



*Fig. 1. The church of St Mary the Less, Westley Waterless, Cambridgeshire, viewed from the north side.  
(photo: © author)*

# The Brass of Sir John de Creke and Lady Alyne at Westley Waterless, Cambridgeshire

Robert Kinsey

*This article provides a study of the fourteenth-century brass of Sir John de Creke and his wife Lady Alyne in the church of St Mary the Less, Westley Waterless, Cambridgeshire. After outlining John de Creke's life and career it considers the style and iconography of the brass and makes some suggestions regarding the date of manufacture and the identity of its patron. It is suggested that the brass was commissioned by his son Sir Walter de Creke (d. 1352) in the mid 1340s as part of a wider commemorative scheme at Westley Waterless that celebrated the family's royal and noble service and marriage alliances.*

Secluded in the uplands of south-east Cambridgeshire lies the 'unpretending little church' of St Mary the Less in the village of Westley Waterless.<sup>1</sup> At first sight, the church, consisting of a simple thirteenth-century chancel and fourteenth-century nave with a nineteenth-century bell turret at the west end, seems to have little to offer the visitor (Fig. 1). Yet this rather unimposing building contains one of the finest medieval funerary monuments in the country – the brass of Sir John de Creke (d. c. 1328) and his wife Alyne (d. before 1304) (Fig. 2). This remarkable memorial has long been marked out as of interest. The two principal Cambridgeshire antiquaries, John

Layer (d. 1641) and the Reverend William Cole (d. 1782), recorded the brass on their visits to the church in the 1630s and 1750s, and both Richard Gough, in his *Sepulchral Monuments in Great Britain* (1786), and Daniel and Samuel Lysons, in their *Magna Britannia* (1806–22), reproduced full-page engravings of the monument.<sup>2</sup> Despite this interest, the brass has never received a dedicated study. John and Lionel Waller included a brief biography of Sir John and a description of the brass in their *A Series of Monumental Brasses* (1840–5) but since then the brass has been mentioned only in passing, usually in reference to the development of medieval armour and the debate surrounding the dating of the early knightly effigies.<sup>3</sup> The purpose of this article therefore is to provide a detailed examination of the brass, placing it in its historical context and making some suggestions as to its date and patron.

## The Creke family

The origins of the Creke family are relatively obscure. They first came to Westley in the mid thirteenth century when John de Burgh, son of the justiciar Hubert de Burgh, sold the manor to Walter de Creke, John de Creke's father

- 1 A. Mee, *The King's England: Cambridgeshire*, rev. C.L.S. Linnell and E.T. Long (Rev. edn, London, 1965), 203.
- 2 John Layer: Oxford, Bod Lib, MS Rawlinson B. 275, f. 158v; William Cole: London, BL, Add. MS 5819, ff. 110v–111r; R. Gough, *The Sepulchral Monuments in Great Britain*, 3 vols, (London, 1786–99), I pt 2, 142, pl. LVII; D. and S. Lysons, *Magna Britannia: Cambridgeshire* (London, 1808), 65. For biographies of Layer and Cole, see P. Sherlock, 'Layer, John (d. 1641)', *ODNB*, online edn, ref: odnb/16222 accessed December 2018; J.D. Pickles, 'Cole, William (1714–82)', *ODNB*, online edn, ref: odnb/5863 accessed December 2018.
- 3 J.G. and L.A.B. Waller, *A Series of Monumental Brasses from the Thirteenth to the Sixteenth Century* (London,

1864; reprinted 1975 with corrections and additions by J.A. Goodall), no. 8; H.W. Macklin, *The Brasses of England* (London, 1907), 23–5; M.W. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Memorials*, 2 vols, (London, 1977), I, 17; *MBS Bulletin*, 18 (June, 1978), 5–6 reports such a discussion; P.J. Heseltine, *The Figure Brasses of Cambridgeshire* (St Neots, 1981), 5, 38; L. Southwick, 'The Armoured Effigy of Prince John of Eltham in Westminster Abbey and some Closely Related Military Monuments', *Church Monuments*, 2 (1987), 9–21; P. Binski, 'The Stylistic Sequence of London Figure Brasses', in *The Earliest English Brasses: Patronage, Style and Workshops, 1270–1350*, ed. J. Coales (London, 1987), 103–16.



*Fig. 2. Brass of Sir John de Creke and Lady Alynne, Westley Waterless, Cambridgeshire (LSW. I).  
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)*

(Fig. 3).<sup>4</sup> In all likelihood the family hailed from North Creak, Norfolk, where the Burgh family held estates, and it can be supposed that the Crekes were originally freeholding tenants of the Burghs.<sup>5</sup> The Creke coat of arms displayed on John de Creke's brass *or, on a fess gules, three lozenges vair* were evidently derived from those of the Burgh family *lozengy vair and gules* and it was common for lesser landowners to adopt the same heraldic devices as their superior lords in the practice of heraldic dissemination.<sup>6</sup> Similarly the gold field of the de Creke arms may have referenced the arms of the Fitzwalter family *or, a fess gules between two chevrons gules* from whom the Burghs had acquired Westley and remained the Crekes' overlords into the fourteenth century.<sup>7</sup>

By 1273 Walter de Creke was dead and the manor of Westley Waterless had passed to his son John.<sup>8</sup> In the *Quo Warranto* proceedings of 1299 John de Creke claimed to be lord of Westley with the accompanying manorial rights of view of frankpledge, infangthief, tumbrel and waif.<sup>9</sup> As well as the family seat at Westley, John also held a number of landholdings elsewhere in Cambridgeshire and in Essex. From at least 1273 he held a property in Hatfield Peverel, Essex, which he

had probably inherited from his father, being another part of the Burgh estate, and in the 1280s he was holding land in Chigwell and Thaxted, Essex.<sup>10</sup> John was twice married. He had married his first wife Alyne by 1285.<sup>11</sup> She was alive in 1295 but was dead by 1304 when John is recorded as being married to Joan le Breton née Scherewind, widow of Richard le Breton.<sup>12</sup> John's marriage to Joan brought with it the manor of Pampisford, Cambridgeshire, which Joan held a life interest in, until the couple sold it in 1321.<sup>13</sup>

Until the early years of the fourteenth century John appears in the records solely as a landowner. This was to change in July 1306 when John, probably then in his fifties, received his first public office as a tax collector in Cambridgeshire.<sup>14</sup> This appointment marked the beginning of a meteoric career in local administration that was to pervade the last twenty years of his life. Just over a year later in November 1307 John was made sheriff of the joint counties of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire, a position he held for three and half years.<sup>15</sup> During these years, Creke was engaged in all manner of duties. A few months into his term of office in January 1308 he was responsible for the arrest of the Knights

4 *Placita de Quo Warranto*, ed. W. Illingworth (London, 1818), 106, VCH, *Cambridgeshire*, VI (London, 1978), 177–8.

5 C. Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh: A Study in Constancy* (London, 1952), 217.

6 For discussion of heraldic dissemination see P. Coss, *The Knight in Medieval England* (Stroud, 1993), 79–81; D. Simpkin, *The English Aristocracy at War: From the Welsh Wars of Edward I to the Battle of Bannockburn* (Woodbridge, 2008), 27–30.

7 Christine daughter of Robert Fitzwalter married Raymond de Burgh (d. 1230). The couple died childless and presumably bequeathed the manor of Westley to John de Burgh who subsequently sold it to Walter de Creke (VCH, *Cambridgeshire*, VI, 177; *CIPM*, VII, no. 160).

8 *Feet of Fines for Essex, Volume II (A.D. 1272–A.D. 1326)*, ed. R.E. Kirk and E.F. Kirk (Colchester, 1913–28), 2.

9 *Placita de Quo Warranto*, ed. Illingworth, 106.

10 *Feet of Fines Essex, II*, ed. Kirk and Kirk, 2, 47, 52, 69, 81; Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, 210; T.M. Hope, *The Township of Hatfield Peverel: Its History, Natural History and Inhabitants* (Chelmsford, 1930), 149–50, 180–2.

11 *Feet of Fines Essex, II*, ed. Kirk and Kirk, 47.

12 *Feet of Fines Essex, II*, ed. Kirk and Kirk, 81, 97; Waller and Waller, *Series of Monumental Brasses*, no. 8; Cambridge, Corpus Christi College Archives, CCCC09/11/1(1), CCCC09/11/27; BL, Add. 5813, f. 162r.

13 VCH, *Cambridgeshire*, VI, 107.

14 *CPR*, 1301–7, 457.

15 *List of Sheriffs for England and Wales, from the Earliest Times to A.D. 1831* (London, 1898), 12.



