



KING'S LYNN AND THE FENS
Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology

KING'S LYNN AND THE FENS

Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology

General Editor Sarah Brown



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

KING'S LYNN AND THE FENS

Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology

Edited by

John McNeill



The British Archaeological Association

Conference Transactions XXXI

Cover illustration: View of the upper chamber in the Red Mount Chapel, King's Lynn, by
J. Gibbons Sankey, 1883



PUBLISHED FOR THE BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION BY ROUTLEDGE
2 PARK SQUARE, MILTON PARK, ABINGDON, OXON OX14 4RN
711 THIRD AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© The British Archaeological Association and contributors 2008. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the written permission of the copyright holder.

Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Disclaimer Statements in the volume reflect the views of the authors, and not necessarily those of the Association, editors or publisher.

ISBN 13: 978-1-906540-15-9 (hbk)

ISBN 13: 978-1-906540-16-6 (pbk)

Contents

	PAGE
List of Abbreviations	vi
Preface	vii
'King John's Cup' JOHN CHERRY	I
The Red Mount Chapel, King's Lynn DAVID PITCHER	17
The Former Nave and Choir Oak Furnishings, and the West End and South Porch Doors, at the Chapel of St Nicholas, King's Lynn CHARLES TRACY	28
The Pine Standard Chest in St Margaret's Church, King's Lynn, and the Social and Economic Significance of the Type GAVIN SIMPSON	53
Trading Places: Counting Houses and the Hanseatic 'Steelyard' in King's Lynn VIRGINIA JANSEN	66
Masters of Kirkstead: Hunting for Salvation PAUL EVERSON AND DAVID STOCKER	83
'Sadly mangled by the insulting claws of time': Thirteenth-Century Work at Croyland Abbey Church JENNIFER S. ALEXANDER	112
Snettisham Church RICHARD FAWCETT	134
The Tomb of Sir Humphrey de Littlebury at All Saints, Holbeach JULIAN M. LUXFORD	148
The Fourteenth-Century Wall-Paintings at Castle Acre Priory and Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth JANE SPOONER	170
The Stained Glass of Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen, Norfolk DAVID J. KING	186
Romanesque Sculpture in Parish Churches of the Lincolnshire Fens THOMAS E. RUSSO	199
Investment in Local Church Fabric in the Lincolnshire Fenlands c. 1150–c. 1210: Moulton and Whaplode DUNCAN GIVANS	215
Medieval Choir Stalls in Parish Churches DONALD O'CONNELL	230
Colour Plates	<i>following page viii</i>

List of Abbreviations

<i>Antiq. J.</i>	<i>Antiquaries Journal</i>
<i>Archaeol. J.</i>	<i>Archaeological Journal</i>
<i>BAA Trans.</i>	<i>British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions</i>
B/E	The Buildings of England
BL	British Library
<i>Cal.</i>	<i>Calendar (of Patent Rolls, Close Rolls, Chancery Warrants etc.)</i>
CVMA	<i>Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi</i>
JBAA	<i>Journal of the British Archaeological Association</i>
<i>Med. Archaeol.</i>	<i>Medieval Archaeology</i>
RCHME	Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England
VCH	Victoria History of the Counties of England

Preface

THE ASSOCIATION'S annual conference for 2005 was based in West Norfolk. Organized around the theme of Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology in King's Lynn and the Fens, it was attended by 105 members and guests, with accommodation and lecture facilities being provided at the National Construction College in Bircham Newton. A total of twenty-two papers were read over five days, of which versions of thirteen are published in this volume. Following the conference, John Cherry generously agreed to provide a fourteenth article in the shape of a much-needed summary of the history of King John's Cup.

The conference programme followed the usual pattern of mixing lectures, visits, meals and receptions, in the happy expectation that a convivial atmosphere would encourage scholarly exchange. On the Sunday the conference spent the afternoon in King's Lynn, where it divided into three groups so as facilitate access to Clifton House, Thoresby College, St Margaret, St Nicholas, and the Red Mount Chapel. On Monday visits were made to the parish churches of Walsoken, West Walton, Walpole St Peter, and Boston, as well as the castle and collegiate church at Tattershall. And on Tuesday afternoon the conference ventured out to St Lawrence and the castle at Castle Rising, along with Castle Acre Priory. Site presentations were given at all of the above, for which the organizers would like to thank Paul Richards at Clifton House, David Pitcher at Red Mount Chapel, Tim Tatton-Brown at St Margaret's, King's Lynn, John Goodall and Charles Tracy at St Nicholas, King's Lynn, Ron Baxter at All Saints, Walsoken, Tim Tatton-Brown and Julian Limentani at St Mary, West Walton, Ian Harper at Walpole St Peter, Linda Monckton at St Botolph, Boston, John Goodall at Tattershall Castle, Richard Marks at Holy Trinity, Tattershall, Rob Liddiard at Castle Rising Castle, Richard Halsey at St Laurence, Castle Rising, and Jeremy Ashbee, Jane Spooner and John McNeill at Castle Acre Priory.

The Association was honoured with receptions at the Stone Hall in King's Lynn, where the mayor of Lynn, Councillor Trevor Manley along with Dr Brian Ayers, County Archaeologist, welcomed the Association, and at Castle Acre Priory, where Richard Halsey addressed the Association on behalf of English Heritage. The President was in attendance throughout, hosting a reception on the first evening. The Association would also like to record its gratitude to all those who helped open doors and assisted in the smooth running of the conference, particularly Emma Day at Bircham Newton, David Higgins, David Pitcher, Paul Richards and Kate Weaver in King's Lynn, Lord Howard at Castle Rising, and Janet Hubbard at Castle Acre Priory. Special thanks are also due to Dr Glenys Phillips, who generously supported two conference scholarships, and Mrs Joan Mase, whose munificence in contributing towards the costs of this volume was an enormous help.

King's Lynn was notable for the Association in two other respects. It marked Nicola Coldstream's first conference as President, and the conference team would like to express its gratitude to Nicky for the tremendous verve and good humour she brought to the running of the conference. Secondly, King's Lynn and the Fens marked the retirement of a distinguished double act. After helping manage no less than nine conferences, Anna Eavis and Robert Gwynne finally stood down as Conference Organizer and Conference Secretary. The success of the BAA's conference series over the best part of a decade owes much to the sensitivity and practical good sense they brought to logistically demanding programmes, and the BAA would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their devotion to the cause and their exemplary ability to put an entire conference, convenor, speakers and members alike, at ease.

Over the past twenty years the BAA's annual conferences have been as much concerned to encourage research into the art, architecture and archaeology of particular regions or cities, as to focus on a single great church, and the decision to hold a conference on King's Lynn and the Fens was much influenced by this. The results of such an approach are inevitably patchy, and the tendency of the articles gathered here to concentrate on the empirical and the particular can cloud any apprehension that there is an underlying theme. In part, this is a reflection of the range of the Association's interests — a catholicity to be encouraged — and in part it is simply the nature of conference transactions volumes. But behind all this is the memory of a conference, and the nature of a conference is slightly different. It has a flavour and a bias, it fosters conversation, it introduces a lot of material concisely and across a given area. The themes of a conference emerge from the interaction of papers, visits and people. And the themes that stood out at the King's Lynn conference were to do with landscapes and parish churches, with a contrast between the great aristocratic and monastic sites — Tattershall, Kirkstead, Castle Acre, Castle Rising — where whole landscapes are artfully manipulated in the service of architectural expression, and the parish church, rising like a ship of souls within Fenland towns and acting as a prism through which a genuinely extraordinary variety of different forms of patronage might act.

