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# Elusive Virtuosi – Thomas and Joshua Mann

R. J. Malden

**Summary** For many years York was accepted as being the second city of the nation and a centre of excellent craftsmanship. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries this dominance was at its peak but it is only now that the high standing of these craftsmen is emerging.

Far from being simple engravers **Thomas and Joshua Mann** were architects and scientific instrument makers with a wide range of contacts with members of the Royal Society. Had the brothers lived a few years longer it is certain that they would have been considered as founding members of the York virtuosi. Winner of the 1985 Sheldon Memorial Trust Essay Competition.

The late seventeenth century saw a flourishing of scientific and artistic thought. In London, as a result of the Great Fire, a widespread building programme was in progress and the Royal Society, with the patronage of Charles II, had been formed as a discussion group for the latest scientific discoveries. Elsewhere people with enquiring minds were forming informal groups to discuss and exchange ideas. In this York was no exception, and a group of friends, known as the York virtuosi, exchanged letters and met in each other's houses to discuss a wide range of topics. The composition of this group has been ably described in Trevor Brighton's definitive work on the life and work of **Henry Gyles**. Letters from members of this group have been published.<sup>2</sup> The virtuosi numbered some eight people with a further five on the periphery, though it is likely that the group contained more members than have been identified. Henry Gyles (1645-1709), glasspainter, formed the focal point for the group which often met at his house in Micklegate. Of the others **John Lambert** (c.1640-1701), **William Lodge** (1649-1689) and **Francis Place** (1647-1728), together with a French painter, **Jacques Parmentier** (1658-1730), were particularly interested in the arts and engraving. **Ralph Thoresby** (1658-1725) was an antiquarian and topographer, whilst **Thomas Kirke** (1650-1706) was a mathematician and Dr. **Martin Lister** (c.1638-1712) was an eminent zoologist; all three were Fellows of the Royal Society.<sup>3</sup> On the periphery of the group were **Moses Ashenden**, a physician, and Henry Gyles' nephew, **James Smith**, an antiquarian; and there were also three clergymen, **George Plaxton**, Rector of Barwick in Elmet, **Miles Gale**, Rector of Keighley, and **Cyril Arthington**, Rector of Adel and a Fellow of the Royal Society.

The virtuosi seem to have been at the height of their powers in the last decade of the seventeenth century although they held meetings from 1676

onwards. The group may have been affected by the departure of Lister from York in 1683 and Lodge's death in 1689. The brothers, Thomas and Joshua Mann, had they survived beyond 1690, would probably have been among their number as they certainly must have known most of the virtuosi personally. The purpose of this article is to show that these two brothers were of such a standing to have been considered on a par with the founding members of the York virtuosi.

The name Mann is not unusual in England and there were areas near York where the name was quite common such as at Little Ouseburn and in Leeds. The name also occurs in London where, in 1602, William Mann was a Burgess and surveyor to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster,<sup>4</sup> and another was Sword Bearer to the Lord Mayor between 1677 and 1686.<sup>5</sup> Since Thomas was a very popular Christian name, it has not been possible to trace much of the brothers' family. Richard Mann claimed his freedom of the City of York in 1630<sup>6</sup> as a cordwainer and his will, dated 1682, makes no mention of any brothers.<sup>7</sup> John Mann was free as a baker in 1634<sup>8</sup> and was buried in 1678.<sup>9</sup>

The Will of Thomas Mann is quite specific, mentioning his wife, children and brother Joshua:  
I Thomas Mann of the City of Yorke Architect being of perfect memory and remembrance doe make and ordaine this my last will and testament in manner and forme ffollowing this twenty seventh day of November 1680. I give unto my brother Joshua Mann all such tooles of mine as he now worketh with as a legacy; Item I give all my houses leases Landes Tenements and goodes whatsoever to Margery my wife, And to my children borne or to be borne to be equally divided amongst them; And I doo make Margery my wife & Joshua my brother Executors of this my last will and testament; In witness hereof I have hereunto set my hand

and seale the day and yeare ffirst above written Tho: Mann sealed signed and delivered in the presence of Hannah Carr Ann Scarth John Todd Rob: Atkinson.<sup>10</sup>

The usual problems of tracing genealogical details of seventeenth century craftsmen are aggravated in this case as neither Thomas nor Joshua claimed their freedom of the City. The regulations of the City council were very strict on this point. Either freedom was obtained to trade in the City or else the individual ceased trading or moved to one of the religious liberties where the jurisdiction of the council did not run. It is somewhat unusual that neither brother claimed his freedom and that certainly Thomas was allowed to carry on his work as an engraver and architect apparently unhindered. That he was expected to claim his freedom is clear when his name first appears in the Poor Relief assessment for 1672 with the entry: 'Thomas Mann till he be a freeman 6d for his house 1d'. In subsequent years this was reduced to 2d and 1d, and no further attempt seems to have been made to persuade him to do so.<sup>11</sup> In the 1671 Hearth Tax returns for the City Thomas is assessed as having three hearths in St. Michael's parish, whilst Richard has two hearths in St. Peter the Little and Mr. Mann has one hearth in Minster Yard.<sup>12</sup> By the 1674 Hearth Tax return Mr. Mann has six hearths in Minster Yard whilst Thomas has two in Water Lane.<sup>13</sup> It is possible that the Mr. Mann in Minster Yard was Joshua, as he was buried in St. Michael le Belfrey church on 13 May 1688 and his daughter Ann was baptised there on 13 December of the same year.<sup>14</sup>

The witness, John Todd, also lived in St. Michael's parish. As will be seen later, Todd was an active partner with Mann and was a builder. The City Chamberlains' accounts for 15 July 1678 record a payment of £20 'to Mr. John Todd in full for ye contract for Building a house in ye Mint Yard'.<sup>15</sup>

Thomas states in his will that he was an architect, and the late seventeenth century saw a boom in building in the City and surrounding countryside. Unfortunately most of this work was, in turn, swept away during the eighteenth century. There are few records of Mann's connection as an architect but those that survive imply a wide ranging practice. In York the building work for the council was in the hands of the City Husband and Mann must have known the holders of this post. Henry Gyles' father Edmund (1611-1676) was succeeded as City Husband in 1676 by John Etty (1634-1709) who had claimed his freedom by patrimony in 1654 as a carpenter. Etty is known to have worked on various Yorkshire properties including the house in Mint Yard for which John Todd received a payment; Grinling Gibbons

(1648-1720) is reported by Ralph Thoresby to have worked for him before moving to London where he was discovered in 1671 by the diarist John Evelyn.<sup>16</sup> That John Etty should qualify as a member of the York virtuosi might be taken from the inscription on his memorial in All Saints, North Street, which states: 'By strength of his own genius and application he had acquired great knowledge of Mathematicks, especially Geometry & Architecture in all its parts far beyond any of his co-tempores in the City.'<sup>17</sup>

