

THE 'LOST' BARRINGTON STAINED GLASS DIAL REDISCOVERED

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The history of the Barrington (or Highworth) stained glass sundial was described in Geoffrey Lane's groundbreaking *Bulletin* article in 2006.¹ At that time the fate of the dial was unknown and the only known illustration was a b&w photograph from 1945. Now, as a result of diligent work by Jo Clark, a local historian, following up on an initiative by John Carmichael, the dial has been located and photographed in detail (Fig. 1 and rear cover).

The dial was made in 1641 by Baptist Sutton for the Puritan Essex MP Sir Thomas Barrington. It was made for his London house in Great Queen Street and is said to have cost 6s 8d.¹ The house was later pulled down but the dial survived at Warneford Place near Highworth, Wilts., the home of Lord Banbury. Warneford Place was sold to Ian Fleming (of James Bond fame) in the 1960s but he then extensively remodelled it and the dial disappeared from the premises and from sight of the dialling community. Now, the dial remains in private hands near London and is kept safely indoors.

The actual dial is just 278 × 173 mm though the overall panel is 460 × 288 mm. It features the coat of arms for Sir Thomas and his second wife Judith, née Lytton. It also has both a spider and a fly, with the fly painted on both sides of the glass in order to give it a three-dimensional effect (Fig. 2). The body and legs are on the outside and the wings are on the inside – the same arrangement as on Sutton's *Non Sine Lumine* dial. The gnomon is unsurprisingly missing but its mounting holes are clearly visible: the origin is in the lower left border of the shield and there are three other holes (two now filled) carefully positioned in the black horizontal strip above the lower numerals. Generally, the dial is in very good condition.

One unusual feature is the number '42' scratched into the glass on the back (outside) of the dial, behind the decoration above the shield and hence only visible on close examination (Fig. 3). This, it seems, is not a serial number

for the dial but its design declination. Reverse engineering of the dial gave a declination of around 41° E, about right for a house along the northern side of Great Queen Street. A similar scratched number exists on the back of at least one other stained glass dial, that at The Merchant's House, Marlborough, Wilts (in that case the number is '45').² The Marlborough dial is attributed to John Oliver so either the practice of labelling dials with their declinations was quite general to mid-17th century London diallists or the attribution is wrong. If you have the opportunity to view the outside of a stained glass dial closely, please look for such numbers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is a pleasure to thank the owners of the dial for permission to photograph it and also John Carmichael and Jo Clark for locating it.

REFERENCES

1. G. Lane: 'Glass Sundial Makers of 17th Century London', *BSS Bulletin*, 18(i), 41-47 (March 2006).
2. Thanks to David Brown for pointing this out to me. ☺



Fig. 1. The Barrington dial



Fig. 2. The spider and fly viewed from the inside.



Fig. 3. The scratched number '42' on the outside of the dial.