

FRAGMENTS OF FAITH: UNPICKING ARCHBISHOP JOHN MORTON'S VESTMENTS

Mary M Brooks FSA (London) and Sonia O'Connor FSA (London)

with contributions from Christopher Caple FSA (London), C. Pamela Graves FSA (London) and Anita Quye FSA (Scotland)

Mary M Brooks,* Department of Archaeology, Durham University, Lower Mountjoy, South Road, Durham, England DH1 3LE Email: mary.brooks@durham.ac.uk

Sonia O'Connor, Department of Archaeological & Forensic Sciences, University of Bradford Richmond Road, Bradford, BD7 1DP Email: s.oconnor@bradford.ac.uk

Anita Quye, Centre for Textile Conservation and Technical Art History, History of Art, School of Culture and Creative Arts, University of Glasgow, 8 University Gardens, Glasgow, Scotland G12 8QH Email: anita.quye@glasgow.ac.uk

C. Pamela Graves, Department of Archaeology, Durham University, Lower Mountjoy, South Road, Durham, England DH1 3LE Email: c.p.graves@durham.ac.uk

Christopher Caple, Department of Archaeology, Durham University, Lower Mountjoy, South Road, Durham, England DH1 3LE Email: christopher.caple@durham.ac.uk

*corresponding author

This paper uses evidence from a previously unresearched ecclesiastical textile associated with Archbishop John Morton (c.1420-1500) to generate new insights into the material culture of the Roman Catholic faith before, during and after the penal period in England (c.1558-1829). This composite textile was initially thought to be made up of fragments of a late 1400s cope bearing Morton's rebus, reconfigured as an altar frontal, which had survived in the house of an important Roman Catholic family. The embroidered motifs include a unique Lily Crucifix. The textile's complex biography is 'unpicked' using physical and textual evidence to understand its changing forms, roles and significance. Analysis of the material and construction, combined with evidence gained through X-radiography, showed the frontal was composed of parts of a cope and one, or possibly two, other vestments, one which bore a now missing image of the Annunciation. Mapping the stages of fragmentation, removal and re-modelling demonstrates the transformation of significant mainstream vestments into other forms, possibly illuminating aspects of Morton's faith as well as providing new insights into the practices of recusant Roman Catholics.

Objects of belief often go through numerous stages of transformation as their religious contexts change and their altered physical forms reflect liturgical, legal and cultural changes. This paper focuses on a textile described when sold in 2014 as an ‘altar frontal made from fragments of a deep blue velvet cope, with embroidered motifs in coloured silks and couched gold and silver thread’, probably made sometime in the late 1400s (fig 1).¹ The frontal, then described as the Morton cope, was acquired by the Auckland Project, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, for their new Faith Museum and is here called the Auckland frontal. Unusually, this textile can be firmly associated with Archbishop John Morton (c.1420-1500) as it bears his rebus, a visual pun on his name comprising a bird known as a ‘mor’, his monogram (MOR) and a barrel (a ‘ton’ or ‘tun’). It is also connected to an elite recusant Roman Catholic family, the Huddlestons, through its provenance at Sawston Hall, Pampisford, Cambridgeshire.

This study demonstrates that not one but at least two vestments are present in the frontal. It maps their transformation, through fragmentation, removal and re-modelling, into an expression of suppressed faith, proposing changes which probably took place in a concealed liturgical context during the repression of the Roman Catholic faith in England between about 1559 and 1829. This provides fresh insights into material expressions of faith before and after the English Reformation as well as during the penal period and its gradual relaxation.

[INSERT fig 01 HERE]

FRAGMENTS OF FAITH: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

Diarmaid MacCulloch notes that it has taken some time for evidence from material culture to be integrated into histories of the Reformation.² However, a powerful case has been made for the ‘materialised study of religion’ based on ‘the assumption that things, their use, their valuation and their appeal are not something added to a religion but rather inextricable from it’.³ This view underlies the approach taken here to unpick the frontal’s complex ‘biography’ to demonstrate how ‘materialised study’ may contribute to enhanced understanding of changing religious practices and hence the significance of these altered vestments. The methodology for this study is therefore deliberately interdisciplinary, drawing on both material analysis and the object biography model:

¹ The frontal was sold at Mallams Auctioneers, Oxford, on 22 January 2014.

² MacCulloch 2016, 253

³ Meyer *et al* 2010, 209-210.

Igor Kopytoff's 'the cultural biography of things'.⁴ Jules Prown argued that the effective study of material 'transformed by human action as expressions of culture' requires interpretation based on as full an understanding of the artefact as possible'.⁵ Detailed analysis of the frontal considered the evidence of its construction, use, fragmentation, modification and degradation, linked with contemporaneous textual and visual evidence, including that of comparable vestments. Learning from things clearly has huge potential but depends on the objects in question surviving. John Chapman's stress on 'parts and wholes', the processes of division and the 'absence' of pieces which are no longer part of the whole is particularly relevant here.⁶ This frontal comprises divided artefacts remade into a new whole so both Chapman's fragmentation and Alexander Walsham's recycling models are here applied to a single artefact to illuminate its changing religious significance, social life and patterns of use during possible concealment and re-use.⁷

ARCHBISHOP JOHN MORTON

To understand the religious significance of the components of the Auckland frontal, it is necessary to summarise Morton's turbulent but relatively understudied life. Both his nineteenth and twentieth-first century biographers made this point: 'He has almost been squeezed out of history, although few men ever made more history than he did' and 'history has, in large part, forgotten him'.^{8,9}

Morton rose from a relatively modest gentry background to the great offices of church and state. An Oxford University graduate, ordained in 1485, Morton became a highly efficient lawyer, diplomat and statesman rather than a theologian.¹⁰ His commitment to the Lancastrian cause meant he fled the country to save his life twice, joining Queen Margaret's court in exile in Flanders, was attainted twice (1461 and 1484) and was imprisoned in the Tower of London twice (1461 and 1483). After the Lancastrians' defeat at the Battle of Tewkesbury (1471), Morton took either a pragmatic or an opportunistic step and submitted to the Yorkists. He was pardoned and the attainder against him reversed in 1472. Edward IV's appreciation of his talents can be seen in Morton's rapid rise; he became Master of the Rolls (1472) and Bishop of Ely (1478). Morton officiated at Edward's funeral in 1483 and was an executor of his will and guardian of his children. A rapid reverse followed. Under Richard III, Morton was again in exile on the continent, working in support of the Lancastrian

⁴ Kopytoff 1988, 64-91.

⁵ Prown 1996, 19-27.

⁶ Chapman and Gaydarska 2007, 8-9, 173.

⁷ Walsham 2017, 1125, 1154

⁸ [Mozley] 1878, 18

⁹ Bradley 2019, 7.

¹⁰ Harper-Bill 1978, 19.

claimant to the throne, Henry Tudor. Finally holding power, Henry VII summoned Morton back to England where he assisted at the coronation (1485), swiftly becoming Archbishop of Canterbury (1486), Lord Chancellor (1487) and, eventually, a Cardinal (1493). Morton was one of Henry's most trusted Privy Council advisers, influencing England's international and fiscal policies as well as managing civic and religious administration.¹¹

Despite his status, surprisingly little of Morton's personality is known and his character is hard to read. He left no statement of faith, no theological reflections or sermons and few private papers.¹² Morton recognised family connections in his will and seems to have had an almost paternal relationship with Thomas More, maintaining him first as a page in his household and then as student at Oxford. More repaid this debt by memorialising the Cardinal in *Utopia*.¹³ When Richard III imprisoned Morton in the Tower, Oxford University scholars wrote pleading for his release but seem to have been more inspired by Morton's support as a 'liberal patron' and 'staunch defender and ready helper' than by personal affection.¹⁴

Work pressures may have meant Morton had no time for 'sustained intellectual pursuits'.¹⁵ Claims for Morton as a translator have proved unfounded.¹⁶ Literary activities linked to his circle demonstrate an interest in civil and canon law, classical literature and rhetoric with some leanings towards humanistic 'new learning'.^{17, 18} Drama was part of the life of Morton's household. More is said to have joined the players in such entertainments.¹⁹ Henry Medwell, one of Morton's chaplains, wrote the first known secular English play *Fulgens and Lucrece*, which was possibly staged at Lambeth Place in 1497.²⁰ The published version (c.1512) was dedicated to Morton. John Holt, tutor to the boys in Morton's service, dedicated his Erasmian grammar book *Lac Puerorum or Mylke for Chyldren* to Morton while More provided the framing Latin verse epigrams.²¹ Morton's 'fine, eloquent and pithie' conversation seems to have left no paper trail beyond More's testimony.²²

The visual record is equally barren. No painting of Morton survives amongst portraits of

¹¹ Harper-Bill 1977, 9-10.