Thomas Mann is perhaps best known in York for building the Market Cross in Pavement. In 1665 Marmaduke Rawdon, son of a York alderman, made a will which was proved in February 1668. In it he left generous bequests to his family and to the City of York, giving his intentions in great detail:

... Item, I give sixty pounds to the cittie of York to be employed in a gold chaine to be worne by the Lady Mairesse successively: Item, I give to the said cittie four hundred pounds for the buying those houses which belonged to Mr Scott next Allhallowes, for them all to be puld downe to enlarge the Pavement, and what the materials of the old houses may come to, be toward making a Crosse or shelter for the markt people that sell meale and corne: Item, I give unto the said cittie one drinking cup of pure gold of the vallew of one hundred pounds, which I desire my executor to have handsomely made, and the cittie armes and my armes graven upon it, 'This is the gift of Marmaduke Rawdon, sonne of Laurence Rawdon, late of this cittie, alderman;' alsoe, I give unto the said cittie a silver chamber pott of the value of tenn pounds, booth which are to goe from Lord Maior to Lord Maior, and if these two bee converted to any other use the vallew thereof to return to my executor or his heirs: . . .<sup>18</sup>

The City Council carried out his requests and Thomas was employed to design and build the market cross. First mention is made in April 1672 when Mann proposed an addition to the original plan:

Ordered that a new addition be made to the [cross] upon the pavement according to a draught thereof shewed by Thomas Mann. The charge thereof not to exceed seaventy pounds & the Lord Mayor, Sir John Hewley & Aldr Richardson are desired to contract for the same.<sup>19</sup>

As so often happens in a building contract, the expenditure ran over budget and in March 1673 the Council left the matter in the hands of the previous Mayor, Sir Henry Thompson junior, to sort the matter out:

Whereas Thomas Mann finds himself to be at greater charge & care in and about the cross upon ye pavement than he is satisfied for, having done more worke about the same than contracted for. It is therefore Ordered yt in respect Sir Henry Thompson, Jun Knt had the oversight thereof & contracted for the same, yt [what] further ssume the said Tho: Mann shall deserve about the same be referred to the said Sir Henry Thompson so ye same ssume agreed not Town payment.<sup>20</sup>

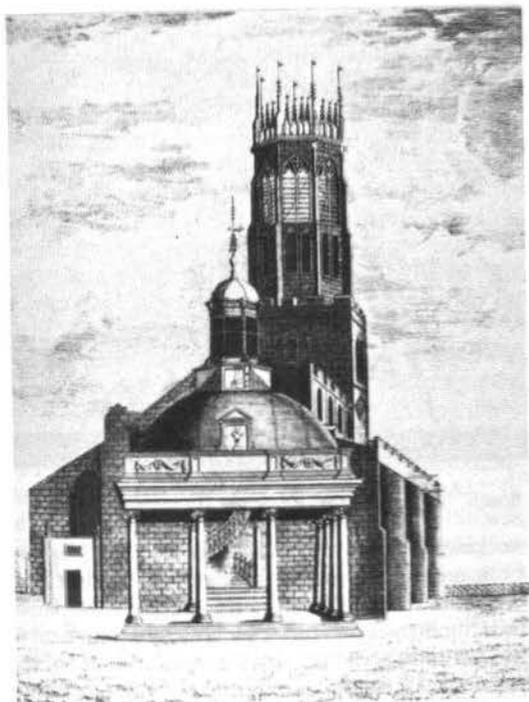


Plate I  
The Market Cross in Pavement 1736.

Between 12 March 1672 and 20 January 1673 Mann was paid a total of £125 4s. 2d. for building the cross.<sup>21</sup> Unfortunately the structure was demolished in 1813, but an illustration of it was published by Francis Drake in *Eboracum* in 1736 and a detailed description of it is among Drake's MSS, dated c.1709. Drake felt that the cross had been 'ill executed' and it is interesting to compare the artistic licence in the illustration with the detailed description:

The Description of ye Cross  
in ye Pavement of Yorke

It's a Commendable piece of Architecture, the Iconography or Ground plan is a Quadrate or Right angled Square, to wch you Ascend by two stepps: upon the Area (or the flower) of ye Uppermost is Erected 12 Columes or Pillars Crowned wth Architrave, freese, & Cornise,

upon ye Cornise is Erected a Tarrase or Battlemt, not wth Ballisters or Indented, as has formerly been Used but wth a Pedistall or foot of a Pillar perpendicular over every Collume whose Breadth agrees wth the Naked of ye Colume above, open'd before into a Pannell, & wth Sollid Pannells betwixt, only the Pedestalls breake before the Pannells, as also the Coronett or small Cornice wch Covers it, upon every breake or Pedestall stands the forme of an Urne (or flower pott rather) for finishing, the Rafters of ye Roofe make a Semicircle fro the one side to ye other, (like unto a Cupolo) or round Looover, on each side or face of wch is a Lucia Window finished wth Pedamett on Cornice, & on the Side next the Markett Stands the head or Effigie of Mr. Rawdon ye Donor, with an Inscription Showing ye Same, in ye Center of wch Roofe rises a Turret Octa-angular, finished on each Angle with Pillasters which revolves into Scrowles, on wch is 4 Quadrans or Sun Dyalls Lanskipt wth severall Inscriptions, (i:e) on ye East Quadran, Eheu fugaces, on ye South Quadran, Dum Spectus fugio, on ye West Quadran, fugit hora ora, on ye North Quadran Tempus Edax rerum, On his Pedestalls below & above is finished wth Architrave freese & Cornice, wth breaks about the head of Each Pillaster, & is Rooft with a Cupullo of ye Same Angles, upon wch is a flower pott, in the centre of wch is fixed the Standard for ye ffaine, on each Side of wch is Sett of wch Scrowld Worke of Iron, E:W:N:S: Significing or Showing the 4 Cardinall Winds or Quarters or ye Horrizon, above is the ffaine, upon wch is Depicted 1672, being the year in wch it was built upon the Pavement below & in Equa distant from Each side is Erected 5 or 6 Stepps of Stone, Quaderangular in ye Center of the Area above is Erected a Newell Octa-Angular, about wch rises a pair of Winding Staires of the Same Angles, & finisht with Rayles & Ballisters on ye outside, by wch you Ascend into the Roofe or Chamber above.<sup>22</sup>

On the dedication stone was the inscription:

Marmaduke Rawdon, Deceased sonne of  
Laurence Rawdon, late alderman of  
this city, was founder of this cross.

