

Mangotsfield. Its authenticity, at Colonel Shipway's desire, was verified by a statutory declaration before a Bristol solicitor made by Buckley's son, a commercial traveller at Bristol.

Davies, in due course, exhausted all the information he could obtain respecting the Shipways at Beverston, Rodborough and Littleworth, in the burial ground of which had been interred the remains of Colonel Shipway's grandfather, William Shipway. It was not to be supposed that the "principal genealogical specialist" would be satisfied with anything so modern as an eighteenth century pedigree, and his further investigations led him to Mangotsfield, the well-known railway junction, a few miles from Bristol. Here a wealth of information awaited him, and he discovered that John Shipway, of Beverston Castle, was the son of a John Shipway buried at Mangotsfield in 1628, that John Shipway, senior, was buried in 1625, that this latter was married in 1591 to Margaret Sandows, and that their son John (the John of 1628) was born in 1593. The burial entry of 1625, which we give below, recorded the "family arms," thus authenticating the seal which Davies bought from Buckley. Subsequently, Davies, stating that he had an authority from the Home Secretary for the purpose, was allowed to make excavations in Mangotsfield churchyard, and he there disinterred a lead coffin upon which according to a photograph, was inscribed the Shipway arms and the words "John Shipway, 1628." Unfortunately, in the removal a labourer was injured and died shortly after the accident.* But this, though it involved an inquest, attracted little attention, for, as he stated to Colonel Shipway, "the whole country side had been aroused to an unprecedented height of enthusiasm over the Doctor's discoveries." In Mangotsfield Church itself, he found two ancient effigies, and though the county historians, who merely "voiced supposition," for heraldic reasons a century ago pronounced them to belong to the Blount family, Davies, who "determined facts fully by exhaustive investigation," assigned them to John Shipway and Margaret his wife, who died in 1623 and 1628. On the breastplate moreover were incised the

* Perhaps the most melancholy feature in the imposture was the death of this unfortunate labourer. Not satisfied with robbing his employer, Davies stole more than half the money which Colonel Shipway sent to Mrs. Webster, the widow.