

## St Peter's Church Ipswich Guide to the Ledger Stone Memorials

*In the 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, when the art of making brasses declined, a School of heraldic sculptors arose. They carved massive floor slabs of a hard blueish-grey stone. The carving was low in relief, so that the stones, let into the floor of the church, would not impede those walking about. The decoration of these slabs usually consists of a coat-of-arms at the top with an inscription under it.*

*'How to Study an Old Church' A. Needham, Batsford, 1948*

St Peter's has a good collection of these 'Ledger stone' memorials, several of which are worth examining in detail. They tell us the names, status and occupations of many of the leading inhabitants of the parish, as well as providing a telling reminder of the high rates of mortality among infants and children in these times; see especially the Hingeston family memorials, ie Nos 6 and 10 in the following list.

The design, lettering and spelling are characteristic of the period and give much added interest and delight. *Note the frequent use of I for J; V for U and f for s. Sometimes the letters of the word THE are compressed in various combinations.*

### NAVE

#### 1. Adrian Adriaenzoo Waywell

HIER LIETH INTERRED  
ADRIAEN ADRIAENZOO  
WAYWEL WHO WHEN  
HE LIVED WAS BOTH  
MARCHAND & MASTER  
OF A SHIPP HE DECEASEN  
THE XXII OF DECEMB.  
A<sup>O</sup> MDCXX [1620]

*Note his merchant's mark at the top of the slab and the four winds at each corner.  
The <sup>o</sup> over the final letter of his second name shows an abbreviation from 'zoon'.*

#### 2. Benjamin Butter and Benjamin Butter Junior

HERE RESTETH VNTIL HIS  
REDEEMER COMETH THE BODY  
OF BENIAMEN BUTTER AGED  
ABOVT 80 YEERS  
HE DIED  
THE 3 OF APREL AN. DO 1663

HERE RESTETH ALSO THE  
BODY OF BENIAMEN BVTTER  
IUNIOR WHO DEPARTED THIS  
LIFE THE 2<sup>D</sup> OF IVNE ANNO  
DOMINI 1669, AGED 53 YEARS

*Signatures of father and son as they appear in the churchwardens' accounts:*

**3. Samuel Smith**

HERE LIETH INTERRED THE  
BODY OF SAMVELL SMITH  
MARRINER WHO DEPARTED THIS  
LIFE THE 23<sup>D</sup> OF OCTOBER  
BEING IN THE YEARE 1694  
AGED 25 YEARS

*[Incorrectly attributed to Samuel 'Simpson' in East Anglian Notes and Queries!]*

**CHANCEL (SOUTH AISLE)**

**4. John Aldus**

HERE RESTETH THE BODYE  
OF JOHN ALDVS, PORTMAN  
OF IPSWICH, WHO DEPARTED  
THIS LIFE THE 16 OF SEPT:  
1664, AGED 85  
AND THE BODYE OF ELIZ:  
HIS WIFE WHO DEPARTED  
THIS LIFE THE 22 OF APR:  
1666 AGED 76

*Portmen were leading townsmen elected '...to maintain the charter, to keep all other liberties ...and to do justice without respect of person.'*

**5. Robert Snelling**

SEPT 14<sup>TH</sup> 1627  
HERE THE BODY OF ROBERT  
SNELLING AWAYTES  
THE RESURRECTION

*In 1615 he gave twelve volumes of the works of Calvin to the town library costing £10*

**6. Peter Hingeston**

At the head of the slab a circular shield: A naked dexter arm couped and embowed grasping in the hand a battle axe.....; impaling Gu., two lions passant gardant in pale ermine, Sorrell. The crest is a squirrel sejant.

Here lyeth the Body of  
PETER HINGESTON Gen<sup>t</sup>  
55 years Organift of this Town  
who departed this Life  
this 26<sup>th</sup> of September, 1743  
Aged 76 years.  
And MARTHA, his Wife, Daughter  
of ANDREW SORREL Efq<sup>r</sup>  
and MARGARET his Wife  
who died the 5: of November, 1705  
Aged 40 years.  
And also ORLANDO their  
Youngeft Son, who died An Infant  
the 25 th of Jan: 1705

*He was corporation organist at the Tower church.*

## CHANCEL (NORTH AISLE)

### 7. Thomas Blith

*At the head of the stone a shield, Ermine on a fess Gu., three lions rampant Or, Blythe*

HERE RESTETH THE BODY OF  
THOMAS BLITH OF THIS TOWNE  
MERCHANT, WHO HAD BY HIS  
WIFE ELIZABETH ISSVE THREE SONS  
JOHN, THOMAS AND SAMVEL.  
HE DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE 21<sup>TH</sup>  
DAY OF AVGVST, 1652: BEING  
OF THE AGE OF 27 YEERS.  
ELIZABETH HIS WIFE, DAUGHTER OF JOHN  
SMYTHIER, EAST COVNTY MERCHANT AND  
PORTMAN OF THIS TOWN DYED APRILL  
THE 18<sup>TH</sup> 1688 AGED 60.

