

NOTES ON SOME FAMILIES AND BRASSES AT
GREAT THURLOW AND LITTLE BRADLEY,
SUFFOLK.

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When inscriptions and shields of arms have been lost from brasses, it becomes a matter of conjecture what persons they represent. The style of costumes assists considerably in determining their date to within a year or two, and beyond that, one can only attribute them to lords of the manor or other known prominent local people. But when brasses in two neighbouring churches are both ascribed tentatively to the same man, as we find at Great Thurlow and Little Bradley, both identified, though doubtfully, with Thomas Knighton, 1532, and c. 1530 respectively,* an alternative suggestion is obviously necessary. Weever† is very valuable in assisting in identifying the brasses at Great Thurlow, but does not record any memorials at Little Bradley. I have already found it evident in other cases, that he errs in attributing some memorials to a church when they obviously belong to a neighbouring one which he omits to notice. This appears to be the case with Great Thurlow and Little Bradley; hence my purpose is to sort out some of his notes on Great Thurlow to their proper churches, and to suggest some identification of the brasses.

The following pedigree shows how in the fifteenth and sixteenth century the manors of Lackford, Great Thurlow and Little Bradley descended in the Gedding and Poley families through the marriage of the heiress

*This occurs in both Farrer's *Suffolk Brasses*, 1903, and Mill Stephenson's *List of Brasses of the British Isles*, 1926.

†*Funeral Monuments*, 1631.

Catherine Peche and her first husband Sir John de Aspale. The Gedding family has left no traces surviving in the form of memorials at any of these three places; but one gathers the impression that Lackford was their chief manor and residence. From the second marriage of Catherine Peche, with Sir Thomas Nutbeane, sprang the connection with the Hinkley and Caldebeck families, and through them the Blodwells and Underhills. It appears likely that in the first half of the sixteenth century the Blodwells were resident tenants at Great Thurlow, and the Underhills at Little Bradley; as such they have certainly left more mark locally than did the lords of the manors.

This pedigree shows how one daughter of Henry Caldebeck, Thomasin, mothered the Little Bradley folk, while the other daughter, Margaret, did likewise to those of Great Thurlow. The logical conclusion from this is that holders of Little Bradley were buried at Little Bradley, and those of Great Thurlow rest at Great Thurlow.

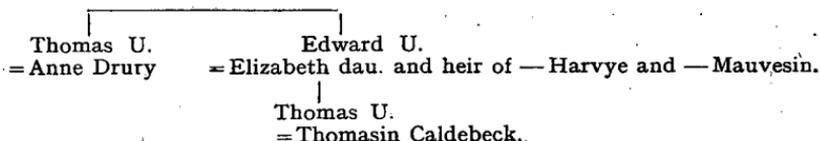
With this before us, let us look first at Farrer's list of Great Thurlow brasses. No. 3, Thomas Underhill, 1508, and his wife, Anne Drury; a plate of nine sons; plate of daughters missing. There are two shields surviving. The first bears [*Gules*] *six annulets, 3, 2 and 1* [*Or*] UNDERHILL: the second UNDERHILL impaling *On a chief, between two mullets pierced, a tau cross*, DRURY. Weever records this memorial with the information that they lie buried in the quire. I suggest that he was a brother of Edward Underhill and uncle of Thomas Underhill, who married Thomasin, daughter and coheir of Henry Caldebeck.*

*See p. 46.

No. 4. A shield bearing *a fess engrailed*: three other shields and inscription missing, c. 1530. The surviving shield is the fourth, at the lower right corner of the slab. The memorial has been ascribed tentatively to Thomas Knighton (d. 1532) and his wife Alice, because Weever has (in error, as I suggest) recorded their memorial as being at Great Thurlow, whereas we should expect to find it at Little Bradley. Failing the identification of the surviving shield which may have borne other charges in addition to the engrailed fess, one can only suggest that it may have belonged either to John Blodwell who died 29 Sep. 1534 and his wife Anne (as Weever records, buried at Great Thurlow), or to Thomas Underhill the son of Thomas and Thomasin.