Erected in ye maiioralty of William  
Richardson in ye year 1671// Finished in ye  
maiioralty of Sr Henry Thomson, junior, kt. in  
ye year 1672.

The dedication stone was the only fragment of the cross that survived and has now disappeared. It is possible that a further structure built by Mann may be identified from the description of the Pavement market cross. Sir Henry Thompson of

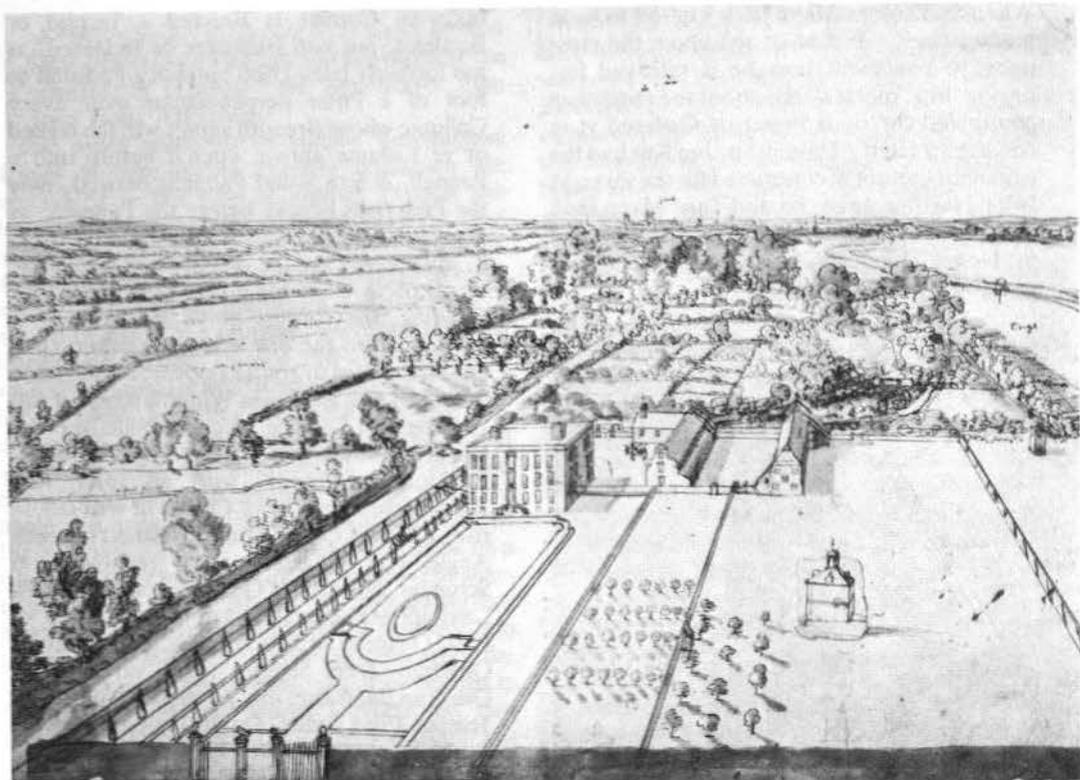


Plate 2

*Middlethorpe Hall and York from South, by Francis Place, c.1705.*

Middlethorpe, Lord Mayor in 1672, lived near Mann in Castlegate.<sup>23</sup> The House Books of the years following his mayoralty record difficulties of the council in obtaining repayment of a loan made some years earlier.<sup>24</sup> The loan was probably required for building work that Thompson was carrying out, not only an extension in brick at the rear of the Black Swan Inn, Peaseholme Green, between 1663 and 1672,<sup>25</sup> but also at Middlethorpe Hall c.1681/2. In the grounds of the latter there survives a dovecote which, in a contemporary illustration by Francis Place, shows many similarities to the market cross.<sup>26</sup> It is reasonable to presume that Mann carried out work for Sir Henry Thompson after the contract in Pavement.

Most of the available information about Thomas Mann as an architect and possible virtuoso comes from the diary of Robert Hooke (1637-1703).<sup>27</sup> Hooke was an inventor and secretary of the Royal Society which, without his efforts, would probably have foundered within a few years of starting. He was an intimate friend of Sir Christopher Wren and the inventive genius behind the watches of Thomas Tompion and the precursor of Newton in the discovery of gravity. Hooke led a bachelor life meeting acquaintances at various coffee houses in London when not

working for the Royal Society or for Gresham College as Professor of Geometry. The year after the Great Fire of London he was appointed one of the City Surveyors and so was closely involved in the rebuilding of the city.<sup>28</sup> His diary covers the period 1672-1680 and records his wide range of contacts and interests. The editors of the diary have presumed that, since frequent visits were made to Man's Coffee House in Chancery Lane, nearly every other reference to Mr. Man relates to the owner of that establishment. However, a closer study of the text shows that, of over 20 entries which mention the name Man most refer to Thomas or Joshua and their long standing contact with London.

There are five entries for 1673, starting in January with 'Mr. Man here' and proceeding to 'Din'd at Mr. Man's at Fish Street Hill with Mr. Marshall' to receiving a payment of 50s. from him. Mr. Marshall was Joshua Marshall (1629-1678), a master mason and the son of the master mason to Charles II. Mann's London base at Fish Street Hill is near the Billingsgate Fish Market and a considerable distance from Man's Coffee House in Chancery Lane.<sup>29</sup> In May 1674 Hooke 'went to Mrs. Mans' and then, in July, at Garaways Coffee House met 'New Yorkshire Man with Collins'.

John Collins (1625-1683) was a mathematician, government clerk and a Fellow of the Royal Society. This entry may be explained if Hooke was meeting Joshua for the first time. Certainly an entry for the following February mentions 'At Garaways J.Man of York'. Three days later Hooke records a method of jointing water pipes: 'Man told me that Quick Lime white of eggs and blood or slime of snail makes a cement for water pipes as hard as stone'.<sup>30</sup> In November 1674 Hooke went 'with Mr. Man at Hondius's'. Abraham Hondius (1638-1695) was a Dutch painter who had settled in London. In May 1675 Hooke writes to 'Man at York' and, in October, appears the dissatisfied entry 'To Moorgate met Cartwright and Oliver. Man fals with Oliver'.<sup>31</sup> Perhaps Thomas had sided against Hooke in some architectural argument with John Oliver (1616-1701), a glass painter, mason and one of the City Surveyors, and Cartwright, also a mason. Hooke's only recorded direct contact with the York virtuosi, apart from purchasing books by Martin Lister, came later in October when he 'wrote to Mr. Kirke of Yorkshire'.