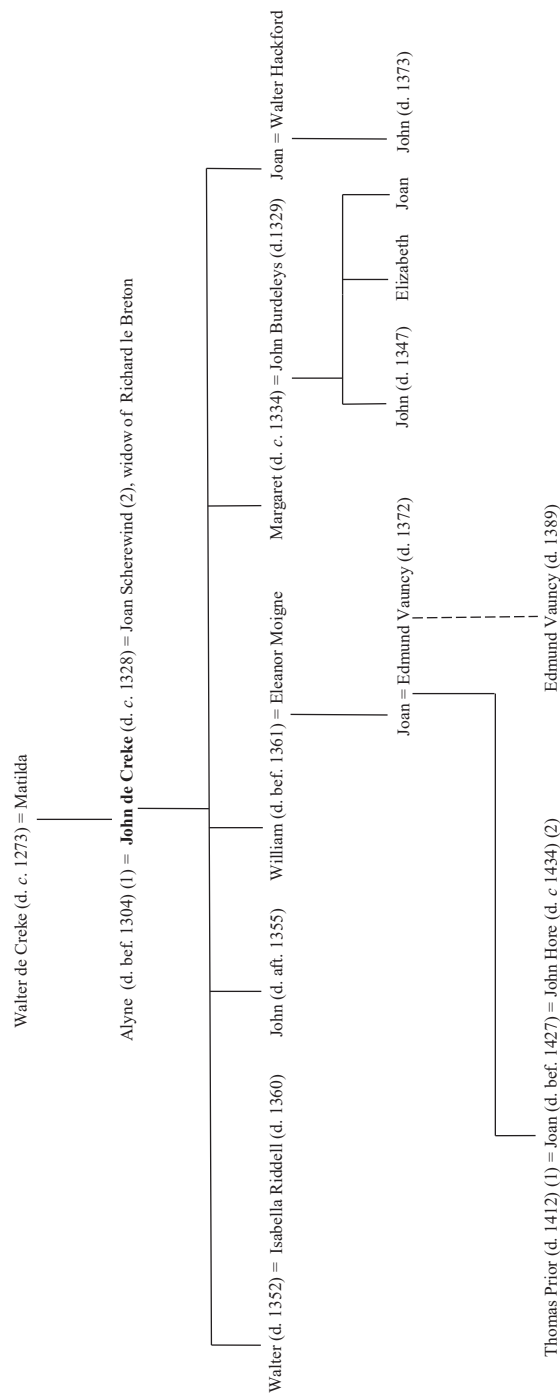


Fig. 3. Genealogy of the Creke family.

Templar in Cambridgeshire, following their dramatic fall from grace, and later that year he was purveying victuals and carts for the war with Scotland.<sup>16</sup> In 1309 he was ordered to convey money from Huntingdon to York; in 1310 he was tasked with overseeing repairs to Cambridge Castle and to arrest participants in an illegal tournament at Newmarket; and in 1311 he was again ordered to purchase victuals and transport them to Berwick-upon-Tweed.<sup>17</sup> Whilst holding the onerous office of sheriff, John also apparently found time to perform military service, as in August 1310 he received a protection whilst serving in the retinue of Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, in the forthcoming campaign to Scotland.<sup>18</sup> In April 1311 John was finally replaced as sheriff but his respite was short-lived.<sup>19</sup> In October that year he was appointed keeper of the confiscated lands of both the Templars and the disgraced former treasurer Bishop Walter Langton in the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire. A month later he was reappointed as sheriff of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire.<sup>20</sup>

John de Creke's second term as sheriff lasted a further three years until October 1314 but he continued to serve on local commissions thereafter.<sup>21</sup> In November 1314 he was commissioned to make inquiries into knights' fees in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire and in 1316–17 he served on numerous gaol delivery and oyer and terminer commissions

in the two counties as a keeper of the peace.<sup>22</sup> In October 1319 John was appointed sheriff for a third time, serving until November 1320.<sup>23</sup> Towards the end of his third term, he was also elected as one of the knights of the shire representing Cambridgeshire in the parliament of October 1320 at Westminster.<sup>24</sup> John was again returned as a knight of the shire to the parliament held at Westminster from July to August 1321 and in the same year he was appointed to a commission of oyer and terminer to investigate those who had broken into the bishop of Ely's park at Doddington, Cambridgeshire.<sup>25</sup>

The following year John de Creke's career took a turn for the worse, however, when he found himself on the other side of the law. In May 1322 he was brought before a commission of oyer and terminer accused, with several others, including his son Walter, of assaulting the manor of Hugh Despenser, earl of Winchester, at Soham, Cambridgeshire, breaking into houses and carrying away horses, livestock and other property belonging to the earl.<sup>26</sup> John de Creke's involvement in the raid on Despenser's manor suggests that he had sympathies with the Lancastrian cause during the civil war of 1321–2 and indeed John de Creke appears to have been closely linked with the courtier-turned-rebel Sir Bartholomew Badlesmere (d. 1322).<sup>27</sup> In 1313 he was acting as Badlesmere's attorney and in 1315 he served in his retinue during a campaign against

16 *CCR, 1307–13*, 13–14, 39–40, 124.

17 *CPR, 1307–13*, 191, *CCR, 1307–13*, 198, 257, 298–9.

18 *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland*, V, ed. G.G. Simpson and J.D. Galbraith (Edinburgh, 1987), 450.

19 *List of Sheriffs*, 12.

20 *CFR, 1307–19*, 105, *List of Sheriffs*, 12.

21 *List of Sheriffs*, 12; *CFR, 1307–19*, 220.

22 *CFR, 1307–19*, 219; *CPR, 1313–17*, 483, 699; *CPR, 1317–21*, 95; TNA, C 66/146, mm. 21d, 32d, 36d.

23 *List of Sheriffs*, 12; *CFR, 1319–27*, 6, 37.

24 *Return of the Name of every member of the Lower House of Parliaments of England, Scotland and Ireland...1213–1874*, 2 vols, (London, 1878), I, 59; *Parliamentary Writs and Writs of Military Summons*, ed. F. Palgrave, 2 vols, (London, 1827–34), II pt 1, 221, 229.

25 *CPR, 1317–21*, 602; *Return*, I, 62; *Parliamentary Writs*, ed. Palgrave, II, pt 1, 237, 243.

26 *CPR, 1321–24*, 166; *Parliamentary Writs*, ed. Palgrave, II pt 2, 188, 191.

27 G.T. Lapsley, 'Knights of the Shire in the Parliaments of Edward II', *English Historical Review*, 34 (1919), 162.

the Scots.<sup>28</sup> One of Badlesmere's numerous properties was the manor of Thaxted, Essex, where John also held land, and it is likely that it was tenurial ties that brought about this association.<sup>29</sup>

The outcome of the 1322 trial is unrecorded but John de Creke's career does not seem to have permanently suffered, although he never held the office of sheriff again. In June 1322, he was summoned to be at Newcastle upon Tyne to take part in the king's campaign against the Scots but responded that he was too old and infirm.<sup>30</sup> Yet despite his advancing years, John continued to be appointed on local commissions, as a tax collector, purveyor and justice, and represented Cambridgeshire at the Westminster parliament of February-March 1324.<sup>31</sup> With tensions rising between England and France, John was amongst the county knights from across England summoned to be at Westminster in May 1324 in preparation for war and in September that year he received one of his last appointments of Edward II's reign to act as custodian of Queen Isabella's lands and properties in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire, which had been taken into the king's hands for safe keeping.<sup>32</sup> There is no record of John's activity during the deposition of Edward II nor what he did when Queen Isabella's invasion force marched from the Essex coast to Cambridge in September 1326 but, like many of the East Anglian gentry,

he probably did nothing to impede her progress.<sup>33</sup>

By 1327, at the beginning of Edward III's reign, John de Creke was reaching the end of his life but he still managed to be elected one last time as a knight of the shire, representing Cambridgeshire at the parliament at York in February-March 1328.<sup>34</sup> John appears in the records again in August of the same year when he is listed as holding half a knight's fee at Westley Waterless from Robert Fitzwalter but he was dead by February 1332, when Joan de Creke is styled as his widow.<sup>35</sup> Given that John de Creke does not appear in the 1327 lay subsidy rolls it can be surmised that he died sometime between August 1328 and June 1329, when the Cambridgeshire lay subsidy roll was returned to the exchequer.<sup>36</sup> John was survived by his second wife Joan and at least five children – three sons, Sir Walter (d. 1352), Master John (d. after 1355), and Sir William (d. before 1361), and two daughters, Margaret (d. c. 1334) and Joan.<sup>37</sup>

Based on the written evidence the account of John de Creke's life ends here. However, it would be remiss not to mention the local legend that gives a rather more dramatic narrative of his death. This colourful tradition tells the story of how John de Creke fought and died in a trial by combat with Sir John de Burgh, whose family owned the manor in the neighbouring village

28 *CFR*, 1307–19, 169; *CPR*, 1307–13, 567; TNA, C 71/7, m. 3, I am grateful to Nigel Saul for providing this reference; *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland*, V, ed. Simpson and Galbraith, 467.

29 *CIPM*, VII, no. 104, 92.

30 *Parliamentary Writs*, ed. Palgrave, II pt 1, 587.

31 *CPR*, 1321–4, 225, 242, 370; *Return*, I, 69; *Parliamentary Writs*, ed. Palgrave, II pt 1, 299, 312, 314.

32 *Parliamentary Writs*, ed. Palgrave, II pt 1, 638; *CFR*, 1319–27, 300–1.

33 N. Saul, 'The Despensers and the Downfall of Edward II', *English Historical Review*, 99 (1984), 20–1; R.M. Haines, *Edward II* (London, 2003), 175–6.

34 *Return*, I, 80.

35 *CIPM*, VII, no. 160; Corpus Christi College Archives, CCCC09/11/27.

36 TNA, E 179/81/6; *Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely. Lay Subsidy for the Year 1327: Names of the Taxpayers in Every Parish*, ed. C.H. Evelyn-White (n.d.), 17–18.