Turning now to Little Bradley: the shield carved in stone which has been inserted above the brass of a kneeling man and woman, bears 1 and 4; [Gules] six annulets, 3, 2 and 1 [Or], UNDERHILL: 2; *Per fess indented* [Or and Gules], HARVYE: 3; [Gules] three bendlets [Argent], MAUVESIN.* It impales Quarterly of six: 1 and 6; [Argent] on a chevron between three crows [Sable] as many cinquefoils (or roses) [of the first], CALDEBECK: 2; [Gules] a chevron engrailed [Argent], HINKLEY: 3; [Gules] a fess nebulée Ermine, NUTBEANE: 4; [Argent] a fess between two chevrons [Gules], PECHE: 5; Quarterly [Gules] and Vairée [Or and Azure] over all a bend [Argent], PEVERELL.† It is evident that this shield,

*The Rev. H. A. Harris has identified these arms as Harvyne and Mauvesin. The suggested Underhill pedigree is therefore:—



†See the Pedigree *supra*.

although it may not have been part of a memorial slab, yet undoubtedly records Thomas Underhill who married Thomasin, daughter and coheir of Henry Caldebeck.

Farrer's Little Bradley No. 1. Civilian and his wife kneeling; inscription, scrolls and Trinity lost; the Trinity replaced by the carved shield of arms, just noticed. Farrer dates this brass as *circa* 1520 and Mill Stephenson ten years earlier. With this wide margin it might well represent either Thomas Underhill and his wife Thomasin *née* Caldebeck or their son Thomas. It may be surmised that the name of the latter's wife was Anne from the fact that one daughter is named Anne, the other daughter being named after her grandmother Thomasin.

No. 2. Man in armour, *c.* 1530; two sons and one daughter. His head, wife and inscription lost. This has been identified as Thomas Knighton, who, Weever records (in error) at Great Thurlow, as dying on 23 April, 1532, and his wife Alice. Thomas Knighton, as the pedigree shows, lived at Little Bradley and so would be buried there. Incidentally the printed pedigrees record only one son Francis and one daughter Anne. Thomas Knighton married Alice Bull of Hertford and was the son of Thomas Knighton of Bayford, Herts, and his second wife Anne, daughter and coheir, with her sister Thomasin, of the last mentioned Thomas Underhill. Thomas Knighton *senior* was buried at Bayford. All that now remains there of his memorial are three brass fragments. One shows his figure in armour; another has part of a female figure, that of his first wife, who was a daughter of the Gascoigne family; the third is a shield bearing arms KNIGHTON impaling GASCOIGNE quartering PIGGOT.*

*The reader is referred to the author's article on the Knighton family in the East Herts Archæological Society's Transactions, vol. VIII.

The only other memorial recorded by Weever at Great Thurlow is that of Thomas Hinkley (d. 1432) and his wife Margaret, daughter and coheir of Sir Thomas Notbeme (Nutbeane or Nothgame) and widow of Sir John Aspall (d. 1442). They were the parents of Cicely, wife of Henry Caldebeck and grandparents of Thomasin, who married Thomas Underhill.

The pedigree of the Underhill family has yet to be compiled. All that is known at present are these facts:—

1. Edward Underhill married Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of — Harvye and Johanna, daughter and heiress of — Mauvesin of Netherhall, Little Bradley.*

2. Thomas Underhill, perhaps a brother of Edward (d. 1508) married Anne Drury, whose arms were *On a chief between two mullets pierced, a tau cross.*

3. Thomas, son of Edward Underhill, married Thomasin, daughter and coheir of Henry Caldebeck.

4. Thomas Underhill, his son, married Anne — and had two daughters coheirs, Thomasin, who married Thomas Estotevyll of Dalham, and Anne, who married Thomas Knighton, of Bayford.

**Ex inform.* Rev. H. A. Harris, *Editor.*