¹² Harper-Bill 1977, 9, 14.

¹³ More, 1639, 23.

¹⁴ Anstey 1898, 493-495.

¹⁵ Harper-Bill 1977, 14.

¹⁶ Presumably basing his argument on what is probably a copyist's note recording 'Explicit liber speculum vite Christi per T. Morton' (MS. Bodley 131), Woodhouse argued Morton had translated the *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus* (1895, 110); Chapman 1909, 370.

¹⁷ Harper-Bill 1977, 14.

¹⁸ Harper-Bill 2004.

¹⁹ Roper [1905], 5.

²⁰ Mullini 1997, 203-204.

²¹ Holt [1508].

²² More 1636, 23.

early Archbishops of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace.²³ It is unclear how far the effigy on Morton's splendid cenotaph in Canterbury Cathedral is a portrait.²⁴ Two other possible representations are both contested. Morton is thought to have paid for a carved and painted roof (c.1485) for St John the Baptist, Bere Regis, Dorset, possibly his birthplace.²⁵ Next to Morton's coat of arms is a rather crudely carved boss reputed to be his likeness although no known evidence supports this.²⁶ Mozley, a nineteenth-century rector at St John the Baptist, Plymtree, Devon, argued that the painted chancel screen in this church depicted Morton as the 'patriarchal-looking man', basing this identification on the 'vessel made in the form of Morton's rebus, a ton or cask, with M upon it' carried by a younger man.²⁷ Unfortunately, Mozley had misinterpreted the evidence – there is no such 'M' and no other reason to identify the older man with Morton.²⁸

Morton's reputation has been mixed, coloured by suspicions about his conspicuous change of allegiance and early biographies which often reflected their authors' political agendas and prejudices. The writer of the *Chronicles of London* considered that 'in our time was no man like to be compared to him in all things; albeit that he lived not without the great disdain and great hatred of the commons of this land'.²⁹ Sir George Buck's heavily rewritten 1619 account presents Morton as one of Richard III's traducers and the source of much malign activity, going so far as to suggest Morton's involvement in the death of the Princes in the Tower.³⁰ Morton's reputation has not been helped by Francis Bacon's assertion of his responsibility for the infamous tax strategy known as 'Morton's fork'.³¹ Nevertheless, even Bacon acknowledged that Morton was a 'wise and eloquent man' although 'harsh and haughty – that he was much accepted by the King, but envy'd by the nobility, and hated by the people'.³² More, not unnaturally, defended Morton as 'not more honourable for his authority, than for his prudence and vertue'.³³ Morton's nineteenth-century biographer John Budden provides anecdotes of his interactions with politicians and churchmen and praises his care for the poor, summing him up as 'famous for religion, pollecy and Integrity of life', renowned in Oxford as

²³ Williams 2019.

²⁴ Robertson (1880, 540) and Woodhouse (1895, 108) both stated this was erected during Morton's lifetime. Bradley suggested it might be post-mortem (2019, 122).

²⁵ Morton may have been born in Bere Regis or Milborne St Andrew, Dorset; Harper-Bill 2004.

²⁶ Morton's arms are blazoned as 'quarterly gules and ermine on the 1st and 4th a goat's head erased argent, attired or'; Bentham 1771, Appendix 45* and pl XIV.

²⁷ [Mozley] 1878, 10.

²⁸ Comparable depictions survive at Buckland-in-the-Moor and Ugborough in Devon. Mozley's attribution was robustly rejected by Keyser (1899, 191).

²⁹ Kingsford 1905, 232.

³⁰ Buck, 1647.

³¹ Lumby 1885, 93. Bishop Richard Foxe, another career cleric/politician, may actually have been responsible for this tax strategy based on the principle that those living lavishly could afford more tax because they were evidently wealthy whereas those who lived frugally could equally afford more on account of their savings; Davies 2004.

³² Lumby 1885, 182.

³³ More 1636, 22.

‘a fortunate determiner of causes, a punisher of guilty and obstinate delinquents, an equall servant of iustice, to administer every man his right’.³⁴ The consensus seems to be that Morton was an austere, sometimes harsh, but fair man who was a consummate politician. Mozley asserts that ‘Morton made no direct appeal to posterity. He wrote nothing that has come down; he raised no mighty fabric to enshrine his memory’.³⁵ However, this is to ignore not only Morton’s legacy of building works but also the material and spiritual evidence of the vestments he so clearly marked as his. The lack of textual and visual evidence makes the evidence of the Auckland frontal and what the vestments suggest about the man who commissioned it even more significant. These show Morton to be a man of sacred and secular power and wealth who clearly was willing to engage with vestments for their liturgical significance, authority and visual drama and, possibly, personal spiritual meanings.

MORTON’S USE OF VESTMENTS

Morton seems to have made good use of the opportunities offered by liturgical theatre although his performance in such rites also seems to demonstrate genuine devotion, as evoked in Walter Hook’s version of a contemporary account of Morton’s enthronement as Bishop of Ely:

After a night passed in prayer, [Morton] set out...to walk from Downham to Ely. He was arrayed only in his rochet; his head was uncovered; his feet were exposed to the hard ground; ... he devoutly uttered his Paternosters ... The great west door, as he drew near, was thrown open... The bishop's sedile was as splendidly decorated as the throne, and contrasted with the unadorned, travel-stained man, who, instead of seating himself, bent the knee... He was still barefooted, and clad only in his rochet... [when] he entered the vestry, and the cathedral clergy washed his feet; with due ceremony and prayer they arrayed him in his pontificals. Then there was silence for a space... The procession came forth. Last of all appeared, in all the magnificence of his pontificals, his jewelled mitre on his head, his rich pastoral staff in his gloved hand, his feet clad with sandals, and treading the rich carpet, the Lord Bishop of Ely.³⁶

These ‘pontifical’ vestments are evident in both Morton’s memorials in Canterbury Cathedral. His elaborate cenotaph shows Morton’s ‘monumental body’ in full episcopal vestments, including a pall, stole, maniple, chasuble and dalmatic with a jewelled mitre, embroidered gloves and his cardinal’s

³⁴ Budden 1879, 50, 52. The manuscript presented in this paper is in the Dorset History Centre (D-MPL/42).

³⁵ [Mozley] 1878, 80.

³⁶ *Installatio Johannis Morton Episcopi Eliensis* Number XXIX (Harley MS 3721) in Bentham 1777, Appendix *34-5; Hook 1867, V, 411-414.

hat and rebus of a monogrammed barrel in the canopy above.^{37,38} In his will, Morton asked to be buried simply under a plain marble slab in the Cathedral's Undercroft where his body could lie in front of the statue of the Virgin Mary known as Our Lady of the Undercroft.³⁹ Despite his request, this slab was ornamented with a memorial brass. Only the indent now remains, showing the Archbishop in his mitre, surmounted by his cardinal's hat.⁴⁰

MORTON AND VESTMENTS AS GIFTS AND LEGACIES

Morton is known to have used vestments as gifts which would have reinforced his presence and authority, especially when his coat of arms or rebus were present. Typically, copes and chasubles were designed as sets, each having different liturgical functions. Copes were generally worn for processions rather than by the main celebrant during a Mass. Chasubles were a Eucharistic vestment so often had religious imagery on the back, visible when the priest faced the altar. After becoming Archbishop, Morton gave Canterbury Cathedral eighty white copes, vestments (probably chasubles) and a funeral pall, all with his coat of arms.⁴¹ The Cathedral may actually have received fewer copes than this but even so this was a costly gift.⁴² The loss of these copes can be traced as the Commissioners visited the Cathedral to remove its material goods and the Canterbury clerics were obliged to dispose of their vestments. The 1540 inventory recorded fifty copes of 'white golde baudekyn wth golde of Moreton's gifte wt Orpheras [orphreys] of velvet golde baudekyn', vestments for a deacon and subdeacon, three stoles and two phanons (maniples). The 'riche hersecloth of blacke and white golde baudekyn' was probably also Morton's gift.^{43,44} The 1563 inventory showed the number reducing radically. The first draft lists 'Item of my lorde Mortons suyte X copes' but the final version only has 'four Copes' from Morton's gift.⁴⁵

Others also received vestments from Morton. Within the Canterbury diocese, the 1509 inventory of St Dunstan's Church, Cranbrook, recorded 'ii whyte copys, an awbe [alb] ii tewnyklys [tunics]. White brawdred with fflwrys of my lord Cardynall Mortymer's [Morton's] geft'.⁴⁶

³⁷ Robertson 1893, 293.