37 Corpus Christi College Archives, CCCC09/11/27; *CIPM*, XVI, no. 866; *Feet of Fines Essex, II*, ed. Kirk and Kirk, 196; *The Percy Charters*, ed. M.T. Martin, Surtees Society, 97 (1911), 211.

of Burrough Green.<sup>38</sup> The tale goes that in a dispute over the ownership of common land lying between Westley Waterless and Burrough Green, Thomas de Burgh, lord of the manor of Burrough Green, challenged John de Creke to a trial by single combat to settle once and for all whether the land belonged to Westley or Burrough Green. John de Creke accepted the challenge but the extravagant and cowardly Thomas de Burgh, evidently the villain of the piece, had second thoughts and asked his elder brother John de Burgh to fight in his place. John de Burgh, having recently retired to a monastery, as a novice and an old friend of Creke, was initially reluctant to do so but finally agreed following the pleas of Thomas's beautiful wife. The tournament lists were drawn up and the two knights prepared for battle. In the ensuing combat, overseen by Burgh's lord, the earl of Richmond, John de Burgh mortally wounded John de Creke. Yet Creke in one last dying blow struck Burgh dead at his feet thereby winning the combat and the land for Westley before breathing his last.<sup>39</sup> Had the duel occurred, it would have been a fittingly chivalric end for a knight so splendidly portrayed in armour at Westley but sadly no documentary evidence has been found to validate the story.

### The brass

However John de Creke met his end, what is known is that he was buried beneath a

magnificent brass alongside his first wife Alyne in Westley Waterless parish church, at the east end of the south aisle (Fig. 4). In August 1752 William Cole recorded the brass as being 'Under the upper South Window of the South Isle...covered in great measure by a Pew', which indicates that it had been there for some time and there is no evidence to suggest that the monument was originally located elsewhere in the church.<sup>40</sup> What can be seen today are the slender effigies of Alyne and John positioned facing east on a Purbeck marble slab (2760×1020 mm). Alyne (1645×336 mm), positioned on the dexter side with her hands folded in prayer, wears long and ample robes (Fig. 5). A long gown with narrow sleeves forms



Fig. 4. The south aisle of Westley Church.  
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

38 For the Burghs of Burrough Green, see J.W. Walker, 'The Burghs of Cambridgeshire and Yorkshire and the Watertons of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 30 (1930–1), 311–48; W.M. Palmer, *A History of the Parish of Borough Green, Cambridgeshire*, Cambridge Antiquarian Society, Octavo Series, 54 (1939), 3–16.

39 The legend was written down by Robert Way of Burrough Green (R.E. Way, 'A Cambridgeshire Legend [Trial by Combat for Land at Burrough Green]', Cambridge, Cambridgeshire Record Office, R59/29/2/2/3). See also P. Jeffery, *East Anglian Ghosts, Legends and Lore* (Gillingham, 1988), 30.

40 BL, Add. MS 5819, f. 111r.





*Fig. 5. Brass of Sir John de Creke and Lady Alynne (detail).  
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)*

the undergarment over which is worn another gown open at the sides from the shoulder to the waist. Over these two garments she wears a mantle tied across the chest by a cordon. Both the mantle and the gown below it have an scalloped border. Her headdress consists of a coverchief, which descends to the shoulders, her hair appearing beneath in plaited bands. Her neck and throat are covered by a gorget. At her feet looking up at her is a small dog.

Sir John (1643×353 mm) on the sinister side wears layered armour (Figs 5, 6 and 7). He is dressed in a quilted aketon (a padded jacket)

over which is placed a hauberk (coat of mail), followed by a coat of plates, with floriated rivet heads, and finally a cyclas (a surcoat shortened at the front). His legs and knees are protected by mail chausses, over which are placed plate armour and decorated poleyns. Plate sabatons also cover the mail of the feet, which bear rowel spurs. The forearms are protected by hinged tubular plate defences, which emerge from the shortened mail sleeve, whilst the upper arms have gutter-shaped plates. The right elbow and shoulders are further protected by a rondel and shoulder-caps bearing the striking lion-leopard head design.<sup>41</sup> The head, neck and shoulders are

<sup>41</sup> In medieval heraldry the lion and the leopard were one and the same. A lion was called a lion if it was rampant but a leopard if it was gardant or passant

gardant as in the royal arms of England (M.P. Siddons, *Heraldic Badges in England and Wales*, 4 vols, (London, 2009), II pt 1, 157.



Fig. 6. Brass of Sir John de Creke and Lady Alyne (detail).  
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

covered by a mail aventail, which is fastened to the bascinet by a lace drawn through staples, below which hangs a fringe (mantelet) of tasselled pendants. Across the forehead are three lozenges separated by studs, which may represent jewels. The bascinet is fluted and at its apex is a finial. Sir John carries a heater-shaped shield bearing the arms of the Creke family and a sword girt in front by a belt decorated with flower heads and studs. The scabbard is also decorated with lozenges and studs. At his feet is a lion (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7. Brass of Sir John de Creke and Lady Alyne (detail).  
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

In their own right the two figures of Sir John and Alyne are a fine example of medieval craftsmanship but the brass was once much more substantial. Drawings by William Cole in 1752 and the Lysons brothers in 1808 show that the couple were originally displayed below an elaborate two-dimensional crocketed double canopy.<sup>42</sup> Although the canopy has since been lost, a rubbing of a section of it survives amongst the Lysons manuscripts held at the British Library (Fig. 8).<sup>43</sup> Surrounding the canopy was a brass inscription written in French, the language of the chivalric classes. The inscription was in a fragmentary state when Cole recorded the brass but it was still complete when John Layer visited the church in the 1630s.<sup>44</sup> In his notes Layer recorded it as:

*ICI : REPOSUNT : LES : CORPS : SIR :  
JOHAN : DE : CREKE : ET : ALYNE : SA  
FEMME : DE QI : ALMES : DIEU : EYE :  
MERCY* (Here lie the bodies of Sir John de  
Creke and Alyne his wife, on whose souls may  
God have mercy).

<sup>42</sup> BL, Add. MS 5819, f. 110v; BL, Add. MS 9461, f. 72v.

<sup>43</sup> BL, Add. MS 9461, f. 70v; J. Blair, 'Westley Waterless (Cambs.): Rubbing of Lost Canopy Fragment', *MBS Bulletin*, 28 (October, 1981), 9.

<sup>44</sup> BL, Add. MS 5819, ff. 110v, 111r; Bod Lib, MS Rawlinson B. 275, f. 158.



Fig. 8. Rubbing of part of the lost canopy of the brass to Sir John de Creke and Lady Alynne.  
(© The British Library Board, Add. MS 9461, f. 70v)

What is more, Laver recorded that between the canopy and the surrounding inscription were six small shields, three above the heads of Alynne and John and three below their feet. These escutcheons had presumably been removed from the brass when Cole came to draw it but the earliest known depiction of the brass, a thumbnail sketch by the herald Sir William Dethick (d. 1612), clearly shows the



Fig. 9. Rough sketch of the brass of Sir John de Creke and Lady Alynne showing the now lost six shields.  
(© The British Library Board, Harley MS 1393, f. 104r)

shields in place (Fig. 9).<sup>45</sup> Although the Purbeck marble slab is now very worn, the indents of the canopy, surrounding inscription, and six shields are just visible enough to allow us to reconstruct how the brass may have originally appeared (Fig. 10).<sup>46</sup>

The suggested date for the manufacture of the brass has been revised several times. Writing in the 1840s the Waller brothers dated the brass to c. 1325, the year that they assumed that John had died based on the limited records available to them.<sup>47</sup> In the 1950s Lawrence Stone extended the date to c. 1325–30.<sup>48</sup> However, Malcolm Norris, following a reassessment of the chronology of the early military brasses in the 1970s, revised the date of the Westley brass to no earlier than c. 1335.<sup>49</sup> This date was again modified in 1987 when Paul Binski on stylistic

45 BL, Harley MS 1393, f. 104r; *A Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, 4 vols, (London, 1808–12), II, 22–5. I am grateful to Nigel Ramsay for viewing this manuscript and confirming William Dethick as its author.

46 See below for a full discussion of the heraldry.

47 Waller and Waller, *Series of Monumental Brasses*, no. 8.

48 L. Stone, *Sculpture in Britain: The Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth, 1955), 163–4.

49 Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Memorials*, 9–13, 17; M.W. Norris, 'Views of the Early Knights, 1786–1970', in *Earliest English Brasses*, ed. Coales, 1–7.





*Fig. 10. Partial reconstruction of the brass, showing the canopy, surrounding inscription and the six shields in between. Illustration after reconstruction by John Blair and Paul Binski.*

evidence dated the brass to ‘c. 1340 or even well into the 1340s’, linking it to the newly identified ‘Seymour style’, a group of brasses that were produced by a London-based workshop operating from the early 1330s until the late 1340s.<sup>50</sup> This link is reinforced by a plater’s mark still visible on the ground by Alyne’s right foot. The mark consisting of a capital N below a hammer and flanked by two stars is identical to one on the brass of Laurence Seymour (c. 1337) at Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, suggesting that both were products of the same workshop (Fig. 11).<sup>51</sup> The c. 1340–45 date for the Westley brass has largely been accepted but this in turn raises further questions as it follows that the brass was produced many years after the deaths of John and Alyne.<sup>52</sup> Indeed in the case of Alyne the gap between her death and the commissioning of the monument runs into several decades.

### Patronage and context

Why then was there such a long delay between the death of Sir John and the commissioning of the brass? One possible reason is the negligence of the heirs. Descendants sometimes took many years to erect a monument to a family member due to a lack of resolve or money.<sup>53</sup> A more likely explanation for the delay at Westley though seems to have been the need to construct a suitable place for the monument to be housed first. The architectural evidence shows that the church was extensively rebuilt sometime in the



Fig. 11. Brass plater’s mark on the brass of Sir John de Creke and Lady Alyne.

