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Country Church Monuments. By C B NEWHAM. 240mm. Pp xxviii + 691, many col pls, maps. Particular Books, London, 2022. ISBN 9780241488331. £40 (hbk).

British churches contain almost all our surviving medieval sculpture, the bulk of sculpture from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries and much from later decades; but British sculpture is undervalued: there is a general perception that there is no post-medieval distinguished native tradition, and that all fine sculpture before the late eighteenth century was produced by European immigrants, or at least by those trained by such immigrants. Neither art historians, whose training contains little on the native sculptural tradition, nor the church authorities, who regard the built heritage as a nuisance, ripe for demolition, do anything to correct this neglect. Surely no archbishop of Canterbury since George Abbott has had Justin Welby's ability to hit the wrong target.

This book provides a salutary corrective to such attitudes. Cameron Newham, FSA is a fine photographer and a master of the arts of digital manipulation. Over recent years he has recorded almost every parish church in England. Here he concentrates on funerary sculpture, and presents it as art. Other deservedly respected books about the art in churches – Simon Jenkins's *England's Thousand Best Churches* (2012), John Goodall's *Parish Church Treasures* (2015) – are general treatments, Hugh Collinson's *Country Monuments* (1975) is more interested in the background stories than in the sculptures themselves and works such as Brian Kemp's *English Church Monuments* (1981) are concerned with history rather than aesthetics. Joe Whitlock Blundell and John Physick's beautiful *Westminster Abbey: the monuments* (1989) takes an aesthetic approach, but is concerned with just one building.

Newham deals only with monuments, and he spans all of England and Wales, depicting 365 monuments. The subjects range from the tenth century (hog-backs from Brompton-in-Allertonshire, Yorks) to 1984 (a wall monument showing a maze to Canon Harry Cheales at Wyck Rissington, Glos). The range is comprehensive, from brasses to massive standing wall monuments. The perspective changes from details – the rhinoceros on the monument by William Wright to Sir Robert Gardner (d. 1619/20) at Elmswell, Suffolk – to shots showing the monument in its setting – Richard Westmacott Jr's monument to Charlotte Egerton (d. 1845) at

Rostherne, Cheshire. Most monuments are made from stone or brass, but among other materials here are wood, plaster, glass and ceramics. All are beautiful objects, recorded in beautiful photographs. Everyone who knows monuments and reads this book will engage in whatabouttery, but it is difficult to know what to discard to include one's favourites.

The arrangement of the book is disconcerting, and really needs an index. It is divided into regions, within which the monuments are shown chronologically. Each section has a list of the contents: the descriptions of the individual items include facts about the subject, identification of the artist and remarks on the form, materials and setting, where known and appropriate. Newham has an eye for arresting detail: Fanny Samuelson, commemorated in a pretty monument by Sir George Frampton at Kirby Wiske, Yorks, died in 1897 as a result of a horrible accident at the hairdressers; Sir Edward Ward (1638–1714), commemorated at Stoke Doyle, Northants, on a monument of 1723 by Rysbrack, presided at the trial of the pirate Captain Kidd. He also deals with the unusual: the extraordinary Bertie monument at Spilsby, Lincs, with its wodewose is included, and it is good to see the wrestling enthusiast Sir Thomas Bunny (Bunny, Notts) standing ready to encounter Death.

There is a concluding section of short biographies of the sculptors. The book has a conservative introductory survey of the history of funerary monuments and useful appendices including a glossary, advice on church access, comments on the care of monuments – do not use them as places to store church equipment, put flower arrangements or stick Post-it notes or Blu Tack – and suggestions for further reading and national societies concerned with the preservation and study of funerary art. He surprisingly omits the many local archaeological, historical and genealogical societies that share these interests. The main problem with the book is its heft: at 4.5lb it outweighs both Jenkins's *Best Churches* and *Best Houses* (2004), although it has fewer pages than either. It is not a book to be carried on a church-crawl. A paperback edition is urgent, desirable and deserved.