The chief link between Thomas Mann and Robert Hooke was in connection with work being carried out at Londesborough Hall in Yorkshire. This property was part of the vast estates inherited by Elizabeth Clifford on the death of her father, the fifth and last Earl of Cumberland, in 1643. In 1634 she had married Robert Boyle who was created in 1664 Earl of Burlington or Bridlington in Yorkshire. Hooke had served as an assistant to Boyle and so knew him well. Pepys records that Lady Burlington was 'a very fine speaking lady, and a good woman'.<sup>32</sup> She was responsible, during her husband's absences abroad, for improvements to the estate. Specifically Hooke was involved with Thomas Mann in altering the gardens and gates at Londesborough. Hooke very rarely left London so it would have been natural for him to make use of an acquaintance in Yorkshire. During 1676 and 1677 there are several references in the diary to the project.

- 28 August 'With the Lady and Lord Burlington to whom I gave Directions about Garden in Yorkshire.'
- 24 October 'Writ to Tho: Man of Yorke . . . Severall times with Lady Burlington about Man of York.'
- 25 November 'To Lady Burlingtons with Garden plat [plan], met Mr. Mayser, Mr. Mans friend. Plat approved. From Lady Burlington 3 guinnys.'

A further plan was drawn four days later and this was probably passed on to Mann on 4 December when Hooke went to 'View at the Hatters 7s. 6d.

then to the Pillar measured it with Leybourne, Marshall, Ailward, Oliver, Man, Hoskins &c'. Further information may have been dispatched on 17 December when Hooke 'met Fitch at Garaways who was to goe out of town next day for Yorkshire'.<sup>33</sup> The meeting to measure the Pillar shows the calibre of company in which Thomas was moving. Joshua Marshall and John Oliver have been mentioned above; William Leybourne (1626-c.1700) was a mathematician and surveyor, whilst Sir John Hoskins (1634-1705) was President of the Royal Society in 1682/3.

Thomas was in London on 6 January 1677 when Hooke went 'to Lady Burlington. Mett man and concluded Garden'. They met again on the 16th: 'met Man with him to Boyles at Green dragon 6d'. and the following day 'to Spittle with Man'. The Spittle refers to the Bethlehem Hospital, better known as Bedlam, which was designed by Robert Hooke. They met again on the 19th and at Garaways on 24 January and in May there are two entries: 'Man would not summon to City Lands without order' and 'with Man to Braces 1/-'. In April 1678 Hooke was still dealing with the project as he visited Lady Burlington 'about her peers and Lodges', and his final reference to Mann is a meeting of acquaintances at the Request Coffee House on Boxing Day 1678. It is unfortunate that Londesborough Hall is no longer in existence, but two sets of gate piers do survive.<sup>34</sup>

The contacts made by Mann in London appear to have also helped him in other contracts. In September 1674 the City council set up a committee:

to consider of the proposal of Mr. Whistler, Mr. Todd and Thomas Mann about conveying water to this Cittie & to consult of the Advantages and betterness of Ousewater or Spring water, and all other matters touchinge the same and to report their opinion therein at the next guildhall meeting. And the said committee are desired to meete about the same upon Munday next at two of the Clock upon Ousebridge where both parties concerned may appear if they please and the said committee are afterwards to treat the said parties with a glass of Wyne.<sup>35</sup>

Henry Whistler was a London merchant and the financial backer for the scheme and is probably the same Mr. Whistler who was on the committee of management for the construction of the Bethlehem Hospital. The committee reported immediately to the next meeting of the council:

Upon reading ye preposall of Mr. Whistler about a water work to be erected in this city Its thought fitt if Mr. Whistler please to come downe to this City that then he be discoursed

with about the same by such persons as this Court shall appoint for the purpose.<sup>36</sup>

At this stage the proposal went no further until January 1677 when the Council set an ultimatum: 'Ordered yt ye proposalls of Mr. Todd & Thomas Mann be suspended untill Mr. Whistler be discoursed with about the erectinge a New Waterworks.'<sup>37</sup> This resulted in Whistler travelling to York, as the following meeting of the Council

Ordered yt Mr. Whistler be consulted about a waterworks to be erected in the water house at Lendal and yt ye persons hereunder mentioned be & are appointed a Committee to conclude with him about the said work & to lymitt a yard for ye performance thereof according to former proportionment or such other as ye said committee think fit.<sup>38</sup>

This last order is, perhaps, a reflection of Thomas Mann's overspending on the Pavement market cross contract. On 1 April 1677 Whistler concluded a contract with the City council in which they encouraged and enabled him 'to erect and make a waterhouse and waterwork for the service and accommodation of the inhabitants'. He was assigned 'all that ancient building or Tower called the Waterhouse Tower situated on the East side of the River Ouse . . . heretofore used as a waterhouse & waterwork'. He was to lay pipes, wheels and other engines and things necessary, into the river for drawing and conveying water. the lease was for 500 years with the construction work, presumably designed by Thomas Mann and built by John Todd, to be completed within three years. During this time he

was to erect at his own cost 'one good and substantial Waterhouse or Waterwork as shall convey and carry the water from the same [River Ouse] into the Streets of the said City of York for the use of the inhabitants of the said City and for such yearly rent and rents to be by them paid'. The Mayor and Commonalty were to fit water cocks 'for the quenching and putting out of any fire' and to maintain them at their own charge.<sup>39</sup>

Whistler seems to have ceased taking any direct interest in the scheme after 1682 when the contract was turned over to William Pawley and Edward Dallow. The lease of the tower and lands was placed in trust for 42 years, into the care of Gabriel Whistler of Combe, Southampton, and Anthony Merry, a London merchant, during which time Pawley and Dallow were to enjoy the profits. Anthony Merry assigned the residue of the 42 year lease to the York bricklayers, John Elan and Thomas Browne, in 1716.<sup>40</sup> It is possible that Whistler's loss of interest in the scheme was strongly influenced by the death of Thomas Mann.