(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

first half of the fourteenth century. The three-bay nave and the side aisles all date from this period and drawings of the exterior by Cole and Lysons suggest that the (now lost) round bell tower was heightened at the same time (Fig. 12).<sup>54</sup> The presence of piscinae in the walls of both the south and north aisles indicates that each at one time contained an altar, which

50 Binski, ‘Stylistic Sequence of London Figure Brasses’, 108–110. See also, P. Binski, ‘An Analysis of the Length of Plates used for English Monumental Brasses before 1350’, *MBS Trans.*, 16:3 (1999), 234, where Binski suggests a date of c. 1345 for the brass based on the length of its component plates.

51 *MBS Bulletin*, 24 (June, 1980), 7–8; Binski, ‘Stylistic Sequence of London Figure Brasses’, 110; N. Rogers, ‘Cambridgeshire Brasses’, in *Cambridgeshire Churches*, ed. C. Hicks (Stamford, 1997), 305; *MBS Bulletin*, 86 (January, 2001), 530.

52 W. Lack, H.M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Cambridgeshire* (London, 1995),

240. See for example comments by J.A. Goodall in Waller and Waller, *Series of Monumental Brasses*, xii–xiii; Binski, ‘Stylistic Sequence of London Figure Brasses’, 130, n. 69.

53 S. Badham and M. Stuchfield, *Monumental Brasses* (Oxford, 2009), 30.

54 S. Bradley and N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Cambridgeshire* (New Haven, 2014), 672; R.K.M. Davies, *The Parish Church of Westley Waterless: Description and Historical Survey* (Haverhill, 1970), 2, 5–6. The two-light cinquefoiled cusped Y-tracery windows of the side aisles is a typical architectural feature of this era (S. Hart, *Medieval Church Window Tracery in*





Fig. 12. William Cole's drawing of Westley Church. Note the later style of the window in the top storey of the bell tower, indicating that it had been heightened.

(© The British Library Board, Add. MS 5819, f. 109v)

suggests that the intention was that they would house chantries for the benefit of the Creke family. Such a large-scale building project would probably have taken a number of years to complete and if we assume that the windows of the side aisles were glazed immediately after building work was finished, then construction cannot have been completed before 1340 as one window contained the quartered arms of France and England, which Edward III first adopted in January 1340 (Fig. 13).

Yet even allowing for the rebuilding of the nave and construction of the side aisles the gap between the death of Sir John in *c.* 1328 and the commissioning of his brass in the 1340s is still fairly lengthy. Why did the patrons of the brass take so long? Following a close analysis of the stylistic elements of the brass and the church's glazing scheme it will be suggested that the brass and rebuilding of the church were commissioned in the mid-1340s with a particular purpose in mind.

*England* (Woodbridge, 2010), 71–2; see pl. 36d for a similar example of the window tracery at Billington, Norfolk).



Fig. 13. Stained glass in the south aisle of Westley Church showing the quartered royal arms of France and England. (photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

A useful starting point is the style of Sir John's armour. The armour is clearly of the late 1330s and 1340s rather than the 1320s and cannot have been based on anything that Sir John would have actually worn. The armour does appear however to have been based on that depicted on the alabaster effigy of Prince John of Eltham (d. 1336), the younger brother of

Edward III, which was erected at Westminster Abbey sometime after August 1339 (Fig. 14).<sup>55</sup> Leslie Southwick in an important article drew attention to a group of knightly effigies dating from the 1340s that bore a striking resemblance to the Eltham effigy at Westminster.<sup>56</sup> Amongst this analogous group, labelled the 'Eltham group', Southwick included the brass of John de Creke pointing to similarities between the armour of Eltham and Creke. As well as the likeness in the overall style of their armour, one of the most interesting parallels between the two effigies are their bascinets, both of which have hanging pendants decorated with tassels. The diamond shapes on Eltham's coronet are also alluded to in the horizontal fillet running across Creke's forehead (Fig. 5). A further resemblance between the Eltham tomb and the Westley brass are the knee defences which on both effigies are decorated with trefoils (Fig. 6). Parallels can also be drawn between the canopies of Eltham's tomb and the Creke brass. Although both have been lost, engravings of the Eltham tomb and Samuel Lysons' rubbing of the canopy fragment at Westley reveal that both included elaborately cusped cinquefoiled arches.<sup>57</sup>

What can be made of these similarities? One explanation is that the London-based workshop took inspiration from the newly erected tomb to Eltham at Westminster Abbey and incorporated some of its features in the brass of John de Creke. The brass to Sir John d'Abernoun III (d. c. 1339–50) at Stoke D'Abernoun, Surrey, a product of the same workshop as the Westley brass, also has

55 Stone, *Sculpture in Britain: The Middle Ages*, 162; M. Duffy, *Royal Tombs of Medieval England* (Stroud, 2003), 124–8; W.M. Ormrod, *Edward III* (London, 2011), 126; W.M. Ormrod, 'The Personal Religion of Edward III', *Speculum*, 64 (1989), 868. Sally Badham has recently suggested that the construction of Eltham's monument could have been as late as 1344 (S. Badham, 'The Rise to Popularity of Alabaster for

Memorialisation in England', *Church Monuments*, 31 (2016), 24–5).

56 Southwick, 'Armoured Effigy of Prince John of Eltham', 9–21.

57 BL, Add. MS 9461, f. 70v; J. Dart, *Westminster Abbey or The History and Antiquities of Westminster Abbey*, 2 vols, (London, 1723), I, 106; Southwick, 'Armoured Effigy of Prince John of Eltham', 10, Fig. 1.



Fig. 14. Effigy of Prince John of Eltham at Westminster Abbey, from C.A. Stothard, *The Monumental Effigies of Great Britain* (London, 1876).

(© Artokoloro/Alamy Stock Photo)





*Fig. 15. Detail of the brass of Sir John de Creke, showing lion-leopard head rondel and shoulder-caps.  
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)*

elements that mimic Eltham's effigy.<sup>58</sup> Yet it may be possible to go further and speculate that the referencing of the Eltham tomb was a deliberate request by the patrons of the brass to emulate the styles that were fashionable in the royal court in the 1340s. Evidence from surviving wills and elsewhere demonstrate that it was not uncommon for patrons to specify that a monument be modelled on an existing one.<sup>59</sup>

One element on Sir John's armour that suggests a conscious effort to imitate the tomb of John of Eltham and the fashions

of the royal court is the use of lion-leopard head iconography (Fig. 15). The lion-leopard head emblems on the rondels and shoulder-caps on the brass of John de Creke can also be seen on three monuments belonging to the Eltham Group: those of John de Ifield, John, second Lord Willoughby (d. 1349) and Robert Fitz-Elys (Fig. 16).<sup>60</sup> Further examples can be found on the effigy of William Bruce (d. 1345) at Pickering, Yorkshire, which dates from the mid 1340s, and on the effigy of John de Lyons at Warkworth, Northumberland, which dates from the 1350s.<sup>61</sup> Whilst the

<sup>58</sup> Binski, 'Stylistic Sequence of London Figure Brasses', 108–10; Southwick, 'Armoured Effigy of Prince John of Eltham', 13–20.

<sup>59</sup> N. Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2009), 104.

<sup>60</sup> Southwick, 'Armoured Effigy of Prince John of Eltham', 14–16, 18.

<sup>61</sup> Stone, *Sculpture in Britain: Middle Ages*, 182, 142.



Fig. 16. Effigy of John Willoughby, second Lord Willoughby (d. 1349), Spilsby, Lincolnshire.  
(photo: © C.B. Newham/Alamy Stock Photo)

lion-leopard head emblem does not appear on John of Eltham's armour it can clearly be seen on the pommel and guard of his sword, a feature which is replicated on both

the effigies of Ifield and Willoughby (Figs 14 and 16).<sup>62</sup>

The leopard had a long association with royalty going back to the first Plantagenet kings and by the early fourteenth century the symbol of three golden leopards on a red background had been established as the royal arms of England for well over a century. However, as Caroline Shenton has shown, the image of the leopard became a particularly fashionable emblem in the court of Edward III during the 1330s and 1340s.<sup>63</sup> From around 1333, Edward III adopted the leopard image as his own personal badge, using it on the great seal in 1338, on his banners and battle clothes, and on coins such as the half-florin first issued in 1344.<sup>64</sup> In January 1334, the king took part in the Dunstable tournament in the guise of 'Sir Lionel' directly associating the person of the king with the leopard in the minds of courtiers and indeed the epitaph on Edward III's tomb erected in the 1380s described him as 'the unconquered leopard'.<sup>65</sup> As dedicated followers of court fashion, the Crekes embraced this iconography with enthusiasm in the church at Westley. The leopard's head emblem not only appears three times on John de Creke's armour but also on the decorated niche in the chancel, which may have been used to display a gold chalice that John de Creke gave to the church, and on the two capitals of the chancel arch (Fig. 17).<sup>66</sup>

A further desire to demonstrate royal and noble connections, and a clue to the identity of the brass' patron, can be found in the heraldic glazing scheme of the church's side aisles. Sadly only a few fragments of the fourteenth-century

62 Stone, *Sculpture in Britain: Middle Ages*, 162.

63 C. Shenton, 'Edward III and the Symbol of the Leopard', in *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England*, ed. P. Coss and M. Keen (Woodbridge, 2002), 69–81.

64 Ormrod, *Edward III*, 99.

65 Ormrod, *Edward III*, 99, 583.

66 Davies, *Parish Church of Westley Waterless*, 2; *Vetus Liber Archidiaconi Eliensis*, ed. C.L. Feltoe and E.H. Minns, Cambridge Antiquarian Society, Octavo Series, 48 (1917), 52–3.