³⁸ Robertson 1880, 540.

³⁹ TNA, PROB11/12/178.

⁴⁰ Morton was presumably buried in his pontificals but his remains were disturbed. A partial skull thought to be Morton's is now at Stonyhurst College; Woodruff 1926, 158-159.

⁴¹ Kalendar of Obits, LPL MS 20, f.218v.

⁴² Wickham Legg and Hope 1902, 122.

⁴³ Baudekyn is a silk and gold metal thread brocaded fabric.

⁴⁴ Wickham Legg and Hope 1902, 122.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 203, 214 & 232.

⁴⁶ Vallance 1929, 59.

Lincoln Cathedral received ‘a red cope of Cloth of Gold with costly orphreys... the gift of Mr John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury’.⁴⁷ Morton also used vestments as gifts for political or diplomatic purposes. In 1498, Erasmus reported Morton’s ‘present of a magnificent vestment’ to Hendrik van Bergen, Bishop of Cambrai.⁴⁸

Morton also seems to have supported churches which needed to replace vestments where a public statement of identity would not have been visible. He authorised a period during which indulgences could be granted to ‘Christians within the province of Canterbury...who contribute to the relief of the parish church of St Michael Queenhithe in the city of London, the most part of whose vestments and ornaments were lately destroyed by fire’.⁴⁹

Morton’s will underlines his engagement with episcopal accoutrements. He left Ely Cathedral his best mitre and the mitre he had received from his predecessor at Ely in return for Requiem Masses.⁵⁰ He does not seem to have left vestments, or funding for vestments, for these Requiem Masses. No further mention of vestments which Morton wore, or might have regarded as personal possessions, has yet been found.⁵¹ In addition to the Auckland frontal, four vestments bearing elements of Morton’s rebus survive but none corresponds to the vestments described in the textual evidence.⁵² St Mary’s College, Oscott, Arundel Castle, West Sussex, and the Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, each have one such cope. A chasuble, probably originally a cope, is at St Mary’s Roman Catholic Church, Monmouth.

CHANGING ATTITUDES TO VESTMENTS: PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES

Henrician claims on church property were followed by more systematic removals under Edward VI. Attitudes were obviously different under Mary I but vestments remained controversial under Elizabeth I. The 1559 *Act of Uniformity* made vestments subject to the authority of the monarch and parliament although the 1566 vestiarian conflicts demonstrated continuing theological differences expressed through the choice of liturgical dress.⁵³ The practical consequence was the continuing

⁴⁷ Caley *et al* 1846, 6 (3), 1282.

⁴⁸ Erasmus was Bergen’s secretary; Epistle 73, 1498, Nichols 1901, 163-164.

⁴⁹ 20 November 1489, Lambeth; Harper-Bill 1977, 12, 184.

⁵⁰ ‘*Item do et lego Cathedrali Elien mitram optimam... et meam mitram quas habui ab executoriibus bone memorie domini Willi Grey nuper episcopi Elien immediati presdecessoris mei in ecclesia Elien...*’. TNA PROB11/12/178.

⁵¹ Heard 2011, 159.

⁵² These vestments are currently the subject of further research, also supported by the Society of Antiquaries (London). A transcription error in the Evelyn Thomas Database of Medieval English Embroidery, now hosted by the Princeton Index of Christian Art (<http://ica.princeton.edu/opus-anglicanum>) created an illusionary sixth Morton vestment said to be at St. John’s College, Oxford. This is actually a duplicate entry for the Arundel Castle cope.

⁵³ Hefling and Shattuck 2006, 46.

reduction of the role of vestments in liturgical practice. Duffy and Ashton have mapped their removal from parish churches and cathedrals along with the strong emotions and protective or iconoclastic actions and reactions produced by things of faith.^{54, 55} Most vestments had gone from the majority of parish churches by the 1570s but copes lingered on and were still used in cathedrals as processional vestments.⁵⁶

The valuable textiles used for vestments, particularly copes with their generous lengths of loom-width fabrics, were often repurposed.⁵⁷ Given the adaptability of cloth, some vestments were given new functions within the church. At St Peter & St Paul, Steeple Ashton, Oxfordshire, a cope was reconfigured as an altar frontal and dossal.⁵⁸ The table carpet at St Margaret's, Lyng, Norfolk, was constructed out of parts of two copes along with embroidered orphreys to make the 'carpet, silk or other decent covering' required for the communion table.^{59, 60} Not all vestments and textiles remained inside the church. At St Sebastian's Church, Great Gonerby, Lincolnshire, 'all the priest's apparel that he was wont to wear at mass' was cut up and sold to William Carter, a local tailor.⁶¹ Some found new life in a domestic setting. In 1566 churchwardens Richard Arnold and Nicholas Colbie of Harlaxton, Lincolnshire, recorded the sale of two chasubles and other textiles to a Mr Blewet who 'hath defaced and cut them in peces and made bed hangings of them and cussinges'.⁶² Such defacement was a necessary mutilation to desacralize the images. Lack of defacement was a concern for those seeking out recusants who might be keeping sacred things whole in the hope they would be needed again. In 1605, Bishop Richard Vaughan instructed his London clergy to establish if 'there be any in your parish who are noted, knowne, or suspected to conceale or keepe hidden in their houses ... copes, vestments, albes, or other ornaments of superstition, uncanceled or undefaced...'.⁶³ Possession of vestments became evidence of adherence to the 'old faith'. Suspicions deepened as missionary priests started to arrive in England. Those suspected of harbouring priests and their mass equipment could be arrested, imprisoned and even executed. Changing attitudes to the cult of the Virgin Mary intensified such risks. England was once renowned for Marian devotion but Henrician reforms rejected Mary's intercessory role.⁶⁴ Devotion to the

⁵⁴ Duffy 1992.

⁵⁵ Aston 2016.

⁵⁶ Whiting 2010, 80.

⁵⁷ Tarlow 2003, 108-121.

⁵⁸ [Boden, Z.] 2006, 190-195.

⁵⁹ Kendrick 1905, 74.

⁶⁰ Parker 1566, III, 175.

⁶¹ Whiting 2010, 80.

⁶² Peacock 1866, 99.

⁶³ Fincham 1994, 37.

⁶⁴ Duffy 1992, 256.

Virgin was effectively banned from 1538 and her statues removed, part of a longer iconoclastic process which continued under Edward VI and Elizabeth I.

A RECUSANT PROVENANCE

The Auckland frontal is known to have come from Sawston Hall, although it is not known when it arrived there. Bradley speculates that the original cope might have been a gift to Sawston church from Morton while he was Bishop of Ely.⁶⁵ However, the Edwardian Commissioners' listing does not include a cope or chasuble corresponding with those now making up the frontal.⁶⁶ Ironically, John Huddleston was one of these Commissioners although he later became a Privy Councillor under Mary I. John's widow Bridget (b.1515) remained a Catholic under Elizabeth I. His son Edmund (d. 1606) was a partial conformer so it was his grandson Henry (d.1657) who continued the Roman Catholic tradition. The family paid recusancy fines and sent their children abroad to be educated; nine entered Roman Catholic orders. Henry was a friend of the English Jesuit priest John Gerard (1564-1637), offering him sanctuary at Sawston in 1594.⁶⁷

Sawston Hall became a centre for recusants with carefully constructed hiding places to protect the priests in residence who were often Jesuits.⁶⁸ 'Prayers' were held in the hidden attic chapel during the penal period.⁶⁹ In operation by at least 1584, this illegal chapel was later described as 'a gloomy Garret and no ways ornamented; it is quite out of the way by Design, and in case of any Confusion, the Tabernacle and Altar may be easily removed'.⁷⁰ After the 1791 *Relief Act*, Ferdinand and Richard Huddleston were quick to register a legitimate chapel on Sawston Hall's ground floor.⁷¹ The Huddlestons acquired numerous Catholic mass artefacts including chalices, altar frontals, frequently made of remounted fragments, and chasubles with remounted orphreys.⁷²

THE AUCKLAND FRONTAL

⁶⁵ Bradley 2019, 104.