John McNeill
Conference Convenor

COLOUR PLATE I



Plate I (Cherry Figure 1). King's Lynn Cup with lid. General view
David Pitcher

COLOUR PLATE II



Plate II (Cherry Figure 7). Side of King's Lynn Cup with gentleman and lady
David Pitcher

COLOUR PLATE III



Plate III (Cherry Figure 11). Painting by Pieter Gerritsz van Poestraeten, showing the King's
Lynn Cup

Sotheby's Picture Library, London

COLOUR PLATE IV



Plate IV (Cherry Figure 13). Print of the King's Lynn Cup by John Carter
Reproduced with permission of the Society of Antiquaries, London

COLOUR PLATE V



Plate V (Alexander Figure 3). Croyland Abbey: west front

Jennifer Alexander

COLOUR PLATE VI



Plate VIA (Spooner Figure 9). Prior's Chapel, Castle Acre Priory: the Virgin's crown and a gilded star, both applied over a vermillion red background, now altered to dark purple

Jane Spooner

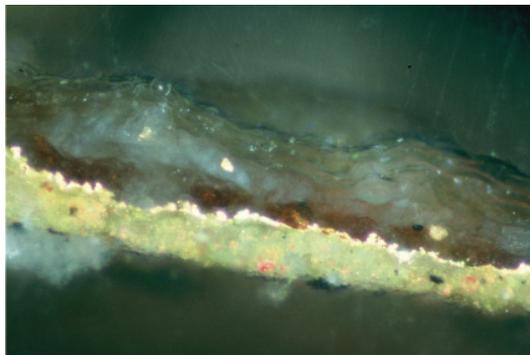


Plate VIb (Spooner Figure 10). Prior's Chapel, Castle Acre Priory: Cross-section sample of red-glazed gilding from the 14th-century wall-paintings

© Courtauld Institute, Conservation of Wall Painting Department



Plate VIc (Spooner Figure 11). Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth: the wall-painting in the western tomb recess

© Courtauld Institute, Conservation of Wall Painting Department

COLOUR PLATE VII



Plate VIIA (Spooner Figure 12). Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth: detail of a female figure painted in the western tomb recess

© Courtauld Institute, Conservation of Wall Painting Department



Plate VIIb (King Figure 1). Wighenhall St Mary Magdalen: Window nVII

David King

COLOUR PLATE VIII



Plate VIIIa (King Figure 2). Wighenhall St Mary Magdalen: Window nVI
David King



Plate VIIIb (King Figure 3). Wighenhall St Mary Magdalen: Window nV
David King

‘King John’s Cup’

JOHN CHERRY

‘King John’s Cup’ is one of the finest pieces of medieval silversmith’s work in England. Known in King’s Lynn since the mid-16th century, the lid, sides, knop, and base originally showed fine translucent enamelling. This article will review the post-medieval history of the Cup and summarize current views on the date, place of production and the original purpose of the Cup.

INTRODUCTION

THIS 14th-century Cup is known to have been in King’s Lynn since 1548. In that year, it was delivered to the Mayor and described as ‘King John’s Cup with a cover and enamelled weighing 70 ozs and $\frac{1}{4}$ ’. Although known as such, it has long been recognized that it is later than the reign of John, King of England, and that it is unlikely to have been associated with John, King of France, who had spent a part of his English captivity just across the Lincolnshire fens at Somerton Castle. The enamelling and secular figures emphasize that it is a secular piece of plate, and as such a most remarkable survival.¹

DESCRIPTION

THE Cup (388 mm high and weighing 33,370 grains or 70 ounces troy) is a standing Cup with a tall stem. The form is particularly graceful, and between the enamelled panels there are decoratively treated solid cast tree stems with roots and foliage (Fig. 1 & Col. Pl. I in print edn). There is a bayonet joint between bowl and stem so that the bowl (here referred to as the cup, while the whole vessel is referred to as the Cup) can become a graceful inverted bell-shaped five-sided beaker. It can also be detached. When the Cup was examined in the British Museum in 1976, a drawing was made by Ian McIntyre which shows how the different parts were fitted together (Fig. 2). The solid castings of the silver trees and the bayonet joint, which enabled the bowl to be detached, can be seen. The Cup is held together by a threaded bolt, possibly inserted in the 18th century.²

The stem has five attached columns that rise up to the capital supporting the cup and is very different from the decoration of the base, knop, bowl and lid. The stem is one of the most fragile parts of a Cup and may have been considerably altered in the Middle Ages. A comparable change occurred in the Royal Gold Cup, where the stem was increased in both the 16th and 17th centuries.³

There are thirty-one enamel panels in all which are made from separate plates of silver individually fitted against the body of the cup and retained by band settings.⁴ The individual scenes include figures of people or animals. Their flesh or face and hands are reserved against the enamelled background, a technique that can be quite



FIG. 1. Cup with lid. General view
David Pitcher

KING JOHN CUP

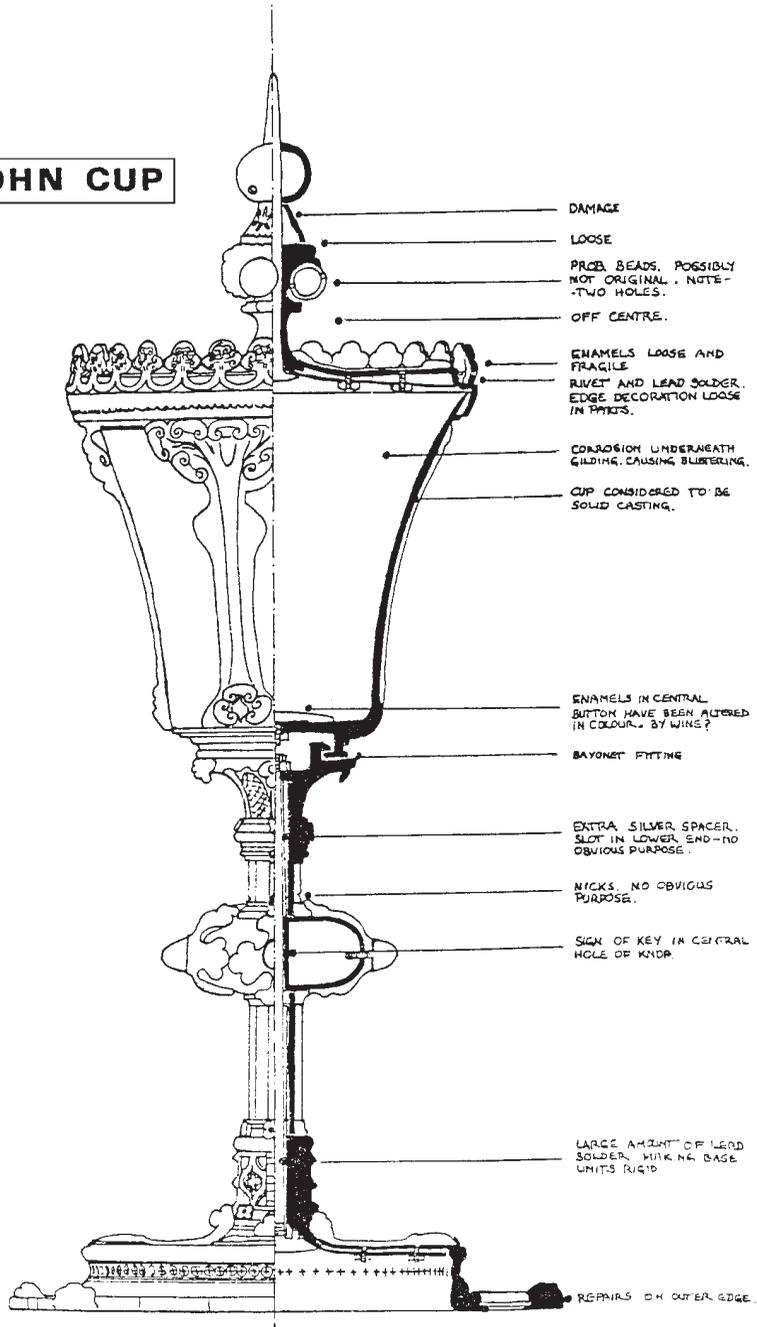


FIG. 2. Drawing of the structure of King John's Cup
Ian McIntyre



FIG. 3. Upper side of lid with lady with bow and dog



FIG. 4. Upper side of lid showing huntsman with horn, staff and two dogs

closely paralleled on the Savernake Horn.⁵ The lid is divided into five sections separated by silver trees, their stumps to centre and crowns towards the exterior. Each section is embellished with a standing figure, three of which are ladies, and two are men. Of the ladies, one has a bow and arrow, and a dog (Fig. 3), a second a hawk, and the third a dog. Of the two men, one has a rabbit hanging from a pole and a dog, and the other is a huntsman sounding a horn, holding a staff with a dog on each side (Fig. 4). All five figures are engaged in hunting, coursing, hawking or archery.