Fig. 17. Fourteenth-century niche in the chancel of Westley Church, depicting the lion-leopard head emblem.  
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)

stained glass windows remain, largely due to the destruction carried out by the Parliamentary iconoclast William Dowsing, who visited the church on 22 March 1644 and noted in his journal that he and his men broke down 'eight Superstitious Pictures' (i.e. the windows). This vandalism was compounded by the subsequent re-glazing of the church in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>67</sup> Fortunately, the heraldry in the windows was recorded by Layer in the 1630s and at least some fragments of the scheme were still visible to Cole when he visited the church in 1752.<sup>68</sup> From Layer's and Cole's notes we know that the windows of the side aisles contained shields bearing the arms

of Lancaster, Percy, Neville, Ufford, Fitzwalter, Charlton and the royal arms of England and France quartered (Fig. 18).

The quartered arms of France and England fixes the date of the glazing of the side aisles as no earlier than January 1340, when Edward III first adopted these arms. Considering the 1340s date it is possible to identify the other coats of arms that were once on display. The arms of Lancaster recorded by Layer as *gules 3 lions passant guardant or; overall a bendlet azure* must have represented Henry of Grosmont (d. 1361), earl of Derby and later duke of Lancaster, who bore these arms from 1326 until at least

67 *The Journal of William Dowsing: Iconoclasm in East Anglia during the English Civil War*, ed. T. Cooper (Woodbridge, 2001), 280; Davies, *Parish Church of Westley Waterless*, 7.

68 Bod Lib, MS Rawlinson B. 275, ff. 157r-158r; BL, Add. MS 5819, ff. 73r, 110r-111r.



Fig. 18. William Cole's drawings of some of the shields of arms displayed in the windows of Westley Church, including the arms of the Lancaster, Percy, Neville, Ufford, Charlton families and the royal arms of France and England. A number of the arms shown here have been misidentified by Cole.

(© The British Library Board, Add. MS 5819, f. 73r)

September 1345.<sup>69</sup> The arms of Ufford *sable, a cross engrailed or* denoted Robert Ufford, earl of Suffolk (d. 1369), the Fitzwalter arms *or, a fess gules between two chevrons gules* represented John Fitzwalter, second Lord Fitzwalter (d. 1361), the Charlton arms *or, a lion rampant gules* probably stood for John, first Lord Chalton of Powys (d. 1353), whilst those of Neville *gules, a saltire argent* and Percy *or, a lion rampant azure* signified Ralph Neville, fourth Lord Neville of Raby (d. 1367) and Henry Percy, second Lord Percy (d. 1352).

Apart from the Fitzwalters, who were the Creke family's overlords, none of the noble families displayed in the windows of the church had a tenurial link to Westley. What does connect all of these individuals and the Crekes though is conspicuous military service in the king's wars with Scotland and France, and in particular Edward III's campaigns in the 1330s and 1340s. Henry of Grosmont served on campaign in Scotland from 1333 until 1336, holding the post of king's lieutenant in Scotland in the final year. Following the outbreak of war with France, he subsequently served on the Continent, seeing action in the Low Countries and at the naval battle of Sluys in 1340. Crucially in 1345–7, as the king's lieutenant in Aquitaine, he commanded the

English forces in the south-west of France, launching a *chevauchée* as part of Edward III's three-pronged campaign, and in June 1347 he joined the king to take part in the final two months of the siege of Calais, which ended in the town's surrender in August 1347.<sup>70</sup> Robert Ufford, likewise, saw active service in the war with Scotland in the mid 1330s taking part in the expedition of 1335. Following this he served in the Low Countries in 1338–40, in Brittany in 1342, and most notably fought with distinction in the Black Prince's division at the battle of Crécy, on 26 August 1346, which saw a spectacular victory for Edward III over the French king Philip VI.<sup>71</sup> John Fitzwalter, as well as overlord of Westley, was a capable soldier and also fought in the Black Prince's division at Crécy.<sup>72</sup> John, Lord Charlton of Powys served in Scotland from the 1300s onwards and three of his sons took part in the Crécy-Calais campaign.<sup>73</sup> Henry Percy, second Lord Percy, was a major northern magnate and spent the 1330s and 1340s serving in Edward III's campaigns against the Scots and defending northern England. Whilst the king was campaigning in France, Percy was made a custodian of the kingdom and played a key role as one of the commanders of the army that repelled the Scottish invasion of England at the battle of Neville's Cross, near Durham,

69 Layer and Cole mistakenly identify these arms as those of Henry Bolingbroke. From September 1345 Henry of Grosmont adopted the arms *gules 3 lions passant guardant or, a label azure each point charged with three fleurs-de-lis* (C.R. Humphrey-Smith and M.G. Heenan, 'The Royal Heraldry of England', *The Coat of Arms*, 7 (1962), 83; J. Peltzer, 'Making an Impression: Seals as Signifiers of Individual and Collective Rank in the Upper Aristocracy in England and the Empire in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries', in *Seals and their Context in the Middle Ages*, ed. P.R. Schofield (Oxford, 2015), 69; *William Jenyns' Ordinary: An ordinary of arms collated during the reign of Edward III*, ed. S. Clemmensen (2008), [http://www.armorial.dk/english/WJO\\_PreEd.pdf](http://www.armorial.dk/english/WJO_PreEd.pdf), p. 12, accessed December 2018).

70 W.M. Ormrod, 'Henry of Lancaster [Henry of Grosmont], first duke of Lancaster (c. 1310–1361)', *ODNB*, online edn, ref: odnb/12960 accessed December 2018.

71 W.M. Ormrod, 'Ufford, Robert, first earl of Suffolk (1298–1369)', *ODNB*, online edn, ref: odnb/27977 accessed December 2018.

72 *Crécy and Calais*, ed. G. Wrottesley (London, 1898), 6, 33; C. Starr, 'Fitzwalter family', *ODNB*, online edn, ref: odnb/54522 accessed December 2018.

73 J.F.A. Mason, 'Charlton, John, first Lord Charlton of Powys (d. 1353)', *ODNB*, online edn, ref: odnb/5165 accessed December 2018; *Crécy and Calais*, ed. Wrottesley, 143, 167.

on 17 October 1346, which ended with the miraculous capture of the Scottish king, David II.<sup>74</sup> Ralph Neville, fourth Lord Neville, was a member of another important northern family. Like Henry Percy he spent much of his career fighting in Edward III's wars with the Scots. In August 1334, Neville was appointed with Percy as a warden of the marches and of the king's lands in Scotland and on 29 August 1335 he was granted the custody of the royal stronghold of Bamburgh Castle, Northumberland, for life. As with Henry Percy, the high point of Neville's military career was his participation in the decisive victory at Neville's Cross.<sup>75</sup>

The rather unusual appearance of the coats of arms of two prominent northern magnates, Percy and Neville, in a Cambridgeshire church links the glazing scheme to one member of the Creke family in particular – John's son, Sir Walter de Creke (d. 1352). Like his father, Walter had originally been connected to Bartholomew Badlesmere, serving in his retinue in a campaign against the Scots in October 1318.<sup>76</sup> However following Badlesmere's execution for treason and Walter's implication in the attack on Hugh Despenser's manor at Soham in 1322, Walter quickly worked to reingratiate himself with the crown and in January 1323 he was staying in the king's service at Alnwick Castle, the Northumberland seat of the Percy family.<sup>77</sup>

From this point onwards, Walter became increasingly associated with the Percies and northern England in the service of the crown. In 1329 he was described as a king's yeoman and in January 1331 he accompanied Henry Percy on a diplomatic mission to France on behalf of Edward III.<sup>78</sup> In May 1333 Walter was again recorded as serving in Henry Percy's retinue and it is likely that he took part in the notable victory over the Scots at Halidon Hill a few months later on 19 July 1333.<sup>79</sup> Walter certainly played an active role in helping to defend and administer the north in the years following the battle. In January 1334 he took part in the king's tournament at Dunstable, Bedfordshire, but by September 1334 he had returned to the north where he was appointed constable of Bamburgh Castle.<sup>80</sup> After holding the constabship of the castle for a year, Walter took part in the campaign against the Scots in the summer of 1335, an expedition which also included John of Eltham, Henry of Grosmont, Robert Ufford, Henry Percy and Ralph Neville.<sup>81</sup> By 1336 he had become established in Northumberland polity when he served as both a knight of the shire for the county and as sheriff of Berwick-upon-Tweed.<sup>82</sup> In February 1340 he was appointed custodian of Berwick and a few months later he came before the Westminster Parliament, along with the bishops of Durham and Carlisle, Henry Percy, Ralph Neville and several other northern

74 J.M.W. Bean, 'Percy, Henry, second Lord Percy (1301–1352)', *ODNB*, online edn, ref: odnb/21929 accessed December 2018.

75 A. Tuck, 'Neville, Ralph, fourth Lord Neville (c. 1291–1367)', *ODNB*, online edn, ref: odnb/19950 accessed December 2018.

76 *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland*, V, ed. Simpson and Galbraith, 480.

77 *CPR*, 1321–4, 166, 232.

78 *CFR*, 1327–37, 145–6; *CPR*, 1331–4, 42; A. Rose, *Kings in the North: The House of Percy in British History* (London, 2002), 206.

79 *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland*, V, ed. Simpson and Galbraith, 492, 494; Rose, *Kings in the North*, 217–

18; *Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae et Cujuscunque Generis Acta Publica*, ed. T. Rymer, 3 vols, (London, 1816–30), II pt 2, 805–6.

80 'Roll of the Arms of the Knights at the Tournament at Dunstable, in 7 Edw. III', ed. C.E. Long, *Collectanea, Topographica et Genealogica*, 4 (1837), 392; *CFR*, 1327–37, 417.

81 *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland*, V, ed. Simpson and Galbraith, 502; R. Nicholson, *Edward III and the Scots: The Formative Years of a Military Career, 1327–1335* (Oxford, 1965), 248–9.