⁶⁶ Copes of purple velvet, blue silk sarcenet, blue silk and crimson velvet and vestments of red velvet and damask, white silk and worsted were recorded; Muskett 1895-1896, 199-200.

⁶⁷ Bindoff 1982, I, 402-403.

⁶⁸ Holt, 1984.

⁶⁹ Rogers 2003, 82 and 92.

⁷⁰ From a 1757 description in the diary of Reverend William Cole, an Anglican with strong Roman Catholic leanings; cited in Jackson 2003, 47.

⁷¹ Jackson 2003, 57.

⁷² It is not yet clear when these were acquired but the dates of their sale may be tracked. The vestments included a chasuble (Fitzwilliam Museum FIT277194); an Italian red brocade chasuble with English orphreys, 1375-1399 (V&A 935-1901) and an altar frontal remade in the 1600s from orphreys dating from 1400-1500 (V&A 817-1901).

The evidence from the fabrics and threads making up the frontal is key to understanding the stages of its ‘object biography’. The importance of these changes – extended ‘use-life’ in Chapman’s terminology – will be discussed after the frontal’s composition and iconography has been considered.⁷³

The frontal is an oblong panel measuring approximately 1560mm by 1010mm, consisting of twenty-six rectangles and triangles cut from blue silk velvet fabrics (fig 1). There are twenty-five appliqué motifs worked in polychrome silk and gold or silver threads with other details embroidered directly onto the velvet. The backing, now faded and incomplete, was made of four loom widths, each approximately 800mm (31½"), of a plain weave wool fabric with a white warp and red weft, embroidered at its centre with an IHS Christogram (fig 2).

[INSERT fig 02 HERE]

SACRED AND SECULAR ICONOGRAPHY

The most important sacred motifs of God the Father and a Lily Crucifix are in the centre of the frontal above a *rose-en-soleil* motif with two further *rose-en-soleil* motifs flanking the crucifix. Morton’s rebus with all three elements – the bird, monogram with the O and R enclosed by the M in the form of a stylised tree and barrel – are on either side of God the Father. There are two other monograms, one centre left and one top right, with two wings from another bird above the former and an angel below the latter. Comparable to angels on many medieval vestments, this has a halo, six peacock feather wings and an ermine collar and is surrounded by small groups of rays. Other secular motifs include four fleur-de-lys motifs towards the corners of the frontal and ten elaborate appliquéd stylised flowers of four different types. This embroidery is typical of the second half of the fifteenth century when appliqué tended to replace more complex overall stitching. Workshops seem to have produced variants on a range of standardised motifs such as angels and flowers.⁷⁴ Motifs such as Morton’s rebus and the Lily Crucifix were probably specially commissioned and are higher quality work. The IHS enclosed in a sun on the backing is worked as a simple outline in thick couched cord. The highly stylised lettering is similar to some eighteenth-century renditions of this Christogram.

The Lily Crucifix is a very unusual motif which appears to be exclusively English. Christ is depicted crucified on a lily, Mary’s symbol, rather than a wooden cross. The lily became a regular

⁷³ Chapman and Gaydarska 2007, 77.

⁷⁴ Jackson 2016, 153-154.

element in Annunciation scenes from the thirteenth century, evoking Mary's purity while also possibly referencing the idea that lilies aided conception.⁷⁵ The fusion of the Annunciation with the crucifixion arose from the belief that the Feast of the Annunciation, celebrated on Lady Day (25th March), was the same day as Christ's crucifixion.^{76,77} This idea was current from as early as Augustine (354-430)⁷⁸ into the seventeenth century when John Donne wrote *Upon the Annuntiation and Passion Falling upon One Day* (1608):

... this day hath showne,
Th'Abridgement of Christs story, which makes one
.... Of the 'Angels Ave,' and *Consummatum est*.⁷⁹

Nineteen representations of the Lily Crucifix are known in various media, dating from the mid to late Middle Ages, frequently shown between Mary and Gabriel in an Annunciation scene.⁸⁰ Cervone argues that these representations are dissimilar, suggesting 'this is not the case of one craftsman or his workshop using and re-using a design'.⁸¹ Some features, such as the number of flowers and the ornate vase, appear fairly consistent but none is sufficiently close to the frontal's version to be considered as a source. Nevertheless, the designer of this embroidered version seems to have been familiar with all the motif's key elements. As Morton was in Oxford first as student and then, after 1435, as Principal of Peckswater Inn (now Christ Church) and finally as Chancellor from 1495,⁸² he may have seen the Lily Crucifix stained glass window in St Michael-at-the-North-Gate, Oxford, dating from 1410-1480. Interestingly, his cenotaph includes carvings of 'a large and well carved lily, in a vase' and there was probably a statue of the Virgin and an Annunciation on the east jamb.⁸³ The high-quality and sensitively detailed Lily Crucifix on the frontal appears to be unique as a motif on vestments (fig 3).⁸⁴ Walter Hildburgh and Christopher Woodeforde, both pioneering

⁷⁵ Hildburgh 1923/24, 220; Duggan, 1991, 41;

⁷⁶ Cervone 2013, 197.

⁷⁷ Duggan (1991, 40) notes an alternative whereby 25th March was considered to be the date of the Resurrection, making the Lily Crucifix a fusion of the Annunciation and Resurrection.

⁷⁸ Haddan, 1994

⁷⁹ Hayward 1929, 290-291.

⁸⁰ Hildburgh 1923/24, 208; Kemp 1986, 434.

⁸¹ Cervone 2013, 197.

⁸² Morton is less likely to have seen the re-set stained-glass Lily Crucifix dating from c.1500 in The Queen's College Chapel.

⁸³ Robertson 1880, 540.

⁸⁴ The 'Lily Crucifix' chasuble at Campion Hall, Oxford, depicts Christ on a wooden cross with the lily growing from its top; Brandon-Salmon, n.d.

writers on Lily Crucifixes, observed no examples had yet been found on medieval church embroidery.^{85,86}

[INSERT fig 03 HERE]

PERSONAL AND POLITICAL MOTIFS

Both his rebus and the *rose-en-soleil* motif may have had a more personal resonance for Morton as assertions of his identity and allegiances.

William Camden describes Morton's rebus as a 'Mor upon a Tun, and sometime a Mulberry tree called *Morus* in Latine, out of a Tun'.⁸⁷ The bird could reference a falcon or the eagle of St. John the Evangelist who could have been Morton's name saint. Morton's rebus was clearly recognised within the ecclesiastical community. An eagle on a tun appeared as one of the 'subtleties' made from sugar paste, marzipan or wax at the banquet celebrating Morton's enthronement as Bishop of Ely.⁸⁸

Morton used his rebus as a mark of ownership in his books; the MOR on a barrel appears in his copy of Bartolus de Saxoferrato's *Lectura super prima parte Codicis*.⁸⁹ Two versions appear in Richard Pynson's 1500 edition of the Sarum Missal, signifying Morton's patronage.⁹⁰ His rebus identified his building works at Croydon Palace and Canterbury Cathedral where it also appears on his cenotaph.^{91, 92} In Oxford, it could once be seen in the Divinity School and St Mary's Church.⁹³ Budden summarised the not so subtle message: '...he hath adorned her [Oxford's] monuments with his armes and diuises ... all wch make full demonstration of his learning, vertue, high descent, and munificence'.⁹⁴ The barrel, generally on its own but sometimes with the initial M, gained wider circulation on the coins Morton was licenced to mint as Archbishop of Canterbury.⁹⁵

Two appliqué versions of the rebus on the frontal have all three elements: the bird, MOR monogram and barrel (fig 4). When present on a vestment, the rebus could function as a reminder of the Archbishop's authority, ownership or gift. It may also have reminded those wearing the

⁸⁵ Hildburgh 1923/24, 209, note 10.

⁸⁶ Woodforde 1932, 64. The motif does actually appear in two manuscripts.

⁸⁷ Camden, Philipot and Gent 1674, 214.

⁸⁸ Bentham 1771, Appendix *36

⁸⁹ Cambridge University Library (Inc.1.B.3.1b[3730]); Hale, 2012.

⁹⁰ Trinity College Library, Cambridge (VI. 18.21), sig. A2r); Airaksinen 2009, 158; Raub 2011.