The outside of the cup is also divided into five panels, each of which contains two standing figures, one above the other, of a lady and a gentleman (Figs 5, 6, 7 & Col. Pl. II in print edn). Their costumes are picked out in different coloured enamels, red and blue being the chief colours used. There is an alternation of the male and female figures above and below. This means that as the cup is turned round, a zigzag pattern of the sexes appears, excepting one point where the odd number of the panels mean that figures of the same sex are side by side. The figures of the side of the cup lack the distinctive hunting attributes of those on the lid, though they do include a man with a hawk, and a man with a flower. The inside of the cup has a figure of a lady with a hawk and grasping a branch on the other (Fig. 8). This is badly worn, no doubt due to the repeated refilling of the cup with wine.



FIG. 5. Side of cup with lady and gentleman with hawk



FIG. 6. Side of cup with lady and gentleman

The centre of the stem is distinguished by a knob with five lobes. Each lobe consists of four oak leaves arranged crosswise, from the junction of which an acorn projects. The background is of deep blue enamel, and between each cluster of oak leaves are two silver stars, with six points, joined by a thin vertical line (Fig. 1). Finally, the base is decorated with five figures (Fig. 9), and on the fringe of the base hounds chase dogs and are set against green enamel. There are twenty-one figures in total.

THE HISTORY OF THE CUP

THE Cup is first mentioned in the Hall Book of King's Lynn in 1548 as the first item in a list of plate delivered to the Mayor. The reference to the delivery of the item to the Mayor suggests that it had previously been in another possession. Since then it has always been closely associated with the Mayors of Lynn. A Latin couplet, probably written in 1647 refers to the cup.

Lenna tenes coppam gladium que a Rege Iohanni/Plures quam gladio periere cupa
'Lynn King John's cup with sack and sugar filled. More than his sword hath in their feasting killed.'⁶

The Mayor of King's Lynn used the Cup by 1653, if not before, for celebratory drinking known as 'the courtesy of King John's cup'. The practice is reported by



FIG. 7. Side of cup with gentleman and lady
David Pitcher



FIG. 8. View into interior of cup showing the roundel of lady with hawk at the bottom of the cup

David Pitcher



FIG. 9. Base of cup with lady and dog pursuing hare

David Pitcher

Benjamin Mackerell in 1738 — ‘upon all public occasions and entertainments used with some uncommon ceremonies, at drinking the health of the King and Queen: and whosoever goes to visit the Mayor must drink out of the this cup, which contains a full pint’.⁷ William Schellinks, a Dutch painter who travelled in England, described this custom in 1662.

On the 10th October we went in the morning . . . to the new mayor’s house, where Mr de Jongh asked to have the honour of seeing the ancient drinking cup, which King John presented to the town in the year 1199 . . . The ancient cup is silver gilt, its style very old and strange, covered on the top by a lid. The cup was also set in several places with precious stones, but many of them have been stolen by one or the other; in many places are enamelled pictures of male and female saints and other decorations more. This cup has attached to it an annual allowance to show it to the spectators or strangers with the following ceremony: First the cup is filled with sack, and the lid is put on. Then it is handed to the visitors, who have to take off the lid. When the drinker has drunk, he turns the star, which is above the foot and below the cup, three times, then three times the other way around the drinking cup, and then the lowest part of the foot the other way. After that it is again filled and covered and handed over to the next drinker, who performs the same ceremony and hands it back.⁸

A later reference is in the anonymous *Journal of a Tour through Norfolk Suffolk, Lincolnshire and Yorkshire in the summer of 1741*.

We were civilly entertained by the Mayor as strangers and drank out of King John’s cup which he made a present of to the Corporation, and at the same time made them a present of his sword, which he took from his side as appears by the inscription. The Mayor has a salary of £150 a year on purpose to buy sack for the entertainment of strangers that come to see the cup. The Mayor gives £500 security for the cup during his mayoralty. The cup is of silver, gilt with gold in some places and enamelled in others; holds about half a pint. There is a cover to it; an irregular flat spheroidal ball between the foot and the cup, which ball turns round as does the foot, which in the ceremony of drinking you turn one, one way, the other the other way.⁹

The repeated use for drinking was one cause of the constant attention that the Cup received in the late 17th and 18th centuries. The entries in the Hall books and Chamberlains accounts are listed by David Pitcher in the Appendix. It was repaired in 1692, but then was found to be much out of repair in 1749, when it was sent to Mr Henry Goodwyn at London. By 1750 it ‘appears still to run at the bottom’ and was sent to the goldsmith in London. In 1771 £12 was paid for enamelling and repairing the cup, and, finally, in 1782, Messieurs Wakelin and Taylor, Jewellers of Panton St, Haymarket, London, properly repaired it (Fig. 10).¹⁰

DEPICTIONS AND CHANGES TO THE CUP

IN view of this repeated repair and attention, it is doubtful whether any of the present surfaces of the enamelling or gilding are medieval, and it is not easy to know how much was re-enamelled in a medieval style. The first appearance of the Cup in a painting (Fig. 11 & Col. Pl. III in print edn) is by Pieter Gerritsz van Roestraeten, apprentice and son-in-law of Franz Hals, who painted many ‘vanitas’ scenes in England in the period 1660–1700. In this painting the cup appears with red stones set into the centre knob (possibly intended to represent coral, which was efficacious in detecting poison) and small projections beneath the bowl. Van Roestraeten was particularly concerned to represent pieces of silver, such as candlesticks and wine



FIG. 10. Base of cup showing inscriptions
David Pitcher

coolers. Lindsey Bridget Jones has speculated that many of his pictures are commissioned pieces. If so, it raises the possibility that the representation of King John's Cup was commissioned, and that the painting deserves further study.¹¹

George Vertue, the engraver, drew the Cup, most probably, on a visit to King's Lynn in 1739. His drawing (Fig. 12) was never published, was acquired by Richard Gough, and is now in the Bodleian Library. It shows the present finial, and on the knop at the centre of the stem the projections are shown to be empty of any stones. It also shows a selection of figures, but is not reliable for the enamelling. It is interesting to note that Vertue describes the Cup as 'richly enamelled blue and green ribb'd and ornamented gilt with gold' whereas the 'figures and star, dogs, hares' are of silver gilt'.¹² The last recorded re-enamelling was in 1782, shortly before John Carter drew the Cup in 1786 (Fig. 13 & Col. Pl. IV in print edn). He also recorded the figures in the five fields of the Cup.¹³

The lid is the part of the cup that has received most change. The cresting around the top of the lid appears to be a later addition. The top of the present finial is in the shape of a ball and spike, and replaces the original finial. The dating of this alteration is not certain, but Marian Campbell (following G. E. P. and J. How) suggests the 16th century. This raises the possibility that the alteration took place when it came into the possession of the corporation. It had certainly already been altered by the late 17th century. Indeed, another change shown in van Roestraeten's late-17th-century painting is that, as with the stem, there were red stones in the centre of the four projections of the upper knops. Vertue's 1739 drawing shows empty settings for stones, so these must have been lost by then. As such, we do not know what the original finial looked like. Penzer suggested that it may have been an acorn, and it is more likely to have

been something of this size and shape rather than a standing figure. Finally, as stated above, the Cup's history of repeated repair and attention begs the question of the status of the present enamel. Herbert Maryon thought that most of the enamelling in the plates was medieval, though Marian Campbell is more sceptical.¹⁴

COMPARABLE CUPS

THE King's Lynn Cup is an excellent example of one of the largest and most important shapes of medieval drinking vessels. The Cup that it may be most closely compared to is the *Coupe au Tournoi* in the Pozzo Pezzoli Museum, Milan, usually dated to around 1330. This is hallmarked Avignon. Although the cup is crystal, the foot has seven panels with secular scenes of Tristan and Yseult, a lady holding two spears, two knights, an esquire, a lady and a serving man. The lid is decorated with scenes of hares and hounds. In subject matter and enamelling, it provides a close parallel with the King's Lynn cup.¹⁵



FIG. 11. Painting by Pieter Gerritsz van Poestraeten, showing the King's Lynn Cup
Sotheby's Picture Library, London



FIG. 12. Drawing of the King's Lynn Cup by George Vertue
Reproduced with permission of the Bodleian Library, Oxford



FIG. 13. Print of the King's Lynn Cup by John Carter
Reproduced with permission of the Society of Antiquaries, London

Other parallels are a Cup, now in the Treasury of Mainz cathedral, with a hexagonal cup, and foot, and a capital at the top of the stem underneath the beaker, usually dated to 1320 to 1330, an ivory cup on a stem in the Cathedral Treasury at Münster, Germany.¹⁶

WHERE WAS IT MADE?