82 *Return*, I, 109.



magnates, as a special adviser to report on the safekeeping of the Scottish Marches.<sup>83</sup> The climax of Walter de Creke's career though was undoubtedly in October 1346 when he fought in Henry Percy's division at the battle of Neville's Cross.<sup>84</sup>

Clearly by the early to mid 1340s Walter was on the ascendant, having made something of a name for himself as a prominent royal and noble servant with connections to the court. It can be postulated therefore that it was Walter de Creke who was the guiding hand behind the rebuilding of the church, the heraldic glazing scheme and his parent's brass, which he used as a means of marking his own rise in status. It can hardly be a coincidence that John of Eltham, Henry of Grosmont, Henry Percy, Ralph Neville, Robert Ufford, and Walter de Creke all served together in Scotland and were all referenced at Westley, either in the style of the brass or in the heraldic arms in the windows.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, Walter's participation in the Dunstable tournament in 1334 directly links him with these men, all of whom except Henry Percy took part, and with the royal symbol of the leopard, which is so prominently displayed at Westley. Having served under Eltham in the king's campaigns against the Scots and in the defence of the north in the 1330s, Walter would have been predisposed to modelling the brass commemorating his father at Westley on the tomb of his former commander and comrade in arms. Examples of other tombs elsewhere show that it was by no means uncommon for members of the medieval military community

to style their monuments on those of their fellow companions in war.<sup>86</sup>

Whilst Walter is the strongest candidate to be patron of the brass and building works at Westley, he was not the only member of the family to have connections to the Percy family or royal service. Walter's brother Master John was also a loyal servant of Henry Percy. From as early as 1327, Master John was rector of the church of Spofforth adjacent to the Percy's chief residence in Yorkshire and was heavily involved in Henry Percy's land transactions across northern England throughout the 1320s, 1330s and 1340s.<sup>87</sup> Evidently Henry Percy put a great deal of trust in Master John as in 1334 he made him the trustee of his entire estate and ultimately nominated him as one of the executors of his will.<sup>88</sup> Meanwhile Walter's other brother Sir William de Creke (d. before 1361) found service under Edward III, serving in the king's division during the Crécy-Calais campaign.<sup>89</sup> The presence of the arms of Percy, Grosmont and Ufford in the windows at Westley may then have also referenced John's and William's connections.

All three of John's sons therefore could potentially have had an influence over the commemorative scheme at Westley Waterless; whether they were acting jointly or one son was acting alone is unclear. Whichever the case, it does seem that the impetus behind the rebuilding of the church with its heraldic glazing scheme and the commissioning of the brass to John de Creke was the remarkable set

83 *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England, IV Edward III 1327–48*, eds S. Phillips and W.M. Ormrod (London, 2005), 258, 269.

84 *CCR, 1349–54*, 194.

85 Nicholson, *Edward III and the Scots*, 248–9.

86 Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 225.

87 *Percy Charters*, ed. Martin, 190–1, 194, 198–9, 202–3, 206–7, 211; D. Robinson, *Beneficed Clergy in Cleveland*

*and the East Riding, 1306–1340*, Borthwick Papers, 37 (1969), 29.

88 *Percy Charters*, ed. Martin, 171–3, 188–90, 299–303; *Testamenta Eboracensia, I*, ed. J. Raine, Surtees Society, 4 (1836), 61.

89 *Crécy and Calais*, ed. Wrotesley, 37, 89, 95, 213.



of English victories in the 1330s and 1340s, culminating in the *annus mirabilis* of 1346–7, and the desire on the part of the Creke family to commemorate the part they had played in these glorious events. The retrospective brass to John de Creke and Alyne was thus part of a larger programme by his descendants to mark their arrival and establish a grand mausoleum in honour of the family.

The Crekes were by no means unique in seizing this moment of triumph as an opportunity to commemorate and celebrate their family's achievements. Edward III's military victories generated an outburst of chivalric pride amongst the nobility and gentry that was expressed in ambitious building works, heraldic displays in church windows and on funerary monuments from the 1340s onwards.<sup>90</sup> At Gloucester Abbey, for example, Thomas, Lord Bradeston (d. 1360), who had fought at Crécy and Calais, commissioned a huge east window (later known as the Crécy Window), which included the arms of Bradeston along with those of the king, the Black Prince, Henry of Grosmont, and the earls of Warwick, Arundel and Northampton, all of whom had been leading commanders during the campaign.<sup>91</sup> At Elsing, Norfolk, the executors of Sir Hugh Hastings (d. 1347) commissioned a magnificent monumental brass that commemorated the important role he had played in the Crécy-Calais campaign, through the display of figures in the side-shafts representing his companions in arms, including Edward III,

Henry of Grosmont and the earl of Warwick.<sup>92</sup> At Bothal, Northumberland, Robert Bertram, a veteran of Neville's Cross, embarked on an extensive programme of building works, enlarging the nave and inserting new windows; similarly Sir John de Sutton, who also fought at Neville's Cross and later served at Calais, rebuilt the parish church of Sutton-by-Hull, Yorkshire, in the late 1340s and on his death in 1356 was buried beneath a military effigy surrounded by the arms of his companions-in-arms, including those of Percy and Neville.<sup>93</sup> Closer to home, the Crekes' neighbour Sir Warin de Bassingbourn, a veteran of the Crécy campaign, commissioned an elaborate glazing scheme at St Andrew's Church, Wimpole, Cambridgeshire, which included the arms of Bassingbourn along with those of the leading commanders of the campaign, including Henry of Grosmont and the earls of Northampton and Suffolk.<sup>94</sup>

The brass of John de Creke was more than just an instrument to celebrate the family's military achievements and connections to royal service though. There was also a strong dynastic element to the commemorative scheme. The most apparent family connection displayed on the brass is John de Creke's marriage to Alyne. The presence of Alyne makes the brass one of the earliest surviving English brasses to show a husband and wife together, although earlier depictions of married couples are known to exist on incised slabs and sculptural monuments dating from the late thirteenth

90 Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 224–5; N. Saul, *For Honour and Fame: Chivalry in England, 1066–1500* (London, 2011), 287–8; see also A.M. Morganstern, *Gothic Tombs of Kinship in France, the Low Countries, and England* (University Park, PA, 2000), 103–5; Badham, 'Rise to Popularity of Alabaster for Memorialisation in England', 57–60.

91 Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 223–4.

92 Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 216–18.

93 N. Saul, *Lordship and Faith: The English Gentry and the Parish Church in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2016), 272–3; Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 224; A.S. Harvey, 'Notes on Two Heraldic Tombs', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 159 (1961), 462–72.

94 BL, Add. MS, 5819, f. 91r; *Monumental Inscriptions and Coats of Arms from Cambridgeshire*, ed. W.M. Palmer (Cambridge, 1932), 245–6, pl. XLIII; *Crécy and Calais*, ed. Wrottesley, 81.

century onwards.<sup>95</sup> Part of the reason for the introduction of joint monuments at this time was the rise of chantries, which in most cases sought intercessory prayers not only for the founder but also their spouse and kin.<sup>96</sup> Yet as well as encouraging prayers, double monuments also afforded an opportunity to display social status through the celebration of marriage alliances. Marriage was one of the few ways that families could enhance their wealth and social status in the middle ages. Marriage to an heiress or a member of an esteemed family could be a significant fillip to a man's fortunes.

A prestigious match was naturally something families would have wished to show off and Jessica Barker and Peter Coss have suggested that an underlying motivation behind a number of double monuments was a desire to evidence a marriage and the property acquired from the relationship or held jointly by the couple.<sup>97</sup> Given that the Crekes do not appear to have descended from an especially distinguished family, it is possible therefore that the presence of Alyne on the brass at Westley Waterless was intended to bolster their respectability or strengthen a claim to property acquired through the marriage. This suggestion is perhaps reinforced by the fact

that Alyne appears on the dexter side of the brass (i.e. on the right side of the monument or the viewer's left-hand side). Traditionally, the dexter side was regarded as the most important and on most joint monuments, as in heraldry, it is the husband who occupies the dexter side. Where the norm is reversed, as in the case of Alyne and John, it has been suggested that the woman was of higher social standing than her husband and women who are displayed on the dexter side of tombs are sometimes found to be heiresses.<sup>98</sup> Unfortunately the identity of Alyne's paternal family is unknown so it is not possible to confirm that this was the case with the Westley brass but perhaps tellingly John and Alyne are recorded as holding at least some of their property in Essex in joint ownership.<sup>99</sup>

The Creke family's awareness of the importance of family connections is further demonstrated by the shields of arms that once existed above and below the brass. Although the shields have long since been removed, they were recorded by John Layer, albeit in a partial state – the blanks in his notes indicating that the top row shields had already lost their tinctures by the early seventeenth century. Despite the loss of some of the tinctures the shields can be identified as set out in Table 1.

95 P. Binski, 'Monumental Brasses', in *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England 1200–1400*, eds J. Alexander and P. Binski (London, 1987), 172; Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 145–7. For two early fourteenth-century brasses commemorating married couples, see the memorials to Thomas and Eleanor de Luda (c. 1310), Abbotsbury Abbey (Dorset), and John de Leukenore and his wife (c. 1335–50), Dorchester Abbey (Oxfordshire), discussed in J. Barker, *Stone Fidelity: Marriage and Emotion in Medieval Tomb Sculpture* (Woodbridge, 2020), 41–3.

96 Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 147. For a recent multifactorial explanation for the emergence of double monuments see, Barker, *Stone Fidelity*, 28–49.