One further piece of evidence survives to demonstrate Mann's architectural ability, though the actual building was demolished some 30 years ago. In 1680 he sent plans to Richard Beaumont for the improvement of Whitley Beaumont Hall, alterations that were put in hand a few years later. On the reverse of the plan, which has been damaged, is a letter from Mann to Beaumont not only discussing the building work but also showing Mann's interest in scientific instruments:

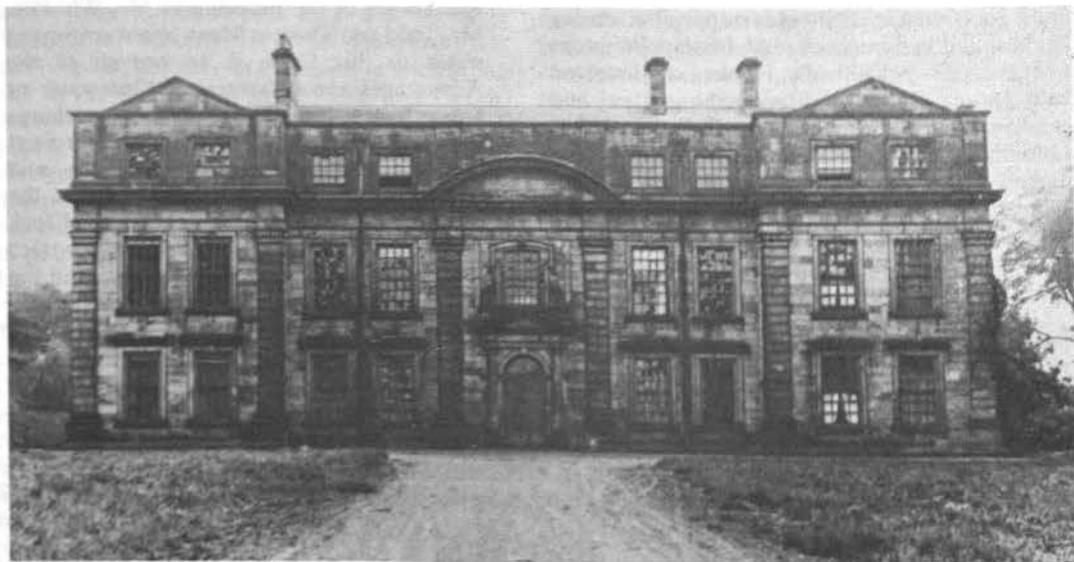


Plate 3

Whitley Beaumont Hall.

Yorke May 25th 1680

I Recd yors and according to Order have fixed yor Quadrant which will only be of use to you for taking of Latitude because the houres and azimuths are calculated for London Latitude and therefore will not serve here.

I have likewise fixed yor Waywiser but as to sending yor [ ] for the use of it I cannot because I soe do find that ever any have [ ] writt concerning its use which is noe other than hanging it too a Girdle upon his Right side, and alsoe fix a String one end to the Brass tricker and the other end to his [ ] below the knee, soe that upon every [ ] Legg forwards in walking he was [ ] put give a Knack, soe in 20 paces [ ] goes Round, in 200 paces the second [ ] 2000 the 5d hand in 20000 the 1th [ ] the Highest hand goes round so that [ ] of every you may [ ] the hands [ ] (viz) to [ ] Numbers) then [ ] paced over [ ] by the hands [ ] it is [ ] then Measuring a certain number of the man's paces you may Compute how many yards Miles &c. he walked allowing 1760 yards to a Mile.

I have likewise sent the Model of yr House which if you take Ocasion to put in practice I desire you'l employ a [ ] workman to doe the Matter because those that are unaccustomed to such kinde of worke they'l Botch it. I shall be glad to waite of yor love when Opportunity serves, Interim Rests.

I [ ] to Serve You  
Thos Mann<sup>sr</sup>

A waywiser was a surveying instrument for measuring distances. The distance travelled by the single wheel was recorded by a hand rotating round a dial. The quadrant was a surveying instrument for measuring altitudes, the design for which had been perfected by Robert Hooke. The quadrant mentioned above might be the 'brass ring dial' which was among the exhibits along with a silver compass inscribed 'Joshua Mann Ebor fecit 1686' at a meeting in York in 1846 of the Archaeological Institute.<sup>42</sup> The compass is probably the very fine pocket sundial and compass offered for sale in 1972 to the Science Museum in London (Plate 4). The quality of workmanship involved in this piece of silverwork is far in advance of not only similar dials produced by the father of English clockmaking, Thomas Tompion, Hooke's friend, but also by Butterfield. Michael Butterfield (c.1635-1724) worked in Paris from possibly as early as 1663, certainly by 1677 when he published a prospectus. In 1678 he wrote from Paris to Hooke suggesting a correspondence on philosophical, mechanical and mathematical matters.<sup>43</sup> Butterfield was an instrument maker of

note, but his name is usually connected with a particular type of horizontal sundial, octagonal in



Plate 4

Pocket Sundial by Joshua Mann, 1686. Science Museum.

shape, with a gnomon which could be adjusted according to the latitude of the place of observation. This type of sundial adopted the name of its inventor and was usually only some three inches in length. It is interesting to compare the Mann sundial with the example of Butterfield's work in the Castle Museum, York (Plate 5).



Plate 5

Pocket Sundial by Michael Butterfield in the Castle Museum, York.

The Butterfield sundial has a circular time and compass ring, engraved 'Butterfield Paris' and the latitude of that city on either side of the gnomon. The two time circles have Roman and Arabic numerals with the gnomon rising from a central engraved circle. The compass cuts through the centre of this circle. The edge of the gnomon is cut ornately and engraved while the moveable indicator is in the form of a bird's beak. On the reverse of the sundial are engraved the latitudes of French, Spanish and Italian towns. In comparison the Mann sundial is more ornate and of finer craftsmanship. It has an octagonal inner compass ring within a time circle with Roman numerals. The latitude is inscribed above the compass and the reverse is signed and dated 'Joshua Mann Ebor fecit 1686'. The gnomon rises from the central engraved circle which touches the edge of the compass. The left hand of a seated cherub is used as the moveable indicator for the gnomon. The latitudes of English towns are engraved on the reverse of the sundial. The craftsmanship of the Mann dial is so much superior to that of the Butterfield that it is difficult to decide whether it was copied with greater skill, or whether Joshua Mann taught Michael Butterfield.

The working life and craftsmanship of the two Mann brothers can be best discovered from their engraving work. Unusually, they signed the majority of the brass memorial plaques that they engraved. All the known examples by Thomas are signed, and most of those by Joshua, though, in the latter case, it is possible to attribute unsigned work from the distinctive style of the engraving. The brasses by Thomas range in date from 1665 to 1677, though the dates are those of the deaths of the individuals recorded on the memorials and so can only be taken as a *terminus post quem* for the work. The list of brasses in the appendix cannot be taken as definitive. A number of churches are known to contain brasses of the correct date but it has not been possible to check them all and so there may be more than nine surviving examples by Thomas. These examples are spread throughout Yorkshire from Hornby and Burneston in the north, to Lowthorpe in the east and Normanton in the south, with at least one example in Lincolnshire at Cotes-by-Stow. The style of engraving is very distinctive and was copied, on a brass at Thornton-le-Street which is signed 'P. Briggs Ebor Sculpt'. There is no doubt in my mind that Briggs must have been trained by Thomas Mann though there is no record of any apprentice of that name. The same applies to Joshua whose earliest work is dated 1680 and, of five signed brasses, four are in York; the fifth is in Bedale. The use of such a distinctive style of either a flowing script or a stiff upright alphabet, makes



Plate 6

Memorial Brass by Thomas Mann in Bessingby Church, 1668.



