

PLAYFORD, SUFFOLK
I. Sir George Felbrigg

M.S. I
London: "C" series¹

St. Mary
HH pla 1400

The effigy of Sir George Felbrigg, 1400, in armor, with arms on jupon, single canopy (mutilated), and marginal inscription in French (mutilated). Formerly on the floor of the nave; now mural in the chancel.

The full-face effigy of Sir George Felbrigg is represented in the full armor of the late fourteenth century, his hands raised in prayer, and his feet, splayed apart as is typical of London "C" series brasses, resting on a profile lion, part of whose head is missing. The mustached and bearded Sir George wears a pointed bascinet with a mail aventail attached to protect the neck and shoulders, the cord and staples by which the aventail is affixed to the rim of the helmet clearly visible. Jointed spaulders of metal plate further protect the shoulders; hinged rerebraces cover the upper arms; couters are at the elbows; vambraces surround the forearms; and, fingered gauntlets cover the hands. One should take note of the engrailed lines of decoration on rerebraces and vambraces, and especially the rather elaborate decorations on the gauntlets. Over the armor, Sir George wears a heraldic jupon, a sleeveless padded garment with a scalloped lower edge charged with the Felbrigg arms: Or, a lion rampant Gules.² Beneath this jupon he wears a hauberk or shirt of mail, parts of which are visible at the armpits and below the jupon's scalloped edge. Though not visible, he would also wear beneath the jupon a coat of plates or a breastplate of metal or boiled leather. An elaborately decorated baldric or hip belt fastened in front by a square clasp supports on his right side a now mutilated misericorde or dagger with a long hilt, and, on his left, the long sword with decorated scabbard, hilt, and pommel. The leg-harness is all of plate: cuisses around the upper legs; poleyns with side-wings over the knees; fitted greaves on the lower legs; and, pointed and jointed sabatons with rowel spurs attached around the insteps on the feet. The mail at the knees and between the greaves and sabatons may be a part of mail leggings or may be gussets of mail stitched to cloth leggings worn beneath the armor.

The figure was once enclosed by an attractive single canopy with the Felbrigg arms on a shield in the pinnacle, and supported by shafts with an embattled base. The whole was surrounded by a marginal inscription in French, each word separated by a rose surmounted by the letter "M."³ Those parts that are extant have been relaid incorrectly and do not appear on the Hamline rubbing.

The figure of Sir George Felbrigg is 56 1/2" (143.5cm) high.

Sir George Felbrigg, the son of Sir Roger Felbrigg, Lord of the Manor of Playford, was twice married. His first wife was Avis, the daughter of Sir Roger de Hales and the widow of Edmund de Redsham; his second, Margaret, the daughter of Sir John de

¹Kent, p. 95; Norris, I, 55.

²Felgate, *Suffolk*, p. 115. On a gold field is a red lion, one paw on the group, three raised, head foreword, and tail erect.

³*Ibid.*

Aspal and the widow of Sir Thomas Naunton. By Margaret, he had two sons, and on Sir George's death in 1400, his elder son, Sir John, succeeded as Lord of the Manor. Margaret died in 1419.⁴

An Esquire-at-Arms to Edward III, Sir George was knighted by him in 1385, when the king and his army were in Scotland. The following year, he served as one of the King's proctors in making an alliance with William, Duke of Guelderland, and Thomas, Duke of Gloucester, then Constable of England.⁵ In 1391, Sir George was Lieutenant of the Court of Chivalry.⁶ He repaired the Playford church and built the tower.⁷

The Felbrigg family acquired the Manor in the early part of the fourteenth century, Sir George succeeding as lord of it about 1380. On the death of his son, Sir John, it passed to Sir John's daughter Margaret and then through her marriage to the Sampson family of Brettenham, Suffolk.⁸

Sir George Felbrigg was a second cousin of Sir Simon de Felbrigg, Standard-Bearer to Richard II, whose superb brass is found in the Felbrigg church, Norfolk (q.v.).

⁴Felgate, *Suffolk*, p. 115.

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶Felgate, *Knights*, p. 34.

⁷Felgate, *Suffolk*, p. 115.

⁸*Ibid.*

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