

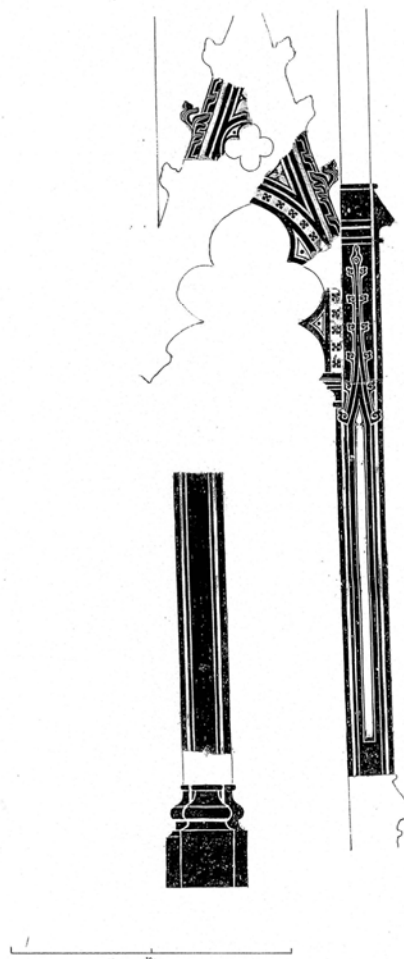
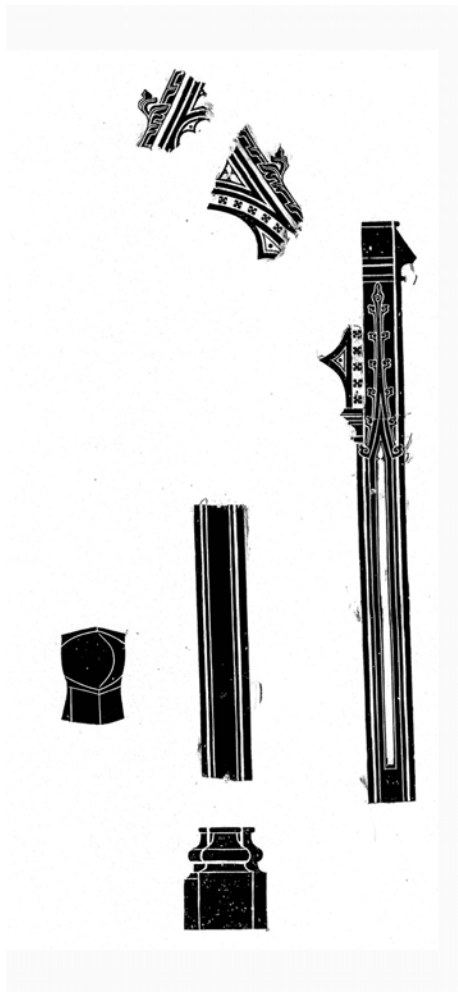
Note on the monumental brass fragments from Binham Priory

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I was first acquainted with these fragments of brass when Steven Ashley brought them to the Society of Antiquaries for me to take a rubbing for their collection in 2009. I drew his attention to an article in the Notes section of Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society Vol.10, 1969, pp 457-8 by H.F.Owen Evans (reproduced in Appendix 1), recording their discovery in the custodians' hut at Binham and assumed to have been discovered in the 1935–38 excavations due to the lack of records.

Below is a copy of my rubbings. These have been assembled in the correct layout, unlike that illustrated in the MBS article. They form part of a triple canopy over a single figure, the product of the London Series B workshop c.1420-50. Since the original slab has not been discovered it is difficult to determine the original layout. The narrow pediment is too small for a single figure, while triple pediments occur over single figures or double triple for couple. A good example of the former, which is identical to the Binham fragments, is at Cheshunt, Herts, to Nicholas Dixon 1448, where the canopy survives but the figure is lost.

The fragment of knee discovered in 2007 is from the same workshop and dated c.1420–5. As the location of the canopy fragments is not recorded on the Binham site, it cannot be assumed they all came from the same memorial.



