

AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EPITAPH

BRAMFIELD CHURCH is one of the most beautiful village churches in Suffolk. The mediaeval rood-screen with its original paintings and the fine seventeenth-century tomb of Arthur Coke (son of Sir Edward Coke, Lord Chief Justice of England) and his wife Elizabeth make a visit to this church most worth while. An addition to these treasures is an epitaph of some interest. This is on the tomb of Bridgett Applewhaite, 'once Bridgett Nelson', who lies in the chancel between her husband and her father.

After the Fatigues of a married Life
Borne by Her with Incredible Patience
For four years and three quarters, bating three weeks
And after the enjoyment of the Glorious Freedom
Of an Easy and unblemisht Widowhood
For four years and Upwards
She resolved to run the Risk of a Second Marriage Bed
But DEATH forbad the Banns
And having with an Apoplectick Dart
(The same instrument with which he had formerly dispatcht her Mother)
Toucht the most vital part of her Brain
She must have fallen directly to the ground
(As one Thunder strook)
If she had not been catcht and supported
By her intended Husband
Of which invisible bruise
After a struggle for above sixty Hours
With that grand Enemy to Life
(But the Certain and Merciful Friend
To helpless Old Age)
In terrible Convulsions, Plaintive groans or Stupefying Sleep
Without recovery of Speech or Senses,
She dyed on the 12th day of Sept.
In ye year { of Our Lord 1737
 { of her own age 44.

Is this the clinical description of the rupture of a 'berry' aneurism of the arterial circle of Willis? The familial tendency, the comparative youth of the lady and the fact that death occurred (? after a second haemorrhage) on the third day make this, I feel, the most likely possibility.

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REFERENCE

SMITH, MARGARET E. (1945), *Bramfield Church and Village through the Centuries*. Halesworth.