

Witness was often up in the belfry. He had wound the clock up for thirty years, but had never seen any name carved on the beam, and he had never seen in any part of the church or the graveyard the name of Shipway, and never heard of the name before Dr. Davies's arrival.

In the autumn of 1896 Dr Davies came to Mangotsfield, and witness saw him for the first time in the church. He asked if there were any vaults in the church near the altar. Witness told him of all the vaults he knew, but said he knew of none near the altar. Then the prisoner asked him to take down the shield from the Andrews monument, and witness did so. It was placed on a stool in the aisle, and the prisoner began to scrape it with his pocket-knife, remarking that there ought to be some writing on it. Nothing was found, and the shield was packed up and sent to Mangotsfield Station. In the west porch there were two little figures over the outside of the door, and these were sent away with the shield. In a few days the shield and the figures came back and were replaced. The figures were unaltered but the shield now bore the name of Shipway.

Next the altar was moved, and the floor of the chantry was taken up. The ground was dug up, and about 18in. below the surface a stone figure of a man was found. The prisoner said that he had expected to find a grave or a vault there. The flooring was replaced, and the figure was placed with the other in the niche, the organ being moved so as not to hide it. The niche was then repaired, and a wooden frame was placed in front of it, on which were fixed memorial brasses. Soon after the figure was dug up the name "Johannis Shipway" mysteriously appeared above the niche, looking as if it had been done with blacklead pencil. The letters were quite clear, but when witness touched them with a knife the black came off, leaving the bare stone. Witness did not speak to Davies about this.

One day Davies borrowed some tools from him. He did not say what he wanted them for, but went up into the belfry. Witness followed, but found the belfry door locked, and heard a noise of hammering. After he had gone, witness went up into the belfry, for two of the bellringers had been talking to him, and carved on the central beam, he found the name "John Shipway, 1541." Forty or fifty years ago the level of the