Appendix 1: Article in *Trans Monumental Brass Soc* 10

NORFOLK, BINHAM PRIORY

When visiting the ruins which are under the guardianship of the Ministry of Public Building and Works, on 6th May, 1964, the fragments of brass shown as Fig. 1 were discovered in the custodian's hut. They comprise portion of the left-hand side shaft of a canopy of conventional pattern c. 1420-1430. The engraving is clear but the metal shows signs of a little corrosion and two pieces are badly bent. A dowel in its lead plug remains in the base portion of the shaft.

Enquiry with the Ministry has failed to ascertain when and where the fragments were dug up, for there is no record when the excavations were carried out in 1935-1938 or subsequently. It seems clear however that they were "reaved" from the slab and became buried.

The custodian recalls, for what it is worth, that there was "some lettering", one could suppose a strip of the marginal inscription adjacent to the side shaft, but this has disappeared.

There are no slabs now on the site of the chancel or chapter house from which the portions of canopy can have come. In the nave, converted to parish church status in 1540 following the Dissolution, the two "marble" slabs remaining at the east end show (1) the matrix of a demi-figure of a monk with curious curved inscription beneath and (2) a badly flaked one with no semblance of the indent of a canopy. One must suppose therefore that the slab is now either buried or lost.

Binham Priory of the Order of St. Benedict was a cell of St. Albans Abbey, founded in 1093. Much of the Norman work remains.

H.F.O.E.

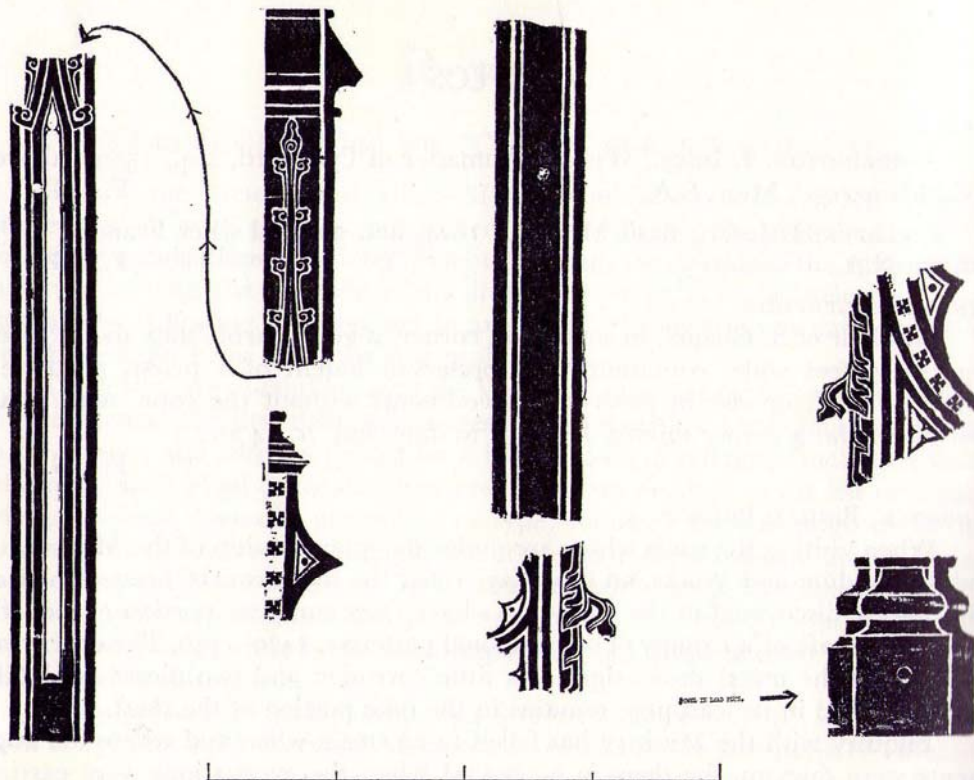


FIG. 1
Fragments of canopy work, early 15th century
(Binham Priory, Norfolk).