

The Rawe Family in Landrake

In St Michael's Church, Landrake there is a monument on the East wall in the South Trancept dedicated to Elizabeth, the daughter of Robert Rawe, gent. The script on the slate slab reads as follows:

Elizabeth (the daughter of Robert
Rawe gent deceased) lieth buried at the
entrance into the Chancel by ye Ministers;
Dom; who died ye 29th day of July 1670
in the 26th yeare of her age
The Soule a little Trinity
Int's Intellect, Will, Memory
Is fled to great Tri unity
As to its proper center
The body in its element
Sleeps, until the mighty advent
Of Christ, Angells, Saints, in judgment
Then come ye blessed enter

Juxta hic incent corpora dicti Roberti; Margariae vxoris
ejus; Roberti et Iohannis filiorum; Sarae, aliusque Elizabethie geminorum
Aut sero, aut citius sequeris, tunc vivere disce
Disce mori, (quaeso) dum licet esse, bene

This translates roughly as:

Here lies the bodies of the said Robert, Margery his wife,
His sons Robert and John and twins Sarah and Elizabeth
Either I join or follow you soon, then to live I depart
I pass away and die, (I beg) that as long as it is permitted to be, good

The sense of the last two lines is difficult to interpret; Mr Harrison suggests the following:

Either I join you now or follow you soon, I beg that I may live as long as is permitted, then it is well that I depart, pass away, die

With Elizabeth are her father, her mother, her two brothers and her twin sister. This must mean that they are interred in a vault beneath the church floor "at the entrance into the Chancel by ye Ministers"

Also on the West wall there is a monument to Samuel Rowe, the inscription is as follows:

Samuel the son
of Thomas Rowe
of Cutlingwith Gent died
the 12 th June 1713 and
lieth buried in the Alley
at the entrance into the
Chancel by the Ministers
Pew
Serius aut citius metam
prosperamus ad unam

This translates as:
Sooner or later we hasten to one home

In St Erney Church there is a monument to Ann, the wife of William Rawe, gent, of Markwell; the inscription is as follows:

Ann the wife of
William Rawe of Markwell,
Gent. The daughter of
Thomas Allen, Gent deceased
Born at Ewelme in Oxfordshire
died and was buried here the 21 st
day of June Anno Dom
1691 aetatis 56
Vix melior altera

This translates as:
age 56
Scarcely better than the other

There is no evidence that Elizabeth and Ann were related by marriage but it is likely that they knew each other as Ann was only nine years older than Elizabeth. There is also no evidence that William and Robert Rawe and Thomas Rowe were related but they must have been for Samuel to have been interred in the family vault. Samuel's father's name is spelled Rowe which is probably the mason's mistake

The Latin inscriptions are interesting especially the one for Samuel as this has been identified as a line from Ovid's Metamorphoses! Ovid was a Roman Poet of the 1st century. How did this become available in the late 17th C/ early 18th C in a small village in Cornwall ?

Latin translations by Mr J Harrison from the British Library
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