BOTH Marie Chamot and Peter Lasko thought the Cup was English. Lasko contrasted it with the Copenhagen cruet, which is certainly French. Marian Campbell commented 'Attribution is sometimes at best tentative, in the absence of clear stylistic traits or diagnostic inscriptions, even for pieces as celebrated as the Kings Lynn Cup'.¹⁷ Mary Fox thought that, although the Cup had stylistic links with both East Anglia and Low Countries, the claims of the Low Countries were stronger. This was based on her comparison of the style of the figures with those shown in a manuscript copy of the Romance of Alexander illuminated between 1338 and 1344.¹⁸ She also makes comparisons with the foliage on wooden screens such as that at Bedingham in Norfolk.

The style of the goldsmith's work is unusual. It is difficult to parallel the trees. A silver gilt fragment from Clarendon may provide a possible parallel for the treatment of the silver.¹⁹

COSTUME AND ICONOGRAPHY

THE costume of the figures on the Cup shows the changes to the effect of tailoring on dress in the 14th century. These have been outlined by Stella Newton, who has shown that there was greater emphasis on the waist. The men have long sleeves buttoned at the top in front, have ribbed and embroidered collars and their tunic reaches below the knees. Some men wear a hood with a long liripipe coiled once round it. The liripipe hood is worn by both men and women on the cup, in one case with man above woman.²⁰ Ladies have bare heads with thick plaits covering the ears. They wear a cotehardie with long tight sleeves, nearly entirely covered with very full super cotehardie with embroidered yoke and borders. Tippetts hang from the half-sleeves at the elbows (Fig. 7 & Col. Pl. II in print edn). Two ladies hold up their skirt with their hand (Figs 4, 7 & Col. Pl. II in print edn).²¹

The main fashion comparison has been with the Romance of Alexander by the Flemish illuminator Jehan de Grise around 1338–42. Mary Fox was very impressed by the similarity, which may have led her to over-emphasize the possibility that it is Flemish in manufacture. The same changes of fashion can be seen in the Luttrell Psalter usually dated around 1334, slightly earlier than the Romance of Alexander. The importance of the King's Lynn Cup is that it the earliest piece of metalwork to show this change in costume which is only known otherwise from texts and illuminated manuscripts.

Hunting is the only actual activity shown on the Cup. Ladies hunting can be seen in two manuscripts. The earlier is probably the Taymouth Hours (BL Yates Thompson 13 d), arguably datable to between 1325 to 1335, where they are found on folios 68 to 83v. The second is the Smithfield Decretals (BL Royal 10 E IV), probably to be dated c. 1330–40, where they are on folios 41, 43v, 44, 45v, 48, 77v to 80.²² The only other English secular enamel with hunting scenes is the Savernake Horn, usually dated to the second quarter of the 14th century and now in the British Museum. This has

two bands with animals and on the topmost band the figures of a king, bishop and huntsman.²³

CONCLUSION

FINALLY, there is another cup, of a very different shape, that may shed some light on the King's Lynn Cup — the Copenhagen cruet (now in the National Museum Copenhagen). This is hallmarked Paris, and was probably made *c.* 1320–30.²⁴ Like the Lynn Cup, it is enamelled with secular subjects, which have been identified as games. An inscription shows that this was the possession of a rich merchant in Lübeck in 1473. It is likely that the Lynn Cup was the possession of a rich Lynn merchant. He most probably commissioned it in England, or, less likely, he may have bought it abroad. He may well have given it to the Trinity Guild at Kings Lynn and later, in the mid sixteenth century, it came into the possession of the corporation, where it has been subsequently treasured.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to all those who helped me with this article, particularly David Pitcher in granting access to the Cup, by reading the text and by helping with the illustrations, Marian Campbell, Philippa Glanville, Adrian James, and David Beasley.

APPENDIX

Repairs to King John Cup DAVID PITCHER

Hall Book KL/C7/12

8 October 1691 fol. 114

Ordered that King Johns Cupp be repaired at the charge of the Maior and Burgesses and for the future to be lodged in the Treasury except on such publique ffestivalls when the Maior for the time being shall desire to have the use of it.

24 October 1692 fol. 125

King Johns Cupp is this day brought in new repaired and lodged in the Treasury according to former Order.

19 May 1693 fol. 130

Ordered that Chamberlains forthwith pay to Sir John Turner Twelve pounds and ten shillings for money laid out by him for repairing King Johns Cupp.

Hall Book KL/C7/13

1 December 1749 fol. 204

King Johns Cup a royal present to the Mayor and Burgesses being very much out of repair in several parts. Mr Mayor is desired to send to Mr Henry Goodwyn at London to get it thoroughly mended and beautified at the charge of the Corporation.

13 June 1750 fol. 20

Mr Mayor now brought into this house King Johns Cup which has lately been repaired and beautified but it appears still to run at the bottom and wants to be riveted. Whereupon Mr Mayor is desired to send it back to the Goldsmith at London to be mended and returned with all convenient speed.

Hall Book KL/C7/14

14 February 1771 fol. 205

Ordered that the Chamberlain do pay Mr Jonathan Jones the sum of Twelve pounds being his charge for enamelling and repairing of King Johns Cup.

17 October 1782 fol. 376

Agreed that King Johns Cup be sent by Mr Mayor to Messieurs Wakelin and Taylors Jewellers Panton Street Hay Market that the same may be properly repaired.

Chamberlains' Accounts

1692/3 Accounts do not exist

Michaelmas 1749/50 KL/C39/129

7 March 1750 John Pearce for gilding Cup £12-12-0

Michaelmas 1770/71 KL/C39/151

Paid to Mr Johnathan Jones for mending the King Johns Cup £12-0-0

Michaelmas 1773/74 KL/C39/154

To Mr Charles Newman for repairing the Inameled Cup £0-2-6

Michaelmas 1782/83 KL/C39/163

Jn. Wakelin and Wm. Taylor a Bill for the repairs of the King Johns Cup £33-0-0

NOTES

1. King's Lynn, Borough Archives, King's Lynn Hall Book (1548), fols 92v-93. For the guilds of Lynn, see H. Harrod, *Report on the Deeds and Records of the Borough of King's Lynn* (King's Lynn 1874), 25ff. The Trinity guild was one of the largest guilds in King's Lynn, and saw King John as one of its founders. Holcombe Ingelby, *The Treasures of Lynn* (London 1924), 38, points out that in 1421 the Trinity Guild had three silver gilt enamelled cups.

2. I am grateful to David Pitcher for making available the Report of the Conservation Department of the British Museum, 21 February 1976 [R I File no. 3762]. The Report was discussed by Erika Speel, 'The King John, or King's Lynn Cup', *Glass on Metal*, 17/1 February 1998, 4-7. She also discussed the Cup in E. Speel, *Dictionary of Enamelling* (Aldershot 1998), 84-85.

3. For The Royal Gold Cup, see Jenny Stratford, *The Bedford Inventories: The Worldly Goods of John, Duke of Bedford, Regent of France* (London 1993), 319-25. The original shape of the stem of the Cup can be seen in O. M. Dalton, *The Royal Gold Cup* (London 1924).

4. H. Maryon, 'The King John Cup at King's Lynn', *Connoisseur*, 131-32 (1953), 88.

5. J. Cherry and R. Camber, 'The Savernake Horn', *Collectors and Collections: British Museum Yearbook*, 2 (1977), 201-11.

6. Harrod, *Deeds and Records*, 7 (n. 1), from a Thoresby manuscript. In 1874 this was in the possession of Mr Wigg. I have not managed to find where the manuscript is now.

7. B. Mackerell, *History and Antiquities of Kings Lynn* (Norwich 1738), 184.

8. William Schellinks, *The Journal of William Schellinks' Travels in England 1661-3*, ed. M. Exwood and H. L. Lehmann, Camden 5th series, 1 (1993), 156.

9. Richard G. Wilson, 'Journal of a tour through the Suffolk, Norfolk, Lincolnshire and Yorkshire in the summer of 1741', in *East Anglia's History*, ed. C. Harper-Bill et al. (Woodbridge 2002), 259-88, esp. 278.