⁹¹ Malden 1912.

⁹² Woodruff 1926, 38.

⁹³ Alterations removed the rebus in the Divinity School in 1669 and St Mary's in 1676.

⁹⁴ Budden 1879, 71.

⁹⁵ Brooke 1931-33, 83-84.

vestments or seeing them used in a Mass after Morton's death to pray for him.⁹⁶ Abbot Thornton seems to have intended his rebus on the back of a funerary chasuble to evoke prayers for his soul's repose.⁹⁷

[INSERT fig 04 HERE]

The *rose-en-soleil* motif adopted by Edward IV combines the white rose of the House of York with the sunburst emblem of his predecessor Richard II (fig 5). The presence of this symbol on the frontal suggests a vestment made sometime between 1471/1472, when Morton began to serve Edward, and the King's funeral in 1483.⁹⁸ This, combined with blue's association with royal mourning, may have led to the belief that the frontal included parts of a cope worn by Morton at Edward's funeral.⁹⁹ However, blue was actually worn as mourning by royalty rather than by those mourning royalty, who wore black.^{100, 101} The *rose-en-soleil* may also be read as a Marian symbol.¹⁰² The two interpretations are not mutually exclusive as Edward was a devotee of the Virgin, visiting her Walsingham shrine in 1469.

[INSERT fig 05 HERE]

UNPICKING THE FRONTAL

This research was initially undertaken to test the hypothesis that the frontal comprised a cope belonging to Morton. Attention focused on investigating and capturing material evidence about making and remaking to gain as full an understanding as possible of the original vestment and the stages in its transformation. Every aspect, from the threads upwards, was considered using detailed visual examination (stitches, seams, direction of warp, wear patterns), chemical analysis (dyes and metals), microscopy and photo-microscopy (fibres, weaves, sequins) and X-radiography (construction). It rapidly became clear that the frontal's biography was more complex than first supposed. Dye analysis showed the presence of natural plant dyes throughout. These are consistent with fifteenth century western European textiles but, because their use continues into the nineteenth

⁹⁶ See Heard 2011, 163.

⁹⁷ V&A 697-1902; Carter 2010, 155.

⁹⁸ Astle 1779, 352, 354.

⁹⁹ Hall, 2014; Bradley 2019, 104.

¹⁰⁰ Hayward 2007, 136.

¹⁰¹ Duch 2016, 101 and 109.

¹⁰² Ward 2016, 38, 41-42.

century, this did not help distinguish the dates of the different phases of forming and reforming.¹⁰³

The study revealed the frontal to be made from pieces of two distinctly different blue silk velvets indicating at least two different source vestments. Despite the surface similarity of the blue pile, one velvet has a predominantly pinkish/blue ground weave and green selvedges (Velvet A) whilst the other, Velvet B, has a predominately blue ground and creamy-white selvedges (fig 6). Such silk velvet was an expensive imported luxury. For Henry VII's coronation in 1485, a year after Morton became Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Dudley was supplied with 11 yards of blue velvet at 14 shillings (about £484) a yard while the crimson velvet for my Lord of Oxford's robe was a startling 30 shillings (about £1037) a yard, more than the purple velvet bought from the mercer John Mafthewe for the King at 20 shillings (about £691) a yard.¹⁰⁴ The price variations presumably reflect differences in the quality of the fabric and dyes.

[INSERT fig 06 HERE]

The twenty-six pieces are stitched together using a variety of construction threads and different seam types. Where embroidery motifs continue across one piece to another, these seams can be safely attributed to source vestments. For instance, the seam joining Pieces 1 and 2 runs beneath an appliqué (fig 7). These seams can be seen to have selvedges where they are visible on the reverse. The single selvedges visible on the turnings of Pieces 8 and 13 show these pieces incorporate unpicked vestment seams. X-radiography was particularly useful in clarifying different seam structures and stitching and revealing cut or selvedge edges, especially where these are obscured by the partial backing. Original vestment seams are neatly sewn with an evenly sized backstitch. Later seams are mostly in coarser, unevenly sized running stitch and poorly aligned to the seam direction, with roughly cut, uneven or excessive turnings.

[INSERT fig 07 HERE]

The appliqué motifs were first embroidered with silk and metal threads onto a plain weave undyed linen fabric, using mainly split stitch and laid and couched work, then cut out and stitched to the velvet. The full rebuses and the Lily Crucifix are composites, the latter having eighteen separate

¹⁰³ The yellows are weld (*Reseda luteola*) and an unidentified flavonoid; blues are indigoids, probably woad (*Isatis tinctorial*) and/or indigo (*Indigofera tinctorial*); reds are madders (*Rubia* species); browns are hydrolysable tannins from wood and bark; Quye, Wertz and Degano, 2019.

¹⁰⁴ [Willughby] 1877, 6, 7, 8. The National Archive's currency convertor has been used throughout; <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter/#currency-result>.

appliquéd elements. Some elements, such as the vase and barrels are in raised metal thread work. The curved ray motifs, curlicues and other direct embroidery are worked in couched metal threads and simple stitches such as back and chain stitch. The threads are typical of the period: silk floss and metal threads made from narrow gilded metal strips wrapped on fibre cores.¹⁰⁵

The angel, floral and fleur-de-lys appliqués are on Velvet A. The figure of God, the Lily Crucifix, rebuses and *rose-en-soleil* motifs are all on Velvet B. The directly embroidered spikes extending from the stylised flowers on Velvet A are accentuated by rows of domed sequins with punched central holes. These have a silver-copper alloy base with a very thin fire-gilded gold layer on the upper surface.¹⁰⁶ These spikes and the other directly embroidered curlicues and trails are in metal threads shadowed by lines of yellow silk split stitch embroidery. The directly embroidered elements on Velvet B are quite different. These depict branching plants made of paired couched metal threads that form leaf-like ends infilled with yellow silk (fig 8). There are exceptions but these fragments of direct embroidery have been repositioned, probably when the twenty-six pieces were stitched together. Some appliqué motifs have also been moved. The Morton monogram in the frontal's top right corner has been cut out with some of its original ground velvet and re-attached across the seam between Pieces 11 and 10 with the letters up-side-down (fig 9). The two bird wings stitched across Pieces 3 and 4 are also no longer in their original locations. This evidence shows that Velvet A and Velvet B were not used in the construction of a single vestment but are from two separate vestments.

[INSERT fig 08 HERE]

[INSERT fig 09 HERE]

There are two crudely made vertical tucks forming raised ridges on the front, dividing the frontal into approximate thirds. Sewn with a thick cream thread and large, uneven running stitches, the tucks pass through all the frontal's layers except for the white tape reinforcing the reverse top edge. There are also four narrow white tape loops stitched vertically onto the back, three towards the top edge of the frontal (fig 10). The fourth loop is halfway down one side below the major horizontal seam (fig 6). The turning of both parts of this seam conceals a blue tape. X-radiography indicates the

¹⁰⁵ Caple [2018].

¹⁰⁶ Caple [2017].

same, or a very similar tape, hidden under the white tapes at the top of the frontal on Pieces 1/2, 9/10 and 11.

[INSERT fig 10 HERE]

Silk is particularly prone to photodegradation and both velvets are weak and their pile powders easily. Both show wear along the original seams but wear along the frontal's bottom edge suggests it was used for some time in this form. Velvet A seems to be considerably more degraded than Velvet B but there are exceptions which indicate that individual pieces and groups experienced different biographies. Soiling includes wax deposits, mainly along the bottom portion of the frontal. There are many roughly mended tears and holes. The frontal's top reinforcing tapes and sides have a variety of holes, frequently with associated iron staining, indicating the use of nails and tacks for display. Moth frass suggests that insect activity may have been a factor in the removal of much of the wool backing which now only covers the central third of the reverse. What remains is faded due to light exposure; the colour is much stronger on its reverse and in the protected seam turnings. This light exposure will also have weakened the wool, probably causing tearing and consequent disintegration of the backing which was then both cut and torn away, leaving only traces of its original extent.

