lack of them to Anne Willson als Smythe my daughter and failing her to my brother George and his heirs and failing them to my cousin Myles Willson, and failing him to my right heirs. My daughter Elizabeth to be executor and the overseers Thos. Chester, William Rede, Edward Vele, Wm. Vele, Myles Wilson, George Wyllson. If any ambiguities arise because of this will being made in great haste testator has imparted to the overseers his mind at large before the making of this will.

On 12 November 1567 administration of Miles Wilson's estate was granted to Elizabeth his widow during the minority of Elizabeth Wilson, his daughter and executor.

This grant was revoked and on 21 May 1568 there was a new grant to Edward Vele, William Vele,⁴ George Wilson and Miles Wilson, the supervisors named in the will, to administer the estate during the minority of Elizabeth Wilson als. Smythe. On 12 March 1571-2 there was yet another grant, this time to Roger Revell who had married Elizabeth Wilson at Westbury on 7 June 1571. Elizabeth was still a minor in 1571-2. Her burial on 8 July 1581 is entered in the Westbury registers. At this point we meet with a difficulty. On 22 January 1581-2 yet another grant of administration of the estate of Miles Wilson was given, this time to George Wilson, described as natural and lawful son of the deceased. The grant was to administer the estate left unadministered by Roger Revell, now deceased, who had been appointed during the minority of the executrix. We can only suggest that through some misunderstanding the clerk who made the entry wrongly assumed that it was Roger who had died, and not Elizabeth his wife, who as the monument shows died in July 1581. Certainly Roger survived her and it was not until 1593 that he was buried at Westbury. Apparently he married again for in the Westbury registers are the following baptisms of children of Roger Revell⁵:—Richard 1583; John 1584; William 1585; Anne 1587; Mary 1588-9 (buried a few days later); and Raphe 1590. Ales Revell 'gent. wydowe' who was buried in 1590 was possibly Roger's mother.

The registers also give the burial on 13 Feb. 1584-5

⁴ The Veeles were hereditary lords of the manor of Over in the parish of Almondsbury. The effigies of Edward Veele d. 1577 and Katherine, his wife d. 1575 are in Almondsbury church. Their youngest daughter Susan married John Large, and it will be recalled that in Westbury-on-Trym church is the effigy of Mistress Rose Large (1530-1610), described I. M. Roper, *Effigies of Gloucestershire*, 1931, pp. 176-8.

⁵ These and other extracts are from Dr Wilkins' printed copy of the registers.

of Clement Revell, whose will is at Somerset House.⁶ From it we learn that he was Roger's brother. The will is dated 24 Jan. 1583-4 and is as follows:—

Clement Revell of Ridland als Thurdland, par. Westbury-upon-Trim, co. Glouc. gent ' of good and perfect health and memory (God be therefore lauded) and minded by God's sufferance to travel in my necessary affairs and for that my return is uncertain'. I commit my soul into the hands of God etc. and my body to be laid where it shall please Almighty God. To my loving cousin Richard Revell son of my brother Roger Revell £100 in money at 21. To William Parker now servant and dwelling with my said brother Roger Revell £5 towards a fine for the purchasing of him a bargān or ten̄te if he be true and faithful servant to his said master. My wearing apparel to be divided among my brother Roger's men-servants. All the rest of my goods, lands &c. within the realm of England to my said brother Roger Revell who is to be sole executor.

Witnesses. John Cassy. Roger Revell & Thomas Willett.

12 Feb. 27 Eliz. [1585]. I Clement Revell of Ridland co. Glouc. sick in body. The will now in the custody of my brother Roger Revell being absent to stand as my last will saving that the £5 bequeathed to William Parker to be revoked and given to Henry Brinklawe my brother's servant and my kinsman. Also to John Revell my said brother his son 100 marks in money. To my mother 20s. to be bestowed on a ring for a remembrance. 10s. to each of my brother's household servants. Whereas it may seem that I have revoked £5 before given to William Parker he is to have it ' so that he continue and remain

⁶ P.C.C. 20 Brudenell. We are indebted to Mr Bernard W. Duggleby for an abstract of this will and also for help with the numerous grants of probate of Miles Wilson's will.

a dutiful servant'. 20s. to the relief of the poor of the parish. This script to be amended to my said last will.

Witnesses. Edm. Greene, Thomas Dunne, Mary Revell.

The will was proved by Roger Revell on 3 May 1585.

Of Roger Revell's son Richard we have one further note. In *Transactions*, xvii, 212 there is a reference to a fine on the morrow of Souls, 2 James I [3 Nov. 1604], 'Richard Hill knt., q. & Richard Revell esq. def. of the manor of Thrydlande alias Rydlande alias Ridlande with appurts. etc. for £240'.

With this sale apparently the connexion of the Revells with Redland ceased. Richard Hill, who thus became possessed of the manor, was later knighted, and died 29 May 1627 aged 70. His fine monument now in the east end of the south or Canynges chapel in Westbury church is stated to have been in front of the Wilson monument.⁷

⁷ The Hill monument was on the north side of north aisle or Large chapel till 1866. Mr H. C. M. Hirst *in litt* to C. Roy Hudleston, 1930.