10. It has not been possible to trace Henry Goodwyn, who may have been a relative of John Goodwyn, mayor, and therefore simply a contact. Walkelin and Taylor became Garrards, whose account books are in the Victoria and Albert Museum's Archive of Art and Design, at Blythe House, London. No entry there corresponds with the repair of the Cup in 1782. The following names and dates are engraved under the foot of the cup (Fig. 10):

New Enamled in 1692. N Green
 New Enameld & gilded in 1750. John Goodwyn, Mayor
 New enameld gilded & repaired 1770. Sam Brown, Mayor
 Re-enameled gilt and repaired 1782. Edw Everard, Mayor
 John Bagge, Mayor 1711.

The entry for John Bagge is not traceable in the Chamberlain's accounts.

11. The painting is now in the Regalia Rooms at King's Lynn Town Hall. It appeared in the Sotheby's sale 'British Paintings 1500-1850' on 13 April 1994, 134. For Pieter van Roestraeten, see Lindsey Bridget Jones, 'Pieter van Roestraeten and the English "vanitas"', *The Burlington Magazine* (June 1990), 402-06.

12. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Gough Maps 44, no. 30. The drawing is signed 'GV delin' apud Lynn', but not dated. The 1739 date is deduced from the Journal entry for Vertue's tour with Lord Coleraine when he visited Lynn. Vertue, *Notebooks*, vol. 5, Walpole Society, 26 (1937-38), 121.

13. The drawing was published in John Carter, *Specimens of Ancient Sculpture and Painting*, II (London 1780-87), 1. This was republished in 1887, with notes by Dawson Turner, who was the first to point out the 14th-century date of the Cup.

14. M. Campbell, 'The King John Cup', in *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England 1200-1400*, ed. J. Alexander and P. Binski (London 1987), 435-36. G. E. P. and J. How, 'A correspondence on the King's Lynn Cup', *Connoisseur*, CXVII-CXVIII (1946), 120; N. M. Penzer, 'The King's Lynn Cup', *Connoisseur*, CXVIII (1946), 12-16, 64, 79-84.

15. R. Lightbown, *Secular Goldsmith's Work in Medieval France* (London 1978), 91-92 and pls LXIX and LXXI; Elizabeth Taburet-Delahaye, 'L'emaillerie translucide à Montpellier et Avignon au XIVe siècle', *Annali della scuola normale superiore di Pisa*, Serie IV, Quaderni 2 (1997), 47-62.

16. For the cup in Mainz cathedral treasury, see J. M. Fritz, *Goldschmiedekunst der Gotik in Mitteleuropa* (Munich 1982), no. 372.

17. M. Chamot, *English Medieval Enamels* (London 1930), nos 24, 41, pl. 16. P. Lasko, 'The "King John" Cup', in *Medieval Art In East Anglia 1300-1520*, ed. P. Lasko and N. Morgan (Norwich 1973), no. 35. Marian Campbell, 'English Basse taille enamels', *Annali della scuola normale superiore di Pisa*, Serie IV, Quaderni 2 (1997), 37-46, esp. 41.

18. Mary Fox, 'The King John's Cup' (unpublished M.Phil. thesis, University of London, 1984). The Romance of Alexander in question is Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 264.

19. T. B. James and A. M. Robinson, *Clarendon Palace* (London 1988), 200.

20. For the new fashions, see Stella Newton, *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince* (Woodbridge 1980), 10.

21. For the tippet, see Robin Netherton, 'The tippet: accessory after the fact', in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles I*, ed. R. Netherton and G. Owen-Crocker (Woodbridge 2005). This shows that they were often lined with fur and were not detachable, but part of the cotehardie.

22. The manuscript of the Teymouth Hours is London, British Library, MS Yates Thompson 13d. The Smithfield Decretals are London, British Library, Royal MSS, 10 E IV.

23. J. Cherry and R. Camber, 'The Savernake Horn', *Collectors and Collections: British Museum Yearbook*, 2 (1977), 201-11.

24. B. Donzet and C. Siret, ed., *Les Fastes du Gothique: le siècle de Charles V* (Paris 1981), 229, no. 183.

The Red Mount Chapel, King's Lynn

DAVID PITCHER

Nikolaus Pevsner described the Red Mount Chapel as 'one of the strangest Gothic churches in England'. Built in 1483–85 for the Benedictine prior of Lynn, its outer octagon and inner core were constructed in brick with stone dressings and contain the Lower Chapel, with a central chamber, known as the Priest's Room, above. In between the outer and inner core are two staircases, each with recessed brick hand-rails. In 1505–06 the building was altered by the construction of a stone cruciform chapel, which rises above the roof of the outer octagon. A fan-vault crowns the crossing of this tiny chapel with panelled tunnel-vaults in the four arms, the upper chapel design having been attributed to John Wastell.

Although usually regarded as a wayside chapel on route to Walsingham, the Red Mount Chapel was also a pilgrimage destination in its own right. Offerings at the chapel frequently exceeded those made at other religious sites in the town. After 1537, the building reverted to the Council, and was put to a number of uses, including those of study, gunpowder store and stable. It survived years of neglect and damage, until increasing antiquarian interest led to its restoration in the early 19th century.

THE Chapel of St Mary on the Mount, or the Red Mount Chapel as it has been called since the 18th century, is a scheduled ancient monument. It lies at the centre of a Grade II Registered Landscape known as The Walks. Its original purpose seems to have been that of a pilgrimage chapel, and the tendency has been to relate it to the shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham, some 25 miles north-east of King's Lynn. The main attraction at Walsingham was the replica of the Holy House in Nazareth in which the Annunciation took place. Inside, beside its golden altar, the statue of Our Lady was bedecked with jewels.¹ Walsingham was certainly hugely popular and every king of England from Henry III to Henry VIII made a pilgrimage there. Many Walsingham-bound pilgrims would have passed through Lynn, particularly those coming from the Midlands and the North, by either land or sea. The Lynn Museum has an extensive collection of pilgrim badges, started in the 19th century by a local jeweller, Thomas Pung, who found that badges had been preserved in the mud of the Purfleet, one of the ferry landing points, and paid children to search for them there.²

However, construction of the Red Mount Chapel was not embarked on until relatively late in the medieval life of the Walsingham cult, and the documentary evidence demonstrates that, whatever its attractions as a wayside halt, the Red Mount Chapel functioned as a pilgrimage destination in its own right. The purpose of the following paper is to lay out this documentary evidence, and review what is known of the chapel's post-medieval existence using antiquarian as well as archaeological sources.

The decision to build a chapel dedicated to Our Lady was taken by William Spynke, appointed prior of Lynn in 1480. There are two primary documentary sources for its construction. First, the priory accounts, the financial returns of the Lynn cell of

Norwich cathedral priory, founded at St Margaret's, Lynn, under bishop Herbert de Losinga, and secondly the Council's minute books, known as the Hall Books, and Chamberlains' Accounts. It appears that money began to be collected in 1482, for in the priory accounts for that year a sum of 6s. 8d. can be identified under the heading 'The Chapel of St Mary on the Mount'.³

The land on which the Chapel of St Mary on the Mount was erected belonged to the mayor and commons. On 24 April 1483, one of the chamberlains was instructed by the council to warn Robert Curraunt not to build a chapel on the site without their agreement.⁴ Robert is described in the lists of freemen as a *raffman* (a dealer in timber) and so it has been assumed that he was the contractor.⁵ A meeting was called between the mayor, the church-reeves and the prior (16 June 1483)⁶ but, within ten weeks of the initial warning, it was agreed that Robert Curraunt should be granted a licence to build a chapel upon 'the mount called the Ladye hylle' (30 June 1483).⁷

The chapel was built on the eastern boundary of medieval Lynn, on a mound just outside the fortification bank, but within the protective ditch. It was located half-way between the end of the masonry town wall at Purfleet and a postern gate called the North Guannock Gate. It has been suggested that the mound may have formed part of earlier fortifications or may have been a saltern. Archaeological investigations undertaken in 2002 found no evidence for either of these theories.⁸