REVEALED AND HYPOTHETICAL SACRED IMAGES

X-radiography revealed previously unsuspected appliqué motifs and associated direct embroidery, including a depiction of the Annunciation on Velvet B, Pieces 3 and 4. Outlines of the missing motifs appeared when the empty stitch holes were highlighted on the enlarged digitised radiographs. They show the Holy Ghost as a dove descending on rays towards the figure of the Virgin with a bird from Morton's rebus above (fig 11). Ragged cuts, one vertically through the location of Mary, seem to be a deliberate act of destruction and contrasts with the apparent care taken in the removal of the Annunciation motifs from the velvet. Morton's bird was also removed whilst the monogram below remained in situ. These velvet pieces were later re-sewn but slightly out of register. The stitch holes also delineate a scroll next to Mary, reinforcing the existence of a complete Annunciation and making it a reasonable hypothesis that the Angel Gabriel once appeared on an adjoining piece which is no longer extant. Remaining thread tufts suggest this scroll was once worked with a text. There are

similar text-bearing scrolls in the Annunciation on a repurposed cope dated to the second half of the fifteenth century in St Augustine's Church, East Langdon, Kent.¹⁰⁷

[INSERT fig 11 HERE]

Another lost figure is suggested by the partial nimbus on Piece 24 at the frontal's bottom centre. Given the Marian imagery elsewhere on the frontal, it is tempting to suggest this may have been a motif of the Assumption of the Virgin. X-radiography also showed metal thread work concealed in the seams and empty stitch holes, confirming the feet of the angel on Piece 10 were originally immediately above the missing figure.

Images of the Virgin are known to have been purposefully removed from church textiles. In 1567, the image of Our Lady on a blue velvet altar cloth at Great St Mary's Church, Cambridge, was removed by command of the Archdeacon and sold for 6 shillings (approximately £71.47) to 'a singing man'.¹⁰⁸ Such removals might parallel the defacement of the faces in two Lily Crucifixes in other media. There could also have been political resonances as links were made, explicitly or implicitly, between Mary, Queen of Heaven, and Mary, Queen of England. Thomas Tallis's antiphon *Gaude gloriosa Mater* honours the Virgin but may also have referenced an earthly Queen.¹⁰⁹ In his 1553/4 poem *An Ave Maria in commendation of our Virtuous Queen*, Leonard Stopes integrates his praise of Mary Tudor within the framework of the Ave Maria.¹¹⁰ Anti-Marian fervour might encompass both Queens and made it doubly politic to remove her image.

PHASES OF USE, FRAGMENTATION AND RE-MAKING

Four phases of use, fragmentation and re-making are proposed.

Phase 1 – Original vestments: The evidence of fabrics, seams, selvages, imagery, stitching technique and materials described above indicates that the frontal was once at least two vestments. Pieces 1/2, 9/10, 11, 12, 13 19, 20, 21/24/25, 22 and 23 are in Velvet A. Pieces 3, 4, 5/6, 7/26, 8, 14, 15/16 and 17/18 are in Velvet B.

Velvet A made up a cope. The alignment of the warp shows how the floral motifs and two fleurs-de-lys were arranged radially at the sides of the semi-circular cope whilst the angel, two more

¹⁰⁷ Anon. 1877, 13-17.

¹⁰⁸ Rogers 2003, 38.

¹⁰⁹ Doe 1976, 34.

¹¹⁰ Rollins 1920, 13-18

fleurs-de-lys and the hypothetical image of the Assumption were arranged vertically down the back (fig 12). The positions of the original seams and the size of the pieces suggest the motifs on Velvet B formed two groups. The long oblong panel with God the Father, the Lily Crucifix and a *rose-en-soleil* motif (Piece 7/26), form the first group. The second group (Pieces 3, 4, and 14) are all part of the Annunciation scene, originally with the bird and monogram of Morton's rebus above and below respectively. The scene is now partly obscured by two relocated bird wing motifs, probably derived from the missing bird motif. Either group may have been flanked by the remaining *rose-en-soleil* motifs and full rebuses (Pieces 5/6, 8, 15/16 and 17/18) (fig 13).

[INSERT fig 12 HERE]

[INSERT fig 13 HERE]

There is no evidence for Morton's rebus on the cope made from Velvet A nor is there any evidence to suggest that the vestment made in Velvet B, which does have at least three versions of his rebus, was a cope. Given the linear positioning of the important imagery, it could well have been a chasuble. The Lily Crucifix would not have been out of place on the back of a chasuble but the discovery of the missing Annunciation motif on Pieces 3, 4 and 14 poses a conundrum. This might have been on the other face of the same chasuble but could equally have been on the back of a second vestment. The velvet and direct embroidery techniques are the same on all these pieces so if there were two vestments, they probably came from the same workshop. Annunciations are known to have been placed on the back of chasubles rather than the more customary Crucifixions, as on the Lucca chasuble (1450-1500).¹¹¹

Phase 2 – Intermediate hanging: At this stage, Piece 11 has been inserted into Piece 10 to infill the curved neckline of the cope. The edges and probably the lower part of the cope, with the speculative image of the Assumption, have been cut away to leave a rectangular hanging featuring the more innocuous angel, flowers and fleur-de-lys motifs (Pieces 1/2, 9/10, 11 and 21/24/25) (fig 14). The top edge has been reinforced with the narrow blue tape and the white tape loops added to enable suspension. This hanging might have been used as an altar dossal in a sacred space or as a decoration in a secular context such as a bed or wall hanging. It cannot yet be determined how the other fragments of the cope and the chasuble were stored or used at this time but the velvet pile of these pieces is much better preserved, suggesting less light exposure.

¹¹¹ Graffius 2008, 28-29.

[INSERT fig 14 HERE]

Phase 3 – Frontal: By this point, the chasuble had also been cut into pieces, some of which were then united with the Phase 2 hanging and the other parts of the cope producing the Auckland frontal. The Annunciation too had been removed from the chasuble and the gaps this left disguised with scraps of scavenged metal thread work. The frontal represents perhaps a third of each of the original vestments but further pieces were clearly extant at this time as elements from both were salvaged and applied to camouflage areas of damage, loss and disfigurement or to help balance the motifs in this new arrangement. A patch on the back of Piece 4 (chasuble) has the pink ground of velvet A (cope). On the front, the inverted monogram sewn over the seam between Pieces 10 and 11 and the bird wings at the junction of Pieces 3, 4, and 14 match those of the chasuble. That more of the cope and chasuble were not incorporated in the frontal may indicate that these areas were more badly degraded. However, the frontal's final size appears to have been determined by the dimensions of the backing, explaining why the side turnings are so uneven and why the centre of the Phase 2 hanging (Pieces 1/2, 9/10 and 11) has been cut out and relocated to the sides of the frontal to accommodate height of the Lily Crucifix. As noted above, the backing has clearly been exposed to light leaving its embroidered face far more faded than its back. When the frontal was in use, the backing fabric would have been protected from the light so this fading must relate to a previous use. The backing seems to have had a separate biography, possibly as an altar frontal or dossal, before it became part of this frontal.

Phase 4 – Display: Finally, the vertical tucks were created, presumably to adjust the frontal to fit a specific space and white tapes were added to the top edge to strengthen it for vertical hanging using nails.

DISCUSSION

The following proposals are conjectural and reflect work in progress but are based on the evidence of the artefact in its historical context and knowledge of the Archbishop's engagement with vestments. The key questions are when were these vestments made, where did the various transformations occur, who undertook them and why? The ownership and location of the vestments in their original forms remains unknown. Nothing in the Canterbury or Ely inventories appears to correspond to a suite of blue velvet vestments bearing a Lily Crucifix and an Annunciation. These are the only

known blue vestments associated with Morton to survive. Suggestions that the cope was worn by Morton at the funeral of Edward IV seem to be recent and dependant on the association of the *rose-en-soleil* motif with Edward. However, this motif and the rebuses belong to the chasuble, not the cope. It is possible that both vestments were part of a set, albeit made to different standards reflecting different costs and time input. The cope bears entirely standard motifs whereas the chasuble has unique, customised imagery of a very high quality. If the motif missing from the cope was an Assumption, the possibility of a set is strengthened. The rebus indicates that the chasuble was commissioned by Morton while the *rose-en-soleil* motif could reference his secular authority during his period serving Edward. The elaborate rendition of the rebus, the distinctly Marian imagery of the re-discovered Annunciation and the Lily Crucifix and the quality of this work suggest that the chasuble was, arguably, also used by him.¹¹² Morton clearly had a special devotion to the Virgin. His will not only specified that he should be buried in the crypt dedicated to Mary but he bequeathed his image of the Virgin to Margaret, the King's mother. This suite of vestments, with its unique imagery, could be read as further evidence of his personal beliefs.¹¹³

The pathway of fragmentation, loss and retention for the chasuble pieces was different to that of the cope. Our supposition is that, following fragmentation, the phases of re-making and re-use took place at Sawston Hall. Phase 2 might relate to use in Sawston's hidden chapel through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, during which time the better-preserved portions of the cope and chasuble were concealed. Various theological, political or even practical flash points might have led to the removal of the Marian imagery. The Annunciation motifs could have suffered various fates: defacement, destruction, donation elsewhere or re-use on another vestment. That the velvet from which this was removed was kept and reconstructed suggests this retained some sacred significance, even though the fabric had been cut up, and remained meaningful at the time the frontal was constructed (Phase 3). The continuing sacredness of all the pieces incorporated in the frontal is attested by the reluctance shown to cut them further to fit the backing as demonstrated by the large turnings and overlapping of pieces on the back and finally the addition of the tucks to the front (Phase 4) to reduce its width presumably to fit the space in which it was hung.