Here Lieth the Body of ELIZABETH  
the Wife of JAMES BLYTHE, Leather  
Cutter of this Parish, who Departed<sup>d</sup>  
this Life Octo<sup>b</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 22<sup>d</sup> 1736, Aged 56 Years

*Note some interesting occupations: 'East Country Merchant' and 'Leather Cutter'.*

*The same name (but with different spelling) appears on a worn slab in the centre of the nave:*

*In Memory of /JOHN BLYTHE/ who departed this Life/...May, 1762/ Aged ...Years./...who.../ the...*

### 8. [Sir] Manuell Sorrell

HERE RESTETH THE BODY  
OF MANVELL SORRELL  
KNIGHT LATE PORTMAN  
OF IPSWICH HE DEPARTED  
THIS LIFE OCTOBER 14<sup>TH</sup> 1669.  
AGED 68.  
HE WAS FOVR TIMES BAYLIFE.

HERE RESTETH THE BODY OF  
MANVEL SORRELL ESQ<sup>R</sup>  
THE ONLY SON OF ANDREW  
SORRELL ESQ<sup>R</sup> & MARGARET  
HIS WIFE, WHO DEPARTED THIS  
LIFE AUGUST THE 5<sup>TH</sup> 1707  
IN THE 43: YEAR OF HIS AGE

*Bayliffs were elected as the principal inhabitants of the town, their office being equivalent to that of mayor.*

*The later Manuel Sorrell's burial is also recorded on the adjacent slab. (No 9)*

*The signatures of James Blyth, Manuel and Andrew Sorrell as they appear in the churchwardens' accounts:*

## 9. Andrew Sorrell

LECTORI  
VT TIBI MORS FOELIX CONTINGAT, VIVERE DISCE.  
VT FOELIX POSSIS VIVERE DISCE MORI.  
*['To the Reader  
Happy the death of them that learn to live;  
Content the lives of them that learn to die.']*  
HERE RESTETH IN HOPE OF A IOYFVLL  
RESVRRECTION THE BODY OF  
ANDREW SORRELL ESQ<sup>r</sup> HE MARRIED  
MARGARET THE DAUGHTER OF WILLIAM BLOOMFIELD GENT:  
HE LEFT BY HER 3 CHILDREN  
MANVEL, MARGARET & MARTHA.  
HE DIED IN HIS THIRD BAYLYWICK  
OF IPSWICH IULY 4 1674  
AGED 44 YEARS.  
Alfo the Remains of  
MARGARET his wife & and of MANUEL his son  
who Died  
{Jvly 1705} Aged {67}  
{Aug. 1707} {42}  
And of JOHN HINGESTON, Surgeon,  
2<sup>nd</sup> son of PETER & MARTHA HINGESTON  
who died Dec<sup>r</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> 1753  
Aged 56 years

## 10. Anne Sorrell, Peter and Ellinor Hingeston and Children

HERE LIETH BURIED THE BODY OF ANNE  
THE WIFE OF ANDREW SORRELL WHO  
DIED THE SEAVENTH DAY OF APRILL  
AN<sup>o</sup> DOM: 1661.  
Here Lye Buried two Children of PETER HINGESTON  
Minister of this Parifh & ELLINOR his Wife.  
EDMVND} died {APRIL 7, 1723} Aged {11} MONTHS  
MARTHA} {NOV. 21, 1726} {7}  
Also  
EDWARD who Died July 12<sup>th</sup> 1730, Aged 6 Years  
And 8 Months.  
NATHANAEL who Died Nov. 20 1731, Aged 15 Weeks.  
BENJA/EMIN who Died Sept<sup>r</sup> 3<sup>d</sup> 1733, Aged 9 Weeks.  
Here alfo lieth buried M<sup>rs</sup> ELLINOR HINGESTON Wife  
to y<sup>e</sup> above s<sup>d</sup> Peter Hingeston who departed this Life  
Feb: 23<sup>d</sup> 17 39/40 in y<sup>e</sup> 42<sup>d</sup> Year of her/is Age.  
JOHN HINGESTON who died June 12<sup>th</sup> 1740 Aged 23 Weeks & 6 Days.  
THOMAS HINGESTON who died 3<sup>d</sup> July 1749 Aged 14 Years.  
And alfo the Body of the above S<sup>d</sup>  
Rev<sup>d</sup>: M<sup>r</sup> PETER HINGESTON  
(28 years Curate of this Church)  
who died 19<sup>th</sup> Dec: 1749  
Aged 55 Years  
*Peter Hingeston was a Perpetual Curate. The date of Ellinor Hingeston's death 17 39/40 is recorded in this way because of the change from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar.  
Note the alterations in the spelling of 'Benja/emin' and 'her/is'.*

### **Provenance of these texts**

Our thanks to Roger and Stella Wolfe for drawing this feature of the Church of St Peter to our attention and for contacting Roy Tricker, who retrieved these transcriptions from his archive. Roger writes:

‘...the leaflet [was] produced to draw attention to the ledger stone slabs at St Peter's. It was produced 2002 for the benefit of visitors to the church after the railway modellers had left and before the HLF renovated the interior for the Hospital Band, a period of some 5-6 years. The historical notes were added by John Blatchly and local historian Jill Freestone who also did the layout.

The leaflet is a series of transcriptions of the inscriptions carved on the slabs, each of which was numbered, hence the lack of graphics. We were at pains to keep the slabs free of clutter and frequently swept the dust accumulating from the adjacent wood block floors which were in an advanced state of decay!

The best known of the slabs is that commemorating a Dutch merchant, presumably settled in Ipswich, which shows his prominent merchant's mark and four wind-blowing cherubs [example 1 in this list]. If you visit the church the slab is located close to the base of the magnificent Tournai font, but last time I was there it was covered by electronic sound amplification equipment.’