Plate 7

Memorial Brass by Joshua Mann in St. Sampson's Church, York, 1680.

it possible to attribute with confidence three further brasses to Joshua Mann. These are at Wath, Knaresborough and St. Crux in York; each is of a considerable length, the longest being to Sir Thomas Herbert.

The late seventeenth century saw the last flourish of the silversmiths of York before their decline and the closure of the assay office in 1716. It is by chance that many of York's finest silversmiths were born during the first half of the seventeenth century, but when so much fine silver was being destroyed during the Civil War it is to their credit that they became apprenticed to such a trade.<sup>44</sup> Their number included John Plummer, free in 1648; Philemon Marsh, free in 1652; Robert Williamson, free in 1653; Marmaduke Best, free in 1657 and Chamberlain in 1674; Thomas Mangy and Richard Chew, both free in 1664.<sup>45</sup> It is interesting to note that eight of the late seventeenth century silversmiths in York lived a short distance from each other. The Hearth Tax

returns show that three lived in the same parish as Thomas Mann, two in adjoining parishes, whilst Thomas Mangy and John Plummer lived in St. Michael le Belfrey parish.<sup>46</sup> The scope of the engraving work by the Mann brothers may possibly be taken a step further. It has been suggested that the silversmiths of York rarely engraved their own work, preferring to subcontract the work to local engravers. That Thomas Mann engaged in engraving silver is borne out by the entry in the Churchwardens' accounts for the parish of St. Martin-cum-Gregory in Micklegate:

6 May 1676 To Thomas Mann for engraving  
flagon 4/6

29 May Two flagons 13s<sup>47</sup>

Unfortunately these flagons no longer survive. A study of engraving on pieces of silver hallmarked in York between 1672 and 1680 provides a range of work that can be stylistically attributed to Thomas, using as a guide the known lettering and



Plate 8

a. Details of Arms of Pierson, by Thomas Mann, at Bessingby.



b. Details of Arms of Wilson, by Joshua Mann, at Bedale.



c. Details of Arms of Herbert, attributed to Joshua Mann, at St. Crux Parish Room, York.

designs on the memorial brasses, such as flat headed eights, certain flourishes on the capital letters and the treatment of coats of arms with stiff foliage.

In particular the silver work of Marmaduke Best, who was a near neighbour of Thomas Mann, is worthy of closer inspection. As already mentioned, the will of Marmaduke Rawdon was

explicit and from his bequest the City obtained a gold cup, inscribed as directed by Rawdon, from Marmaduke Best in 1672/3. From the same maker came the silver chamber pot dated 1671/2. Both these pieces of civic plate are engraved in the Mann style.<sup>48</sup> Also by Best is the tankard of the Fishmongers' Company, now in the Castle Museum, given to the company in 1673 by Christopher Smith, and hallmarked for 1672/3 (Plate 9).<sup>49</sup> The ornate engraving of the arms of the Company and the inscription can be attributed to Mann. The chalice and patten of St. Michael, Spurriergate, Mann's own parish, may also be engraved by him. The set of chalices, pattens and offertory dish dated 1674 in the crypt of Ripon Cathedral was made by John Plummer of York, and have the unusual feature of an illustration of the cathedral itself (Plate 10). A similar piece is known showing Pontefract Castle.<sup>50</sup> Who better to engrave an architectural view than an architect? In the William Lee collection, in the undercroft of York Minster, is a porringer and cover, dated 1680, by Thomas Mangy. This shows the distinctive flat headed numeral eight and the flourishes to the capital letters common to Mann's work. The use of flat headed eights was not unique to the Mann brothers but it was uncommon enough to be a guide to their work. Further comparisons and identifications will, no doubt, arise through further research.

Thomas and Joshua Mann, far from being simple engravers, had a wide range of talents and many contacts in seventeenth century York and London. Even if the York virtuosi had not existed it is certain that the brothers would have deserved the title.

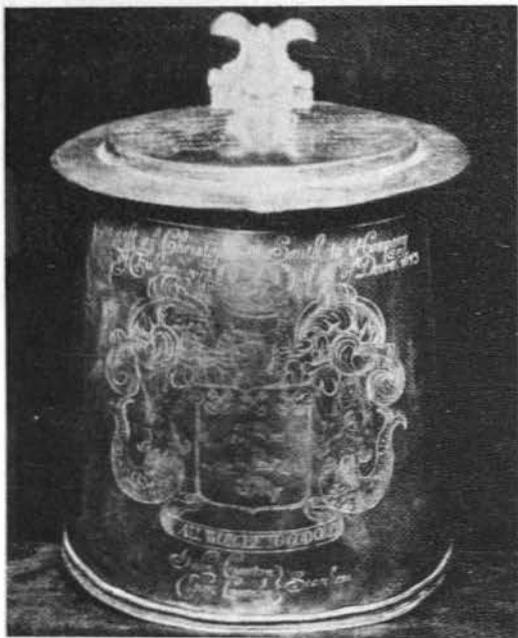


Plate 9

*The Fishmongers' Tankard in the Castle Museum, by Marmaduke Best, 1672/3.*



Plate 10

*Alms Dish in Ripon Cathedral Treasury, by John Plummer, 1674.*

## NOTES

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30. *Ibid.*, pp.100, 114, 132, 146, 149 & 150.
31. *Ibid.*, pp.162, 184 & 190.
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34. *Ibid.*, pp.266, 268, 269, 270, 289, 290 & 390.
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36. *Ibid.*, f.99r.
37. *Ibid.*, f.135v.
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39. YCA, K11.
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*Appendix:*  
*Memorial Brasses signed by Thomas Mann*

Listed in chronological order of the dates of death.

**Lowthorpe, John Pierson, 1665**

Multis quidem flebilis occidit Venerandus ille Senex Johannes Pierson Armiger in hius partibus Justitiarius Pacis; qui bono cum Deo Elizabetham duxit Uxorum, proprii cognominis Matronam egregiam; ex qua tribus Filiis quatuorque Filiabus ditatus est. Obiit tertio Novembris Anno Domini MDCLXV. Aetatis suae septuagesimo quarto. Cujus sineres religiosa cura et impensis charissimae Uxoris, sub hoc lapide requiescunt.

Tho: Mann Eboraci Sculp.

**Burneston, Ellinora Harrison, 1668**

Ellianora Thomae Harrison de Allerthorpe Armig. et Maria Uxoris delectae filia primogenita; postquam moribus pijs et exemplari modestia parentes beaverat, Anno Virginitatis suae 16 Caelestes nuptias consumavit Anno Dni 1668.