Similarly, various changes might have been catalysts for the re-formation of the vestment pieces as a frontal. The IHS Christogram is particularly associated with the Jesuits so at either stage of the backing's life, i.e. before or after the backing became part of the frontal, this might relate to

¹¹² Morton was not alone in such devotion. The will of Bishop John Grandison of Exeter (c.1292-1369) describes a chasuble with an Annunciation on the back and the Nativity and Coronation of the Virgin and a cope with the Purification and Coronation of the Virgin. All bore Grandison's coat of arms; Davies 2016, 80.

¹¹³ TNA, PROB11/12/178

the Jesuit priests at Sawston. The eighteenth-century style of lettering could be consistent with its use in the legitimate 1791 chapel. Whilst the construction and working of the source vestments have all the hallmarks of professional work, the later reconstructions of the cut pieces were clearly done by hands untutored in needlework. This would rule out the ladies of Sawston Hall and their maids or nuns, as women of any standing would have been skilled in the use of a needle from a young age. Was this dangerous work of devotion perhaps carried out by hidden priests in the long hours between private prayer and service to their recusant congregation?

CONCLUSIONS

This research has corroborated the existence of a cope within the Auckland frontal along with at least one other previously unsuspected vestment, possibly a chasuble. The latter can be directly associated with Morton through the presence of his rebus but the cope's links to Morton are more tenuous. However, the use of similar materials, techniques and possibly Marian imagery suggests the chasuble and the cope formed part of a set of vestments. These vestments probably moved from an overt liturgical practice to covert use by recusant Roman Catholics before returning once more to overt use. Morton's use of the power of vestments has become clearer, indicating authority as well as, potentially, a personal statement of belief. The dates of the fragmentation of the vestments and transitions between various remakings remain unclear. What is clear is the on-going power and agency of these fragments and the importance of giving the processes of fragmentation and remaking equal weight.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mary Brooks undertook historical research and carried out detailed physical examination of the frontal with Sonia O'Connor, who also led the interpretation of the X-radiographic and photographic images and prepared the figures. Anita Quye analysed the dyes and Chris Caple conducted the study of the sequins and metal threads. We thank the Society of Antiquaries, London, for the award of the 2016 Janet Arnold Grant, which was led by C. Pamela Graves, and The Auckland Project, for making the frontal available for research and funding. We thank Jeff Veitch (Durham University) for the original photography and Jane Colbourne and Jason Revel (University of Northumbria) for facilitating X-radiography. We are particularly grateful to archaeological illustrator Rachael Kershaw and imaging specialist Tom Sparrow for preparing these images for publication. We also thank colleagues who attended the 2016 workshop for their thoughtful reflections and stimulating ideas.

ABBREVIATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbreviations

BL British Library

LPL Lambeth Palace Library

TNA The National Archives, London

Bibliography

Primary sources

BL Royal 1 D X, f.100

Dorset History Centre, D-MPL/42

LPL, MS 20, f.218v, Kalendar of Obits

TNA, PROB11/12/178, Morton's will 16 July 1500

Secondary sources

Airaksinen, K 2009. 'The Morton Missal: the finest incunable made in England', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, **XIV** (2), 147-72

Anon. 1877. 'Medieval embroidery in East Langdon Church', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, **11**, 10-23

Anstey, H (ed) 1898. *Epistolae academicae Oxon. (Registrum F); a Collection of Letters and other Miscellaneous Documents illustrative of Academical Life and Studies at Oxford in the fifteenth Century*, Oxford Historical Society, **II** (321), 493-95

Astle, T 1779. 'Ceremonial of the funeral of K. Edward IV. From a MS. of the late Mr. Anstis, now in the Possession of Thomas Astle, Esq.', *Archaeologia*, **1** (2), 350-75

Aston, M 2016. *Broken Idols of the English Reformation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Bentham, J 1771. *The History and Antiquities of the Conventual Cathedral Church of Ely*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Bindoff, S T (ed) 1982. *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1509-1558*, Secker & Warburg, London

[Boden, Z] 2016. 'The Steeple Ashton cope', in C Browne, C Davies and M A Michael (eds), *English Medieval Embroidery: Opus Anglicanum*, Yale University Press/Victoria & Albert Museum, London

Bradley, S 2019. *John Morton: Adversary of Richard III, Power behind the Tudors*, Amberley Publishing, Stroud

Brandon-Salmon, A n.d. *The History of the English Reformation in One Vestment*.

<http://www.campion.ox.ac.uk/?q=content/history-english-reformation-one-vestment>
(accessed 14 April 2019)

Brooke, G C 1931-33. 'The mints of Canterbury and York in the reigns of Edward IV and Henry VII', *British Numismatic Journal*, 3rd ser, **1**, 73-87

Buck, G 1647. *The History of the Life and Reigne of Richard the Third*, Wilson, London

Budden, J 1879. 'A biographical sketch of Cardinal Morton. From a manuscript (circa. 1610) in the

- possession of the President', *Proc Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Fld Club*, **3**, 49–73
- Caley, J, Ellis, H and Bandinel, B (eds) 1846. *Monasticon Anglicanum... by Sir William Dugdale*, Bohn, London **6** (3), 1282
- Camden, W, Philipot, J and Gent, W D 1674. *Remains Concerning Britain*, Charles Harper and John Amery, London
- Caple, C [2017]. 'Morton Cope Sequin: Technical Analysis', unpublished report, Archaeological Artefacts Forensic Analysis Service, Durham University
- Caple, C [2018]. 'Morton Cope Metal Threads: Technical Analysis', unpublished report, Archaeological Artefacts Forensic Analysis Service, Durham University
- Carter, M 2010. 'Remembrance, liturgy and status in a Late Medieval English Cistercian Abbey: The mourning vestment of Abbot Robert Thornton of Jervaulx (1510–33)', *Textile History*, **41** (2), 145–160
- Cervone, C M 2013. *Poetics of the Incarnation: Middle English Writing and the Leap of Love*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia
- Chapman, F 1909. 'A fourteenth century life of Christ', *The English Review*, **1** (2), 370
- Chapman, J and Gaydarska, B 2007. *Parts and Wholes. Fragmentation in Prehistoric Context*, Oxbow Books, Oxford
- Davies, C S L 2004. Foxe, Richard. *Dictionary of National Biography*.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10051> (accessed 14 April 2019)
- Davies, G 2016. 'For whom the embroiderer toils. The role of the commissioners in the design of some fourteenth-century Opus Anglicanum embroideries', in M A Michael (ed), *The Age of Opus Anglicanum*, Harvey Miller, London
- Doe, P 1976. *Tallis*, Oxford University Press, London
- Duch, A M 2016. 'The Royal funerary and burial ceremonies of medieval English Kings, 1216–1509', unpublished PhD thesis, University of York
- Duffy, E 1992. *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400–1580*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London
- Duggan, E J M 1991. 'Notes concerning the "Lily Crucifixion" in the Llanbeblig Hours', *Journal of the National Library of Wales*, **27**, 39–48
- Fincham, K (ed) 1994. *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church*, Boydell Press/Church of England Record Society, Woodbridge
- Graffius, J 2008. 'The Lucca chasuble', in M Whitehead (ed), *Held in Trust: 2008 Years of Sacred Culture*, St Omers Press, Stonyhurst
- Haddan, W A (trans) 1994. *Augustine: On the Trinity*, Hendrickson, Peabody, Mass, on-line edition,
<http://www.logoslibrary.org/augustine/trinity/0405.html> (accessed 7 December 2019)
- Hale, W 2012. *Who oweth thys boke?* Incunabula Project blog, Cambridge University Library,
<https://inc-blog.lib.cam.ac.uk/?cat=53> (accessed 31 March 2019)
- Hall, J 2014. 'New exhibit shows power and glory at Auckland Castle', *The Journal*,
<http://www.thejournal.co.uk/culture/arts-culture-news/auckland-castle-new-exhibit-shows-7382151> 7 Jul 2014 (accessed 31 March 2019)
- Harper-Bill, C 1977. 'An edition of the Register of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury with a critical introduction', unpublished PhD thesis, King's College London
<https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/2933131/DX192621.pdf> (accessed 15 March 2019)
- Harper-Bill, C 1978. 'Archbishop John Morton and the Province of Canterbury, 1486–1500', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, **2** (1), 1–21
- Harper-Bill, C 2004. 'Morton, John (d. 1500)', in D Cannadine (ed), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edition,
<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-19363> (accessed 18 October 2019)