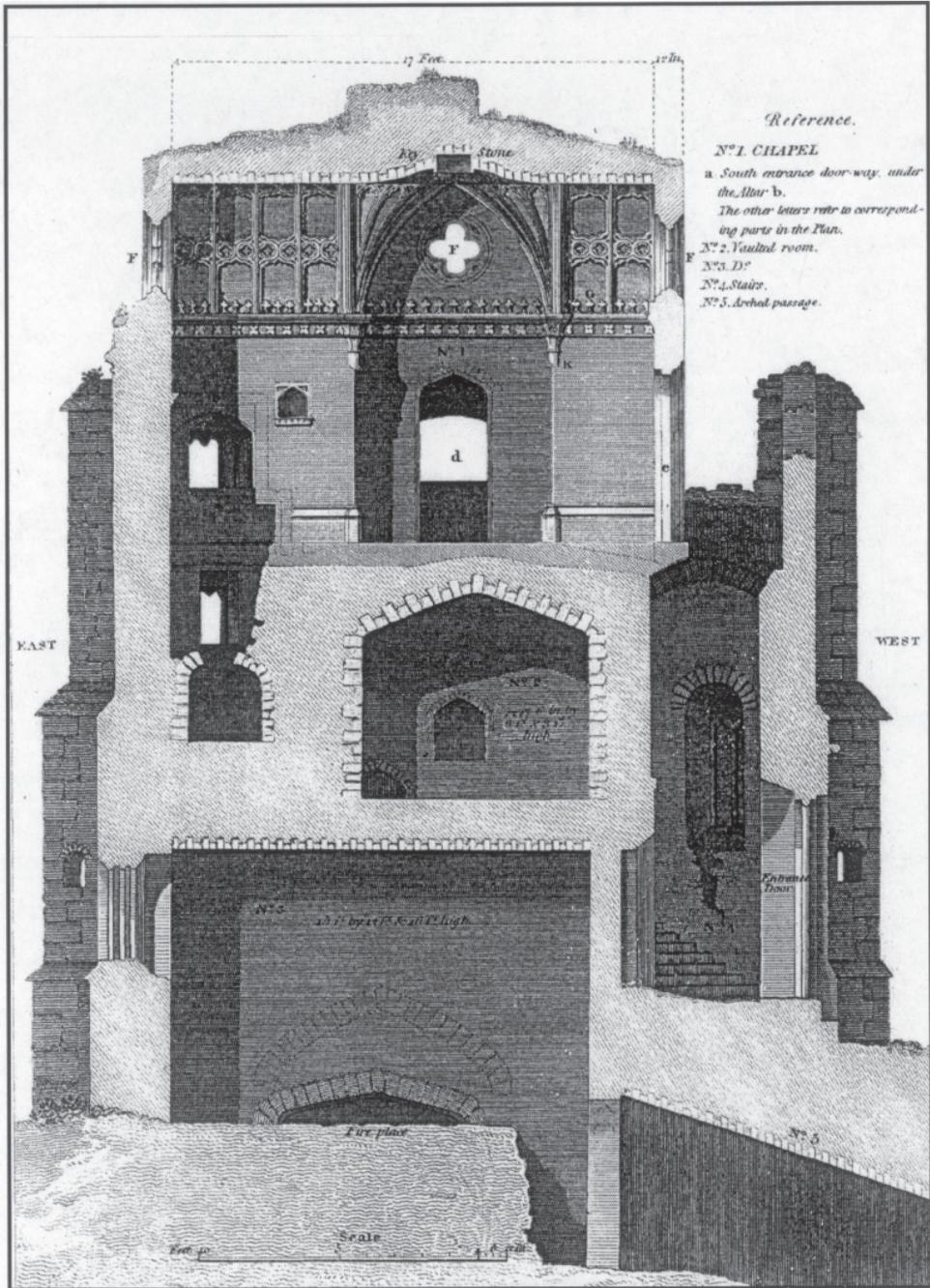
There is also a much quoted will of William March, said to date from 1480, in which he bequeathed 6s. 8d. to the fabric of St Mary the Virgin. This led certain writers to believe that there might have been a small chapel on the site prior to the erection of the present building.⁹ However, recent study shows that the will is actually dated 1488, and the bequest must therefore have been for the present building.¹⁰

On 6 May 1485, Prior Spynke was granted the lease of the land upon which the chapel stood with the surrounding pasture. In exchange for the lease, the prior of Norwich and Prior Spynke granted the mayor and commons the use of their Mill Meadow or the proceeds of its rental. In practice, they gave 20s. per annum. Prior Spynke was also to fund the four tapers burning at the high altar and the two great candlesticks.¹¹

Prior Spynke's building is octagonal, and is constructed of brick with stone dressings. There were two main entries into the building, both on its west face, one from the mound platform and another immediately below, via a passage through the mound itself. Stepped buttresses project from the angles of the octagon, with small arched openings pierced through each. It has been suggested that these might have held lamps.

The section (Fig. 1) shows that within the outer octagon there is a central core, also of brick. The lower chapel is built partly within the mound and between the inner and outer sections are staircases, which run anti-clockwise bottom to top. The main feature of the staircases is the roll-moulded brick handrail recessed into the inner wall. A handrail of similar design, but of finer quality, is to be found in the gatehouse of nearby Oxburgh Hall (Norfolk), also dating from the early 1480s.

On entering the main door from the mound a window gives a view into the lower chapel. Below this window, a 19th-century addition, is the original entrance from the mound passage. Its intrados is panelled and demonstrates that this entrance was considered to be of some importance. Taylor's engraving (Fig. 2) shows the lower chapel viewed from the west. The chapel has a shallow barrel-vault but has now largely lost



its original plaster finish and tiled floor. Towards its eastern end are two tall shallow recesses. A drawing by Edward Edwards, dated 1828, shows a pair of steps in front of each of these recesses, but no apparent evidence exists for this today.¹² In the south wall is a wide brick arched niche, with a brick relieving arch above, similar in type to a tomb recess (Fig. 3a). Opposite is a tall, pointed doorway giving access to a staircase that rises to the third external door in the north-eastern face of the octagon. This outer north-east door may have been specifically intended for the chapel priest, or custodian, as not only does it connect directly with the lower chapel, but it also gives onto another staircase which enables one to ascend to a middle chamber-known as the Priest's Room (Fig. 3b). This brick-vaulted chamber, now lime washed, has two arched recesses. In its south-east corner there is a tunnel-like feature with a damaged barrel-vault, sloping downwards into the thickness of the wall, and to the east is a brick opening with chamfered jambs, giving access to a small annexe. The annexe has been much altered, and its purpose, particularly the reason for its raised earthen floor, remains a matter for conjecture.

The accounts for the chapel shed light on how it was constituted and used. The prior appointed an attendant to safeguard the offerings at the chapel, which in 1485 amounted to over £20. This might be compared to the offerings recorded for the same period at the chapel of St Mary on the Bridge, Lynn, which were less than £1.¹³ Finally, we learn that, in 1488, the altar cloth made of camlet, was embroidered with a star.¹⁴

In 1489 William Spynke was appointed prior of Norwich. In the accounts for that year the total cost of building the chapel is given as £38 4s. od.¹⁵

Members of the Gild of St Fabian and St Sebastian were ordered to meet their Alderman on 23 January 1492 at our Lady of the Mount at nine o'clock, 'there to play an anteme to oure Ladye', and there to make an offering, or failing that to forfeit half a pound of wax.¹⁶

Offerings reached their peak at £34 13s. 4d. in 1498. Evidence from the priory account rolls indicates this sum was set against the cost of rebuilding the chancel clerestory at the priory church of St Margaret.¹⁷

In 1506 George Hyngham became prior. Hyngham had held a number of posts at Norwich cathedral priory, the last being that of cellarer. In his first year at Lynn, the Upper Chapel was erected at a cost of £14 11s. od., around two-thirds of the offerings received at the chapel in that year.¹⁸ Also mentioned in the account is the construction of a porch and the arches required to support the new chapel, which overhangs the central core. The upper octagon window on the east face was partially blocked by the new build. The chapel, in the shape of a cross, measures 5.26 m from east to west and 4.3 m from north to south. It is accurately set out, in contrast to the octagon where no side is parallel. The centre of the cross is covered by a fan-vault. The four arms of the chapel are each of two bays, with the exception of the arm over the altar, which has four. Each is vaulted with panel tracery with a recurring motif of encircled quatrefoils (Fig. 4).