97 P. Coss, *The Lady in Medieval England, 1000–1500* (Stroud, 1998), 85–6; J. Barker, 'Legal Crisis and Artistic Innovation in Thirteenth-Century Scotland', *British Art Studies*, 6 (2017) <https://doi.org/10.17658/issn.2058-5462/issue-06/jbarker> accessed December 2018; Barker, *Stone Fidelity*, 258–60.

98 Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 147; C. Schleif, 'Men on the Right – Women on the Left: (A)symmetrical Spaces and Gendered Places', in *Women's Space: Patronage, Place and Gender in the Medieval Church*, eds V.C. Raguin and S. Stanbury (New York, 2005), 207–47.

99 Waller and Waller claimed that Alyne was a member of either the Clopton or Chamberlain families but this cannot be proven (Waller and Waller, *Series of Monumental Brasses*, no. 8); *Feet of Fines Essex, II*, ed. Kirk and Kirk, 69, 81.

Position	John Layer's Notes	Identification
Top row, first shield	[...] a bend inter 2 cottizes indented [...]	Unidentified (... <i>a bend between 2 cottises indented</i> ...)
Top row, second shield	Ermine on a cheife a lion passant [...]	Burdeleys ( <i>Ermine, on a chief gules a lion passant or</i> )
Top row, third shield	[...] on a fesse [...] 3 lozengies	Creke ( <i>Or, on a fess gules 3 lozenges vair</i> )
Bottom row, first shield	Ar. 2 barres & 3 molletts in cheife sa.	Moigne ( <i>Argent, 2 bars and 3 mullets in chief sable</i> )
Bottom row, second shield	Ar. on a bend g. inter 2 cottises indented sa a rose or	Creke ( <i>Argent, on a bend gules between 2 cottises indented sable a rose or</i> )
Bottom row, third shield	B. a bend or inter 2 cottises indented Ar.	Poyer/Power ( <i>Azure, a bend or between 2 cottises indented argent</i> )

Table 1. Identification of the six shields of arms from John Layer's notes

The first shield on the top row *a bend between 2 cottises indented* had lost all of its tincture when John Layer recorded the brass and could belong to any number of knightly families. Waller and Waller, drawing upon William Cole's antiquarian notes, suggested that these arms belonged either to the Cloptons of Suffolk or the Chamberlains of Cambridgeshire and represented Alyne's paternal family, given that this shield appeared directly above the figure of Alyne.<sup>100</sup> However this appears to be merely conjecture based only on the fact that both the Clopton and Chamberlain arms featured a *bend cottised indented*. Nor can it be presumed that these arms belonged to Alyne. The second shield *Ermine, on a chief gules a lion passant or* is easier to determine and can be identified as belonging to the Burdeleys family.<sup>101</sup> The

Burdeleys were an established middle-ranking East Anglian gentry family.<sup>102</sup> The core of the family's estates were in Cambridgeshire, centring around their three manors of Comberton, Cottenham and Madingley to the east and north of Cambridge, but they also held the manors of Scoulton, Norfolk, and Stagsden, Bedfordshire.<sup>103</sup> The head of the family in the early fourteenth century was Geoffrey de Burdeleys (d. 1324), who, like John de Creke, was active in local administration, serving on a number of judicial and tax collecting commissions in Cambridgeshire, and represented the county twice in parliament as a knight of the shire.<sup>104</sup> Indeed Creke and Burdeleys on occasion found themselves serving together on the same commission.<sup>105</sup> The third shield *or on a fess gules, three lozenges vair* above the

100 Waller and Waller, *Series of Monumental Brasses*, no. 8.

101 Waller and Waller mistakenly identify this coat of arms as Ermyrn of Northamptonshire (Waller and Waller, *Series of Monumental Brasses*, no. 8).

102 E. Miller, *The Abbey and Bishopric of Ely* (Cambridge, 1951), 182–3.

103 VCH, *Cambridgeshire*, V (London, 1973), 179–80; VCH, *Cambridgeshire*, IX (London, 1989), 56, 167; F. Blomefield, *An Essay Towards A Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, 11 vols, (London, 1805), II, 347; VCH, *Bedfordshire*, III (London, 1912), 97–8.

104 Miller, *Abbey and Bishopric of Ely*, 182–3.

105 CPR, 1313–17, 49; CFR, 1307–19, 219; CFR, 1319–27, 59.

head of Sir John are the Creke arms. The arms may have been intended to represent John de Creke himself but could also have represented another member of the family.

On the bottom row, the first shield *Argent 2 bars and 3 mullets in chief sable* represented the Moignes of Great Raveley and Sawtry, Huntingdonshire. The Moignes were one of the leading gentry families in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire.<sup>106</sup> Members of this family were regularly appointed sheriffs of the two counties during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and frequently represented Huntingdonshire in parliament.<sup>107</sup> The shield in the centre of the bottom row, despite being completely different from the arms of Sir John de Creke represented another member of the Creke family, most probably one of his sons, Walter or William. The same arms, minus the gold rose, are labelled as ‘Sir Walter Krake’ in William Jenyns’ Ordinary, which has been dated to the 1360s or before and linked to Henry of Grosmont.<sup>108</sup>

The difference between the arms of Sir Walter and his father John naturally raises questions. It should be noted, however, that coats of arms in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries

were by no means fixed and it was not unknown for members of a family to completely change their arms to reflect a change in feudal overlord, a new inheritance, or simply a change in fashion.<sup>109</sup> Nor was it unusual for two branches of the same family to have entirely different coats of arms; the de la Poles of Wingfield, for example, bore arms that were utterly dissimilar from the de la Poles of Castle Ashby, even though they were originally descended from the same Hull family.<sup>110</sup> Indeed it appears that the Creke family adopted a number of alternative coats of arms during the fourteenth century. In the early 1330s Walter bore the arms *argent, a bend azure between three wyverns* and his brother William de Creke’s seal depicted *a wyvern salient*, which was perhaps a reference to an association with Henry of Grosmont, whose family crest was a wyvern.<sup>111</sup> The commissioning of the monument at Westley in the 1340s may have therefore afforded an opportunity for the Creke family to establish their coat of arms once and for all, setting it in brass.

The sixth and final shield can be identified as those belonging to the Poyer (or Power) family. Precisely who this family was is unclear. The coat of arms appears twice in Powell’s roll of arms,

106 *History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1386–1421*, eds J.S. Roskell, L. Clark and C. Rawcliffe, 4 vols, (Stroud, 1992), III, 750–1.

107 Elizabeth Stazicker, *The Sheriffs of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire: A Brief History* (Cambridge, 2007), 124–5.

108 London, College of Arms, William Jenyns’ Ordinary, f. 47r. The legend naming the bearer of the arms is very worn in the original but the arms are clearly identified as those of ‘Sir Walter Krake’ in a sixteenth-century copy of the ordinary in Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 557/324, f. 9v. For discussion of William Jenyns’ Ordinary, see P.A. Fox, ‘Fourteenth-Century Ordinaries of Arms. Part 2: William Jenyns’ Ordinary’, *The Coat of Arms*, Third Series, 5 (2009), 55–64.

109 I am grateful to Bridget Wells-Furby for advice on this matter. See B. Wells-Furby, ‘The Custom

of England: The Relationship between Arms and Landed Patrimonies in the Fourteenth Century’, in *Heralds and Heraldry in Medieval England*, ed. N. Ramsay (forthcoming).

110 R. Horrox, *The De La Poles of Hull*, East Yorkshire Local History Series, 38 (1983), 4.

111 Walter de Creke at the Dunstable Tournament in 1334 bore ‘*d’argent ove un bend d’asure ove trois wyfres*’ (‘Roll of the Arms of the Knights at the Tournament at Dunstable’, ed. Long, 392; C.H. Hunter Blair, ‘Appendix II: Baronies which owed Castle-Guard or Castle-Guard Rent to the Castle of Newcastle upon Tyne and which maintained houses within it’, *Archaeologia Aeliana*, Fourth Series, 18 (1940), 158; BL, Add. MS 5819, f. 74v). For the Lancaster crest see, H. de Walden, *Some Feudal Lords and their Seals MCCCJ* (Bristol, 1984), 5, 29; J.H. & R.V. Pinches, *The Royal Heraldry of England* (London, 1974), 32–3.

which dates from the 1340s and was probably commissioned by the Ufford family.<sup>112</sup> The Ufford connection suggests an East Anglian origin for the family but they remain difficult to trace. One possible candidate though is the Powers of Essex, a minor gentry family who held manors in the parishes of Witham, Little Fordham and Aldham, Essex.<sup>113</sup>

Despite the fact that we do not know all the families represented by these shields it seems that they were intended to represent members of the Creke family and those families connected to them by ties of kinship. The Burdeleys shield of arms on the top row was undoubtedly a reference to the marriage of John de Creke's daughter, Margaret, to John de Burdeleys (d. 1329), son of Geoffrey de Burdeleys, sometime before 1321.<sup>114</sup> Meanwhile the Moigne shield commemorated the marriage of William de Creke to Eleanor, a member of the Moigne family.<sup>115</sup> The connection between the Creke and the Power families is obscure but they may have also been related. What is known is that the Power's manor house at Witham, Powers Hall, lay just across the fields from Crix, the Creke's property at Hatfield Peverel.<sup>116</sup>

Once again, the appearance of these shields can be partly explained by the rise in popularity

of chantries, which were often established to ensure that prayers were said not just for the souls of the deceased but for other members of the family, both living and dead. The shields of arms on the tomb acted as mnemonic devices to remind the celebrant performing the mass to pray not only for those represented by effigies on the monument but also for their wider family.<sup>117</sup> This familial or kinship style of tomb first appeared in England from the late thirteenth century to commemorate members of the royal family and became increasingly popular amongst aristocratic families in the fourteenth century.<sup>118</sup> By the 1340s, as the Creke brass clearly demonstrates, kinship tombs had become fashionable amongst the knightly classes, particularly those knights who had close connections to the royal court and had served in the king's wars with Scotland and France.<sup>119</sup> Indeed, Anne McGee Morganstern has suggested a direct relationship between conspicuous military service to the Crown and the knight's tomb of kinship in the fourteenth century England, which would certainly fit with what we know about the career of John de Creke's son Walter.<sup>120</sup> Once again, the Crekes' inspiration may well have come from John of Eltham's monument in Westminster Abbey, the tomb chest of which displayed twenty-four shields with accompanying figures representing members of the royal family.<sup>121</sup>

112 Bod Lib, MS Ashmole 804. IV, f. 7r-v; N. Denholm-Young, *The Country Gentry in the Fourteenth Century with Special Reference to the Heraldic Rolls of Arms* (Oxford, 1969), 118–20.