- Hayward, J (ed) 1929. *Donne. Complete Verse and Selected Prose*, Nonsuch Press, London
- Hayward, M 2007. 'Crimson, scarlet, murrey and carnation: red at the court of Henry VIII', *Textile History*, **38** (2), 134-150.
- Heard, K 2011. 'Such stuff as dreams are made on': textiles and the medieval chantry, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, **164** (1), 157-168
- Hefling, C and Shattuck, C L (eds) 2006. *The Oxford Guide to The Book of Common Prayer: A Worldwide Survey*, Oxford University Press, New York
- Hildburgh, W L 1923/24. 'An alabaster table of the Annunciation with the Crucifix: A study in English iconography', *Archaeologia*, **74**, 203-32.
- Holt, J [1508]. *Lac Puerorum. Mylke for Children*. Wynkyn de Worde, London
- Holt, T G 1984. 'An eighteenth-century chaplain: John Champion at Sawston Hall', *British Catholic History*, **17** (2), 181-87
- Hook, W F 1867. 'John Morton', in *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*. Bentley, London, V, 387-499
- Jackson, C 2003. 'Glowing embers: Catholic life in Cambridgeshire in the century before emancipation', in N Rogers, (ed), *Catholics in Cambridge*, Gracewing, Leominster
- Jackson, C 2016. "'Powdered with armes ymages and angels": An early Tudor contract for embroidered vestments, *The Antiquaries Journal*, 96, 143-167
- Kemp, G W 1986. 'The Annunciation and the Lily Crucifixion', *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Fld Club*, **45** (2), 434-39
<https://www.woolhopeclub.org.uk/system/files/documents/transaction/woolhope-club-transactions-volume-xlv-1986-part-ii.pdf> (accessed 22 April 2019)
- Kendrick, A F 1905. *Exhibition of English Embroideries executed prior to the middle of XVI Century*, Burlington Fine Arts Club, London
- Keyser, C E 1899. Panel paintings of saints on the Devonshire screens, *Archaeologia*, **56**, 2nd ser, (6), 183-222
- Kingsford, C L (ed) 1905. *Chronicles of London*, Clarendon Press, Oxford
- Kopytoff, I 1988. (1986.) 'The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process', in A Appadurai (ed), *The Social Life of Things. Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 64-91
- Lumby, J R 1885. *Bacon's History of the Reign of King Henry VII*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- MacCulloch, D 2016. 'Modern historians on the English Reformation', in *All Things Made New. Writings on the Reformation*. Allen Lane, [London]
- Malden, H E (ed) 1912. 'Croydon: introduction and Croydon Palace', in *A History of the County of Surrey*, 4, Victoria County History, London, 205-17. *British History Online*
<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/surrey/vol4/pp205-217> (accessed 14 April 2019)
- Mallams 2014. *Oriental Carpets & Rugs, Eastern Works of Art & Furniture, Lot 464*, 22 January 2014
http://www.catalogue-host.co.uk/mallams/oxford/2014-0122/lot_464?prev_page=browse%20results%2c%20page%2010%20of%2012&prev_url=%2fmallams%2foxford%2f2014-01-22%2f_page_10 (accessed 16 April 2019)
- Meyer, B, Morgan, D, Paine, C and Plate, S B 2010. 'The origin and mission of material religion', *Religion* **40** (3), 209-10
- More, T 1636 [1551]. *The Commonwealth of Utopia*, Alsop and Fawcett, London
- [Mozley, T] 1878. *Henry VII, Prince Arthur and Cardinal Morton*, Clay, Sons and Taylor, London
- Mullini, R 1997. 'Fulgens and Lucretia: A mirror held up to stage and society', *European Medieval Drama* **1**, 203-18
- Muskett, J J 1895-1896. 'Inventories of Cambridgeshire church goods, No. II', *The East Anglian or*

Notes and Queries, new series, **VI**, 199-203

<https://archive.org/details/eastanglianorno05whitgoog/page/n208> (accessed 14 April 2019)

Nichols, F M 1901. *Epistles of Erasmus*, I, Longmans, Green, London

Parker, M 1566. 'Advertisements partly for due order in the public administration of Common Prayers and using the holy Sacraments, and partly for the apparel of persons ecclesiastical...', in W H Frere and W P Kennedy 1910. *Visitation Articles and Injunctions 1559-1575*, Longmans Green, London

Peacock, E 1866. *English Church furniture, Ornaments and Decorations at the period of the Reformation, as exhibited in a list of the Goods destroyed in certain Lincolnshire Churches, A.D. 1566*, John Camden Hotten, London

Prown, J D 1996. 'Material/culture. Can the farmer and the cowman still be friends?', in D W Kingery (ed), *Learning from Things. Method and Theory of Material Culture Studies*, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington & London, 19-27

Quye, A, Wertz, J and Degano, I 2019. 'Morton Cope Dye Analysis', unpublished report, Glasgow University

Raub, J 2011. 'Sarum Liturgical Printing in Tudor London', unpublished PhD thesis, Royal Holloway College, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/78863835.pdf> (accessed 31 March 2019)

Robertson, S 1893. 'Burial-places of the Archbishops of Canterbury', *Archaeologia Cantiana* **20**, 276-94

Robertson, S 1880. 'The crypt of Canterbury Cathedral, Part II', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, **13**, 500-51.

Rogers, N (ed) 2003. *Catholics in Cambridge*, Gracewing, Leominster

Rollins, H E 1920. *Old English ballads, 1553-1625*, Cambridge University Press, London

Rushforth, G McN 1927. 'A lily-crucifix and an unidentified saint in Kenn church, Devon', *The Antiquaries Journal*, **7** (1), 72-3

Tarlow, S 2003. 'Reformation and transformation: what happened to Catholic things in a Protestant world?', in D Gaimster and R Gilchrist (eds), *The Archaeology of Reformation 1480-1580*, Maney, Leeds

Vallance A. 1929. 'Cranbrook Church inventory 1508', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, **41**, 57-68.

Walsham, A 2017. 'Recycling the sacred: material culture and cultural memory after the English Reformation', *Church History* **86** (4), 1121-54

Ward, M 2016. *The Livery Collar in Late Medieval England and Wales: Politics, Identity and Affinity*, Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge

Whiting, R 2010. *The Reformation of the English Parish Church*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Wickham Legg, J and Hope W H St-J (eds) 1902. *Inventories of Christchurch, Canterbury*, Archibald Constable, Westminster and London

Williams, R 2019. *Archbishop of Canterbury Portraits*

<http://aoc2013.brix.fatbeehive.com/pages/the-archbishops-from-augustine-to-williams.html> (accessed 15 March 2019)

[Willughby, R] 2012 [1877]. 'Empcions and provisions of stuff made by Robert Willughby, knight, agenist the coronacion of our soueraine lorde king Henrey the VIIth', in W Campbell (ed), *Rerum Britannicarum medii aevi scriptores*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, II, 3-28.

Woodforde, C 1932. 'Two unusual subjects in ancient glass in Long Melford Church', *Proc of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and Natural History*, **21** (1), 63-6

Woodhouse, R I 1895. *The Life of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury*, Longmans, Green, London & New York

Woodruff, C E 1926. 'The Chapel of our Lady in the Crypt of Canterbury Cathedral', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, **38**, 153-71