The advantage of the arrangement is that the art is allowed to speak for itself. Comprehensive information is available about each entry, but the monuments themselves dominate and demand attention. The pictures show how good some undervalued English sculptors were: the innovative Richard Parker (fl. 1532–d. 1570), with his transformation of weepers on early modern tombs into conversation pieces,

the beast carver from the workshop of Samuel Baldwin and the undervalued Stanton *atelier*. The animation of the figures on table tombs, only visible from overhead shots – a God's eye view – is a revelation. The flowing lines of the fourteenth-century Cheltenham monuments at Pucklechurch, Glos, emerge beautifully, as do the gorgeous vegetable forms of the drapery on the monument to the composer Amy Woodforde-Finden (d. 1919; she wrote *Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar*) at Hampsthwaite, Yorks, carved in 1923 by George Wade to a design probably by Gerald Giudici.

The monuments chosen show other sides of their appeal and importance: the evidence they provide of emotional history, as with the heartbreak of the 1705 Clayton monument at Bletchingley, Surrey, with its foregrounding of their only child, dead in infancy four decades earlier; the way in which they link the present with the past. What the Church of England prioritises today are current worshippers – we can discard the past and ignore the future – but it is the artistic impact that is the greatest, and it is to be hoped that this book will attract a wider readership than those already invested in ecclesiology, including art historians.

- Collinson, H 1975. *Country Monuments: their families and houses*, David & Charles, London
- Goodall, J 2015. *Parish Church Treasures: the nation's greatest art collection*, Bloomsbury Continuum, London
- Jenkins, S 2004. *England's Thousand Best Houses*, Penguin, London
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JEAN WILSON

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Orfèverie de la Renaissance et des Temps Modernes, XVI^e, XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles : La Collection du Musée du Louvre (3 vols). By MICHÈLE BIMBENET-PRIVAT, FLORIAN DOUX and CATHERINE GOUGEON with Phillippe Palasi.

320mm. Pp 264, 392, 392, 2,270 ills. Louvre éditions, Paris, 2022. ISBN 9782878443219. 165 euros (hbk).

This magisterial and fully illustrated catalogue of post-medieval goldsmiths' work in the Louvre Museum has taken ten years to achieve. The principal author, Bimbenet-Privat, acknowledges the assistance of conservation colleagues who have repaired and cleaned the objects prior to comprehensive new photography.

Exciting acquisitions made during the last decade, through bequest and purchase, join gifts from generous donors including from the French banker David David-Weill in 1946. A spectacular dish cover by F T Germain surmounted by hunting trophies made for Joseph I of Portugal in 1757–8, which weighs 25kg, was previously at Ferrières, the Rothschild chateau outside Paris. It was purchased by the Louvre in 1983 (II, cat. no 120, pp 171–4). It compares in magnificence with the *surtout de table du Duc de Bourbon*, supplied by Jacques Roettiers in 1734–5 (II, pp 282–7, no. 177). Forty-five pieces of a table service made by the Paris goldsmith Henri Auguste for George III from 1776 were assembled over forty years in collaboration with the Rothschild Foundation at Waddesdon (II, p 24, cat. no 78).

The Renaissance ewer and basin showing the conquest of Tunis by the armies of Charles V is inspired by an Imperial model based on classical antiquity. In 1794 it was published as Florentine, but was in fact made in Antwerp in 1559, a masterpiece of Flemish mannerism. In 1793 it belonged to the Prince de Chimay, whose wife was a lady-in-waiting to Marie Antoinette (I, p 121, cat. no 24).

The gold coffer, marked for Jakob Blanck, 1677, was previously described as the gift of Cardinal Mazarin to Anne of Austria. Louis XIV used it for his personal jewels. It is later listed in the Garde des Meubles among the furniture of Napoleon Bonaparte in the Tuileries Palace (I, p 142, cat. no 28).

The gold goblet presented to Corneille de Witt in honour of his victory on the Medway 9–14 June 1667, marked in The Hague (I, p 240, cat. no 66), was one of three recording this important Dutch victory against the English on the Kent coast known as Chatham Cups. Only two survive – the other is in the Rijksmuseum.

Given the melting down of silver in France in 1689, 1709 and 1759 to finance military endeavour and bridge financial crises, French eighteenth-century silver is rare. Recent additions of eighteenth-century French silver with a history