113 P. Morant, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Essex*, 2 vols (London, 1763–68), II pt 1, 107–8, 199. One antiquarian source suggests a Devonshire origin for the family (BL, Add. MS 28834, f. 144v).

114 TNA, C 143/143/6; *CIPM*, VII, no. 261.

115 BL, Add. MS 5819, f. 151r; *CIPM*, XIV, no. 214; William de Creke's granddaughter, Joan Vauncy, was in 1404 one of the co-heirs of the estates of Sir William Moigne, who is described as her kinsman (*House of Commons 1386–1421*, eds Roskell, Clark and Rawcliffe, III, 416–17; IV, 143).

116 Morant, *History and Antiquities of Essex*, II pt 1, 107; P.H. Reaney, *The Place-names of Essex*, English Place-Name Society, 12 (1935), 289, 301; Hope, *Township of Hatfield Peverel*, 149–50, 180–2.

117 Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 125; Morganstern, *Gothic Tombs of Kinship*, 3–6, 107–16.

118 Morganstern, *Gothic Tombs of Kinship*, 103–16; A.M. Morganstern, 'The Tomb as Prompter for the Chantry: Four Examples from Late Medieval England', in *Memory and the Medieval Tomb*, eds E. Valdez de Alamo and C.S. Prendergast (Aldershot, 2000), 81–97.

119 Morganstern, *Gothic Tombs of Kinship*, 103–5.

120 Morganstern, *Gothic Tombs of Kinship*, 105.

121 Morganstern, *Gothic Tombs of Kinship*, 91–4.



Yet, as well as prompting prayers for John de Creke's descendants, the display of heraldry was also tied up with the secular concern of demonstrating the family's power and connections. The Crekes, despite coming to prominence through royal service under Edward II and Edward III, were still parvenues and may well have been keen to reinforce their connections with the Cambridgeshire gentry. The display of the coat of arms of the Moigne family, an important knightly family from at least the twelfth century, would undoubtedly have helped to establish the Creke family amongst the East Anglian elite for instance. In this context the positioning of the Burdeleys coat of arms in the centre of the top row of shields, the pre-eminent position, is worth noting. This is likely to have been a deliberate choice, as we know from wills that patrons took great care in the selection and positioning of coats of arms on their tombs.<sup>122</sup> Why should this be the case? Given that John de Burdeleys and Margaret were both dead by 1334, one possible explanation for the shield's prominent place might be out of a genuine sense of loss for the deceased couple.<sup>123</sup> However, if it is assumed that Walter was responsible for commissioning the brass, there may have been a more prosaic factor at work here. After the death of John de Burdeleys in 1329, Walter was granted the wardship of the lands of Burdeleys' son John, Walter's nephew, until he came of age.<sup>124</sup> This wardship included the Burdeleys family's substantial collection of properties in Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and

Bedfordshire, valued in excess of £25 a year and probably worth much more.<sup>125</sup> However, Walter's rights over some of the manors were not altogether secure. In 1335 John Fraunceys of Wimpole brought a suit against Walter in Chancery, claiming to have been granted a life interest in the manors of Comberton and Cottenham by John de Burdeleys before he died.<sup>126</sup> After some litigation, the difficulty was ultimately resolved by Fraunceys' own death in 1337 but Walter must have been anxious to assert his claim to this valuable wardship, especially after the king allowed him to hold the manors of Comberton, Cottenham and Madingley from the crown rent free for the duration of the wardship in consideration for his good service in Scotland.<sup>127</sup> The positioning of the Burdeleys arms, therefore, as well as commemorating the departed members of that family, may have also been an attempt by Walter to reinforce his entitlement to the wardship of the Burdeleys estates against any further property disputes. Julian Luxford and Jessica Barker have shown that funerary monuments could be used to assert claims over landed estates and that members of the gentry were aware of the potential of tombs to act as legal evidence in disputes.<sup>128</sup> In the end though, John died before reaching his majority and the Burdeleys lands were divided between John's two sisters in August 1347.<sup>129</sup> If this reasoning for the placement of the Burdeleys arms is correct then it can be posited that the *terminus ad quem* for the production of the brass is mid 1347.

122 Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 165; S. Badham, *Seeking Salvation: Commemorating the Dead in the Late-Medieval Parish* (Donington, 2015), 219–20.

123 *CFR*, 1327–37, 145–6, 405.

124 *CFR*, 1327–37, 145–6, 405.

125 Madingley, Cambridgeshire (*CFR*, 1327–37, 474); Comberton and Cottenham, Cambridgeshire (*CFR*, 1337–47, 15); Stagsden, Bedfordshire (*CFR*, 1337–47, 452); Scoulton, Norfolk (*CCR*, 1337–39, 545–6).

126 *CCR*, 1333–37, 522–3; VCH, *Cambridgeshire*, V, 266.

127 *CIPM*, VIII, no. 103; *CPR*, 1334–8, 470; *CCR*, 1337–9, 139.

128 J.M. Luxford, 'Tombs as forensic evidence in medieval England', *Church Monuments* 24 (2009), 7–25; Barker, 'Legal Crisis and Artistic Innovation in Thirteenth-Century Scotland'; Barker, *Stone Fidelity*, 254–60. See also, Morganstern, *Gothic Tombs of Kinship*, 107.

129 *CIPM*, IX, no. 41; VCH, *Cambridgeshire*, V, 180; VCH, *Cambridgeshire*, IX, 56, 167; VCH, *Bedfordshire*, III, 98–9.



*Fig. 19. Civilian effigy in the south aisle of Westley Church.  
(photo: © Martin Stuchfield)*

### Conclusion

The brass of John de Creke and Alyne looked as much to the present and future as it did to the past. Indeed, it can be argued that the brass at Westley is less of a memorial to John and his first wife and more of a statement of his sons' aspirations in the 1340s. The monument was used as an opportunity by their children to celebrate their success in serving the crown, their involvement in the great military campaigns of the 1330s and 1340s and their dynastic achievements. Ultimately though, the Crekes' grand aspirations, represented by the rebuilding of the church and the commissioning of an ornate monumental

brass, were to be somewhat dashed. Walter's wardship over the Burdeleys estates was lost with the death of his nephew John in 1347 and a year later the country was ravaged by the Black Death. Walter, Master John and William all survived the pestilence but the rest of the family may not have gone unscathed as both Walter and William did not leave any male heirs. Instead the bulk of the Crekes' estates were inherited by William's surviving daughter, Joan, who married Sir Edmund Vauncy of Westley Waterless (d. 1372).<sup>130</sup>

Yet despite the failure of the male line it is perhaps surprising that there is no evidence of

<sup>130</sup> VCH, *Cambridgeshire*, VI, 178. For the descent of the Creke family, see *CIPM*, XIV, no. 214; *CIPM*, XVI, no. 866; *CCR*, 1389–92, 407; *CCR*, 1392–6, 212–13.

any other monuments to the Crekes at Westley. There is nothing to suggest that either Walter, John or William were buried in the church. The large grey marble slab in the south aisle alongside the brass, containing an indent for a simple inscription brass, is later and probably commemorated a member of the Alington family, who were lords of the manor in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>131</sup> There are three stone cross slabs mounted to the west wall of church but these predate the Creke brass and probably belong to the thirteenth or early fourteenth century.<sup>132</sup> The only other fourteenth century monument in the church is an effigy to a young man, tentatively dated to *c.* 1380, which was originally positioned parallel to the Creke brass under the eastern most archway of the nave (Fig. 19).<sup>133</sup> Whilst it is possible that the man may have represented another member of the Creke family, given that he is shown in civilian attire he cannot have represented either of John de Creke's sons and the monument most probably commemorated Edmund Vauncy the younger (d. 1389), who

inherited Westley Waterless from his father Edmund and died in his minority.<sup>134</sup> The two slender brass figures of Sir John de Creke and Lady Alyne in the corner of a quiet country church thus remain as the sole reminder of this remarkable family and their achievements.

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131 There were a number of inscription brasses to the Alington family in the church, two of which are now on the wall of the north aisle (Lack, Stuchfield, Whittemore, *Monumental Brasses of Cambridgeshire*, 242; *Monumental Inscriptions and Coats of Arms from Cambridgeshire*, ed. Palmer, 180–1, 243; VCH, *Cambridgeshire*, VI, 178).

132 Davies, *Parish Church of Westley Waterless*, 3.

133 Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 377; BL, Add. MS 5819, f. 111.

134 P. Tudor-Craig, 'Fourteenth-Century Churches', in *Cambridgeshire Churches*, ed. Hicks, 92; VCH, *Cambridgeshire*, VI, 178.