[This is probably signed, but the edge is hidden by the altar step]

**Hornby, Henry Harrison, 1668**

Henricus filius natu minor Thomae Harrison de Allerthorpe// Militis et Margaritae filliae honissimi Baronis D'arcy et Conyers.// Qui duxit in uxorem Elizabetham filliam unicam et haeredem D'arcy// Conyers de Holtby in hac Parochia. Ex qua genuit, et cui reliquit// duos filios et quatuor fillias, et obiit 35<sup>o</sup> Anno aetatis suae 1668.//Quam transiens aetas, quam pmangens aeternitas.

Tho Mann Eboraci Sculpit.

**Bessingby, William Pierson, 1668**

Hic jacet corpus Guilielmi Pierson de Bessingby generosi, Qui Exuvias seposuit XIXmo Decembris MDCLXVIII<sup>o</sup> ad cujus dextram Susanna Uxor ejus suavissima III<sup>o</sup> Maij MDCXLVII<sup>o</sup> tumulata fuit (quondam relicta Thomae Bust generosi, et filia Francisci Styring de Bessingby predicto generosi) et pulchram prole per eam beatus fuit viz trium filiorum, et quatuor Natarum.

Thomae Mann.

**Normanton, Richard Mallet, 1668**

Hic reponitur corpus Richardi filii Guilielmi Mallet de Normanton// cujus Natales plusquam quadringetos efflorent anos// (sicut ex Scriptis patet) hunc vero Majores parum faelices// haeredem patrimonii et

Nominis eorum supremum destinarunt// Natus est XXI<sup>o</sup> Februarii MDCXXIII. Obiit XXI Maii MDCLXVIII.// Haec in memoriam posteris prodi quam prorsus oblivione deleri Mallet.

Thomae Mann Eboraci Sculpt.

**Helmsley, Francis Whelewright, 1671**

Nere this place lyeth the body of Francis Whelewright// late of this Towne gentleman (Sonne of Stephen Whelewright late Vicar of this Parish) who departed this Life the 11th of// September Anno Dni 1671. And by his last will gave to the Poore// of this Towne five Poundes to be Distributed within a weeke// after his Death, and five Poundes to the Poore Stocke, and Fifty// Poundes to be lent at Interest for ever, and the Interest to// be Distributed every Sonday in the Church to fourtene Poore// Protestant Persons of the same Towne, every one A Penny in// Bread and the Advantage to the Clarke for his Paines; and gave// many good Legacies to his Relations in this Towne and elsewhere.

Thomae Mann Eboraci.

**Cotes-by-Stow, Anthony Butler, 1673**

Here lyeth the body of Mr Anthony Butler (Son of Anthony Butler) of Coats in the county of Lincolne Esqr; who dyed the Ninth Day of Aprill in the Yeare of our Lord 1673, being the last heire male of this family.

Tho: Mann Eboracensis.

**Ingleby Arncliffe, Elizabeth Mauleverer, 1674**

I ask't and had what I desir'd forever,  
I sought and found caelestiall joy forever,  
I knock't and heaven was opened unto me,  
And there I rest in god eternally: All that desire to find  
eternall rest

Do as I have done and be for ever blest.  
This Epitaph of Elizabeth Mauleverer senior, was made by herselfe 18<sup>o</sup> January 1661, who died 22 May 1674

Tho: Mann Eboraci Sculpit.

**Rudstone, Katherine Constable, 1677**

Here lyeth Katherine Constable, Daughter of Edward Hutchinson of Wikeham Abby Esqr, Wife of Iohn Constable of Carthorp Esqr. Shee was Borne Iune the 20th 1640, and Dyed Iune the 12th 1677.

Tho: Mann: Eboraci, Sculpit.

## Memorial Brasses by Joshua Mann

**York: St. Sampson, William Richardson, 1680**

Hic requiescit in spe beatae Resurrectionis, Gulielmus Richardson, Pietatis tam privatae quam publicae amator sincerus; nec non Charitatis Exemplar assiduum. Cujus Anima in Caelum migravit die Decembris 29 Anno Domini 1680.

suae Aetatis 47.

Joshua Mann Sculpt.

**York: St. Michael le Belfrey, Frances Farrer, 1680**

Here lyeth the body of Frances wife of William Farrer of Ewood within the Vicaridge of Hallifax and County of Yorke Esqr: daughter of Richard James of Portsmouth Esqr: who departed this Life the 16th day of Ianuary, being Aged 51 yeares Anno Doni 1680.

Joshua Mann Ebor Sculp.

**Bedale, John Wilson, 1681**

[Coat of Arms]

Hic juxta positus est

IOHANNES WILSON ARMIGER

(FILIVS IOHANNIS WILSON

SACRAE THEOLOGAE PROFESSORIS

Ac hujus ECCLESIAE quondam RECTORIS)

Beatae Resurrectionis spe reconditus

Dum vixit

Iuris Consultus Legum peritissimus

Omnimoda doctrinae dolibus ornatus.

Clientibus sincerus, Amicis certus,

Ac singulari erga omnes modestia insignitus.

Miles in Bello Regi fidus, ac fortis,

Cessante Bello Iustitarius pacis studiosus.

Ac publicae justiae strenuus assertor.

Diem clausit extremum

Septembris 24to Anno Dni 1681 Aetatis 57.

A MARIA UXORE amantissimae, ac MARIA unica FILIA  
Maxime deploratus.

J. Mann Ebor. Sculpt.

**York: St. Michael, Spurriergate, William Sharp, 1681**

Here lyeth the body of Mr William Sharp (Batchelor) late of this Citty Marchant, Sone of Mr Thomas Sharp late Rector of Aldingham in Furneise in lancashire, Who departed this Life the 18th day of July in the yeare of our Lord 1681, Being Aged 40 yeares: And by his last Will gave £100 to the Poore of this Parish for ever.

This for a Memorandum of his Name,

Whose Vertues still Surviving tell his Fame.

J. Mann.

**York: St. Michael le Belfrey, Thomas Dawny, 1683**

[Coat of Arms]

Here lyeth the body of THOMAS DAWNY late of SELBY Esqr son of THOMAS DAWNY of SUTTON Mannor in COLDFIELD in WARWICKESHIRE Esqr who departed this life the 27th day of December in the yeare of our Lord 1683 being aged 44 yeares.