This chapel was reached by climbing the main staircase from the western doors on the mound, bypassing the priest's room. At the head of the main staircase the pilgrim passed under its altar slab and into an 'ambulatory' which eventually leads to the entrance to the stone chapel, thus making a complete circuit of the building. From the 'ambulatory' it was possible to catch a glimpse of the interior of the chapel through

The Red Mount Chapel

FIG. 2. The Lower Chapel by William Taylor, c. 1844

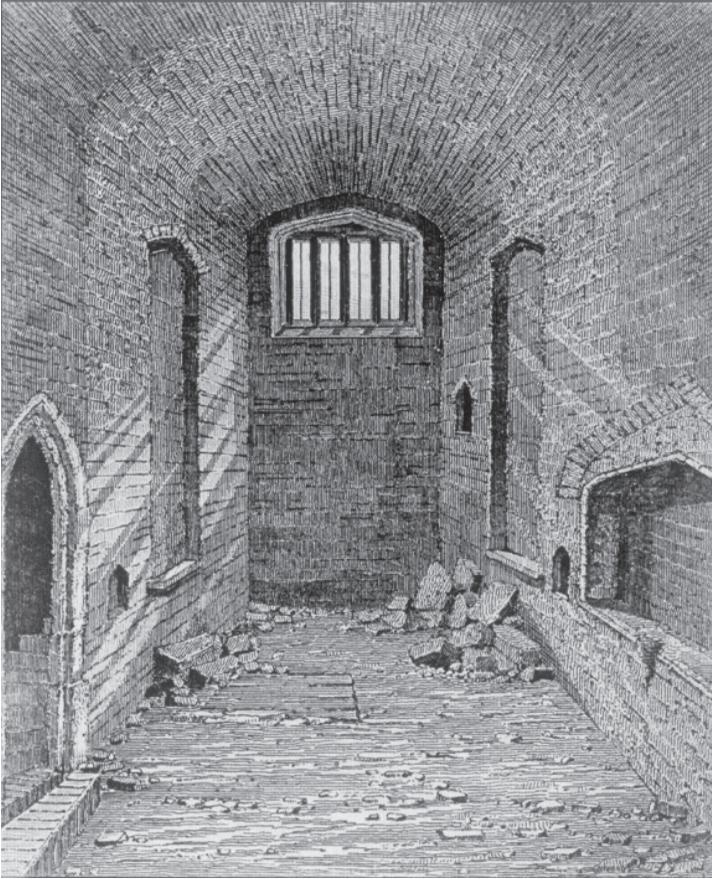
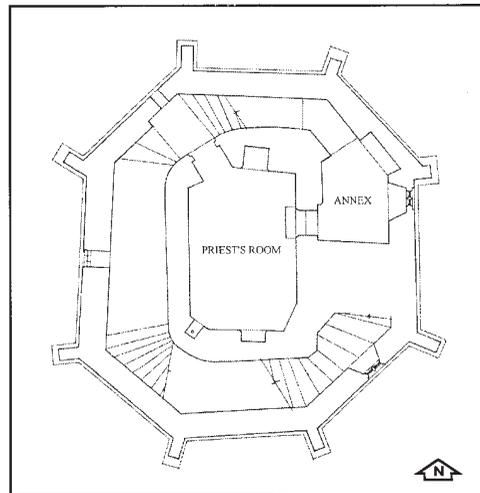
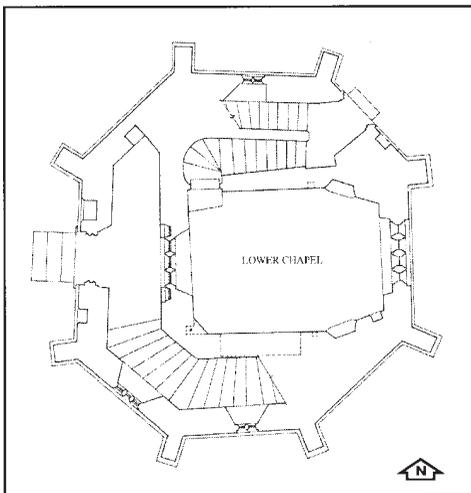


FIG. 3. a. Plan of the Lower Chapel; b. Plan of the Priest's Room



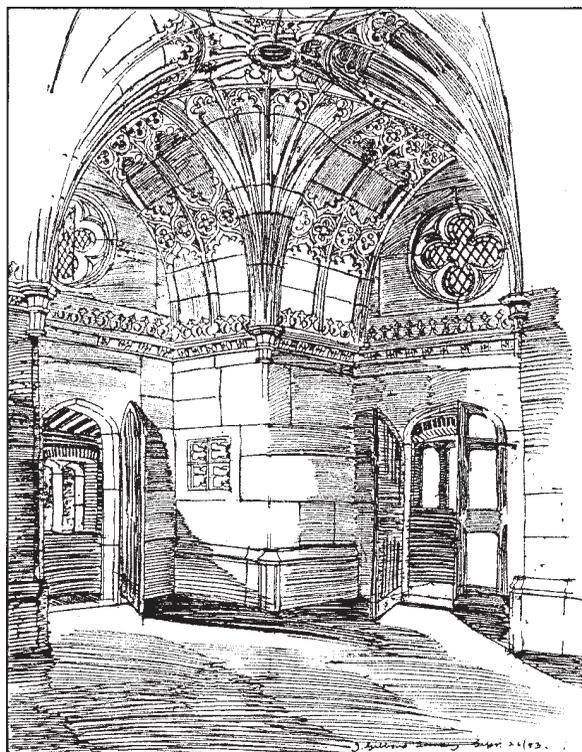


FIG. 4. South-west view of the Upper Chapel by J. Gibbons Sankey, 1883

three square apertures giving oblique views of the altar and, quite possibly, a statue of Our Lady. Each aperture has four quatrefoil lights, the cusps of which are now damaged. At some time metal grilles protected them. The fine detailing of this chapel, although damaged by time and the actions of iconoclast and vandal, is best illustrated by Figures 4 and 5. The design has been attributed to John Wastell on the basis of similarities between its vaults and those of the retrochoir at Peterborough and the high vaults at King's College, Cambridge.¹⁹

In 1507 the altar of the new chapel was gilded at a cost of 53s. 4d., an organ installed at the same cost and an iron lectern provided for 13s. 4d. A further 20s. was spent on beautifying the oratory. A number of books containing masses and antiphons as well as canticles of prick-song were purchased for 6s. 8d.²⁰ After this period, offerings at the chapel declined from £21 5s. 7d. in 1508 to £9 8s. 6d. in 1529.²¹

It is still clear that the Red Mount Chapel remained an object of pilgrimage in its own right, however. In 1517, Gregory Clerke, a former mayor of Norwich, left money in his will for such a pilgrimage to be undertaken on his behalf. This also included the other holy sites at Ipswich, Bury, Cambridge, Ely, Castle Acre and Walsingham.²²

Following the closure of the Lynn priory in 1537, the Red Mount ceased to be used as a chapel and reverted to the mayor and burgesses as landowners. Did the statue of Our Lady suffer the same fate as 'her sister of Walsingham' or those 'idolls and masse

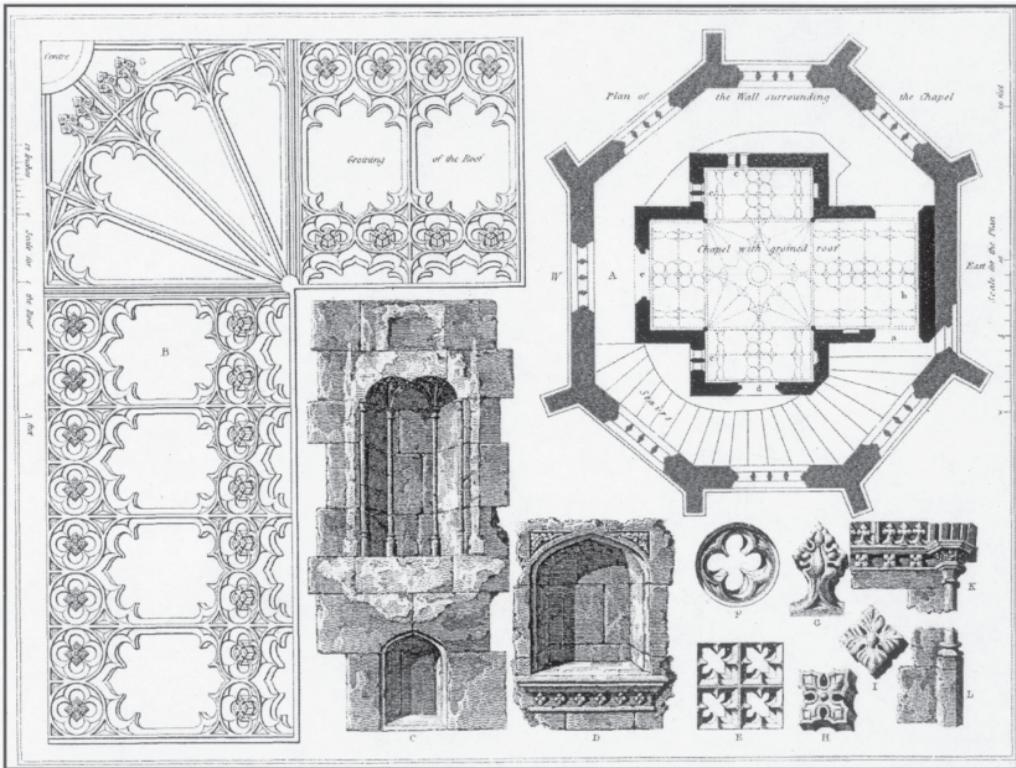


FIG. 5. Plan and details of the Upper Chapel by Mackenzie, 1810

books and other fylthy reliques' that were burnt in Lynn's market place in 1560:²³ The council's records remain relatively silent until the 1570s when six loads of thack tiles were taken from the Mount and three loads of spars and timber removed.²⁴ A roof covered in thack tiles would normally be steeply pitched and it suggests that the form of the original roof was different from the present.