J. Mann Sculpt.

## Memorial Brass by P. Briggs

**Thornton le Street, Roger Talbot, 1680**

Justa hic reconduntur ossa Rogeri Talbot Armigeri, primogeniti filii Johannis Talbot (ex parte Regis Caroli) / Chiliarchae, defuncti, Qui cum patre (adhuc juvenis) multis in praeliis obsidionibusque Regi fideliter adhaesisset // & in campo (ad extremum usque) viriliter pugnasset. (Exactis jam inimicis // evectoque ad solium patris Carolo 2) // Hic in numero Justiciariorum (pro pace do'ini adscitus Chiliarchiaeque (pro bello) Maioris officio insignitus, et (pro// Rege & patria) ad Comitata Regni (per plurimos annos) evocatus; tandem cum ex Uxore Elizabetha Ambrosii Pudsey//Armigeri (defuncti) sorore; numerosam prolem suscepisset (viz Rogerum primogenito Johanne prius defuncto) filium// & heredem, Ambrosium, et Thomam, Carolum, Brigidam (in puerperio sine sobole defunctam) Johanni Wright gent// Enuptam, Janam Richardo Lockwood gent in uxorem datam, Elizabetha', Anna', Catherina', Florentia', Maria' senio//& curis confectus ab hac luce migravit 2do 8bris. Anno Aetatis suae LXI. Annoque// D'ni MDCLXXX.

P. Briggs Ebor. Sculpt.

## Memorial Brasses attributed to Joshua Mann

**Wath, Richard Graham, 1680**

RICHARDUS GRAHAM ARMIGER

Honoratissimi RICHARDI GRAHAM BARONETTI

per

Agrum Eboracensem Vicecomite

ET

CHARISSIMA MATRIS ELIZABETHA

FILIUS

NATU MAXIMUS

IN

CAELIS ET TERRIS

HAERES

GRATIA NATURA

Caeleste tamen Habitaculum aspirans

Terrenae Haereditatis jus

et

Corpus Fragile

heu!

(Vegetans licet et virescens)

Exiit

REDEMPTIONIS 1680

ANNO ADMISSIONIS IN ACAD: CANT: COL: CHR

AETATIS 20<sup>o</sup>

Mense Martij

Die Martis

Die Mensis 3<sup>o</sup>

Hora Semi post tertiam Antelucanam

FEBRE PLEURATICA LASSATUS

VIATOR

Cursum siste tuum totum lustraveris Orbem

Conditur in Urna quicquid in Orbe patet.

York: St. Crux, Sir Thomas Herbert, 1681

POSTERITATI SACRUM

Heic sitae sunt reliquiae THOMAE HERBERT,  
e nobili et antiqua HERBERTORUM de COLEBROOKE  
in agro MONUMETHENSI familia orundi.

Cui inuente aetate, tam intensus peregrinandi fuit ardor// ut, itineris sui, in celebriores AFRICAE, ASIAEque  
majoris parte// praecipue PERSIAE, Orientalis INDIAE, insularumque adjacentium// (Anno Dni MDCXXVI  
suscepti) observationes selectissimas// in lucem edidit, quas matura aetate, consummate perpoliuit// qui per totum  
vitae dimensum, ob morum elegantiam, vitaeque probitatem conspicuus// Historiarum et penitioris Antiquitatis  
indagator sedulus// Quis, in accurata gentis HERBERTINAE historia// (ex Archivis Regijs, Authenticis Chartis  
allisque indubitatae// Antiquitatis monumentis, manu propria exaratis// et armorum, Sigillorum et Tumulorum  
Ectypis// Graphice delineatis) specimen eximium perhibuit// Serenissimo Regi CAROLO, martyri, per totum  
acultimos vitae// tristissimae annos ab intimis cubiculis Servus extitit fidelis// rerumque dicti Regis infesta solitudine,  
gestarum, commentariola contextuit// exindi per illustrissimum nunc Regem CAROLUM IIum// in gradem  
BARONETTI merito evectus est.

LUCIAM filiam GVALTERI ALEXANDER Equitis Aurati  
in Uxorem primam duxit  
Quae fati cessit A° Dni MDCLXXI  
ex hac

PHILIPPVM, HENRICVM (paterni honoris haeredem superstitem)  
MONTGOMERVM, THOMAM, GVIELMVM ap THOMAM,  
filiasque quatuor suscept:  
TERESIAM, ALEXANDRO BRAFIELD de HANSLAP in Agro BVCK, nuptam;  
ELIZABETHAM, ROBERTO PHAIRE de ROSTBLON in HIBERNIA:  
LUCIAM, imprimis IOHANNI FROST de CLAPHAM in comitat. SVRR;  
deinde GVIELMO HERBERT de CALDECOT in agro MONVMETHENSI  
et ANNAM, provectori aetate defunctam.  
Postea cum ELIZABETHA filia GERVASII CVTLER de STAINBVRG  
in Comitatu EBOR. EQVITIS AVRATI  
modo superstite secundas inivit nuptias;  
e qua

ELIZABETHAM Trimestrem Feb. XXI A° Dni MDCLXXIII extinctam genuit  
tam celebris et Charissimi MARITI maestissima VIDVA  
ut amoris sui, et virtutum tam insignis Viri  
Longaevum praebet Testimonium,  
Hocce Monumentum L.L.M. posuit.  
ex hac luce pietissime emigravit  
1° die MARTII A° Dni MDCLXXXI Aetatis suae LXXVI.

Knaresborough, Thomas Richardson, 1683

EXIIVIAE THO: RICHARDSON DE SCRIVEN GENL:  
SUMMAE INEGRAITATIS ET PRUDENTIAE SENESCHALLI.  
CUIUS OPERA, CONSILIO, INDUSTRIA, FIDE,  
IN BELLIS CIVILIBUS, IN OTIO, IN NEGOTIO,  
Hs SLINGSBEIUS MIL: H: SL: BARTTUS  
(INDIGNA HEU MORTE PER EMPTUS)  
THO: BARTTUS (VIRI AMPLMI: CONSULTMIQE)  
SUO QUIQUE TEMPORE USUS EST GRATISSIME  
QUORUMQUE RES ET REDITUS SIBI COMMISSOS,  
GNAVITER ET FIDELITER ADMINISTRAVIT,  
DONEC TANDEM ANNORUM, ET HONESTAE FAMAE SATUR,  
AD REDDENDAM CUM GAUDIO DISPENSATIONIS RATIONEM,  
AD RECIPIENDUM FIDEI SVAE PRAEMIUM,  
EX TERRENA HAC CALIGINE,  
IN LUCEM CAELESTEM  
EMERSIT IAN: 28°  
A: D: 1683. AET: 71°  
SUB AUSTRALI REGIONE HUIUS MARMORIS SITA EST ANNA  
RICHARDSON THOM: PRAEDICT: UXOR, ET NON MINUS  
LAUDIS, QUAM, THORI PARTICEPS.