On 28 May 1572 the council agreed 'that the whole howse adyoynnye next the Mownte shalbe taken downe or els sould standing'.²⁵ The building survived and new uses were found. By 1577, the Mount is described as 'walled about, being a Conduit of Receipt with a cistern of lead'.²⁶ The cistern was still in the lower chamber in the 18th century.²⁷ In 1586, 12s. was spent on the building for the benefit of Mr Howse, the Vicar of St Margaret's, who had a study there.²⁸ The porch was pulled down in 1608 and the remaining part of the building repaired.²⁹ The chamberlains account reveals that two bricklayers and three labourers were on site for almost eleven weeks. As well as their daily pay, they received a weekly allowance of 6d. for beer.³⁰

At the beginning of the Civil War, the town council decided to use the chapel as a gunpowder store and the building was called Mount Fort.³¹ After declaring its support for the king in 1643, the town was blockaded by the forces of the Earl of

Manchester but soon capitulated. As the parliamentary forces did not demolish the Red Mount one assumes that it was not considered to be a military threat, and it had clearly ceased to be a religious one. The walls of the upper chapel are covered with graffiti dating from this period, including a number of sets of initials and dates inside house-shaped outlines topped with a flag.

In 1783 the upper chapel was granted to a teacher of navigation as an observatory, alterations made causing damage to the structure.³² It was about this time that the lower chapel was filled with soil to the level of the mound and a door inserted into the east window so as to convert the lower chapel into a stable. The area around the Red Mount also became a popular resort. The Revd James Coulton, who rented the stable and surrounding pastureland, complained to the council that ‘men, women and children flocked there in greater numbers than pilgrims to Mecca in the month of Ramadan’. Rolling in the grass was apparently a popular pastime!³³

Eighteenth-century engravings show a tall slender structure on the roof of the upper chapel. Its purpose is unknown, but it has been suggested that it might have been a chimney, the central support for a pyramidal roof, or the shaft of a cross. It had been demolished by 1809. Oldmeadow’s engraving *c.* 1820 shows the building in an advanced state of decay. The brick octagon was roofless, windows were decayed and there was other fabric loss (Fig. 6).

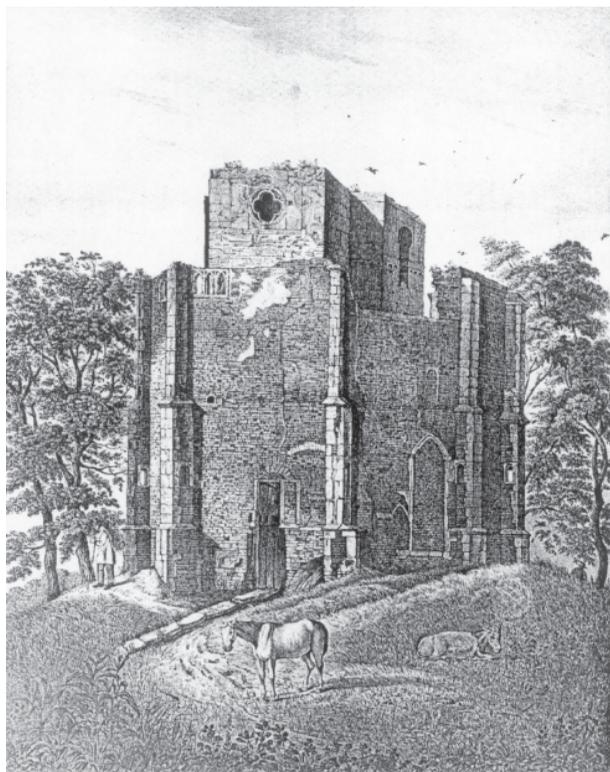


FIG. 6. View of the Red Mount Chapel showing decay and the stable entrance by W. Olmeadow, *c.* 1820

One of the first people to recognize the antiquarian significance of the building was the Revd Edward Edwards, the 'Lecturer of Lynn'. Edwards contributed an engraving of his section and other drawings, with a description, to Britton's 'Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain'.³⁴

In 1828 the Revds E. Edwards and E. Blencowe raised a public subscription, amounting to over £250 for repairing the building. The lower chapel was cleared of soil and rubbish, the stairs renewed and the upper brickwork and windows restored. The octagon was roofed and the windows of the upper chapel filled with stained glass, some from St Nicholas. Regrettably these windows were all vandalized by 1870.

At the same time the mound was excavated, revealing a polygonal wall of about eighteen sides and the original entrance to the lower chapel from the level of the exterior Walk. Due to its ruinous state, the wall was recovered in 1829. Henry Bell's *groundplat* of c. 1670 depicts this wall with an aperture in each face.³⁵

During the 19th century, several local historians wrote detailed descriptions of the Red Mount.³⁶ Nationally the chapel appeared in architectural publications, such as *The Builder* and *Building News*. The council appointed custodians who, for a small gratuity, would show the interior and willingly tell some of the myths and legends associated with the Red Mount to their captive audience.³⁷ But by the late 19th century, attitudes to the chapel, and to pilgrimage, were changing, and on 20 August 1897 some forty pilgrims departed from the Red Mount Chapel on the first public pilgrimage to Walsingham since the Reformation. Amongst its number was Charlotte Boyd who purchased and restored the Slipper Chapel at Houghton St Giles, now the national Roman Catholic shrine.³⁸ In 1968 the Red Mount Chapel was leased to the Roman Catholic Diocese of Northampton as an interdenominational place of worship. During this period, the window over the altar was filled with stained glass designed by the late Colin Shewring. It depicts a lily against a blue flowing background and bears the inscription 'Ave Maria Gracia Plena Dominus Tecum'. A number of repairs were also undertaken, but the lessee considered that the terms of the full repairing lease were too onerous. By agreement, the lease was surrendered at the end of 1988. Subsequently the chapel has been unused and generally closed to visitors.

The most interesting aspect of this building is the layout of its interior. It is possible that the lower chapel was intended to evoke the Holy Sepulchre, perhaps with a tomb of Christ in the lower chapel. Pilgrims would enter via the passage, stooping low, and probably left the same way. They would then climb the mound to the western doors above, ascending by the main staircase to the glory of the upper chapel and then descend by the other staircase to the north-east door.³⁹ That indeed was the processional route followed by 20th-century worshippers. It is also possible that the latter narrow staircase was reserved for the priest only, pilgrims ascending and descending by the main staircase.

A certain symbolic meaning could be suggested by the chapel's octagonal shape. Richard Marks has also pointed out that 'Calvary is evoked by the location of the building outside the town walls' and goes on to point out its affinities with the Jerusalem church in Bruges.⁴⁰

Whatever the symbolic meaning of this curious building, the Red Mount Chapel is a remarkable survival, without parallel in this country. It contains a rare example of fan-vaulting in Norfolk, possibly designed by one of the greatest late Gothic master masons. In 2008, following repair and the re-opening of the passage entrance, the modern-day 'pilgrim' will once again be able to visit 'one of the strangest Gothic churches in England'.⁴¹

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank all those who have aided his research, particularly Lynn historian Michael Begley and Susan Maddock of the Norfolk Record Office.

NOTES

1. See, in particular, J. C. Dickinson, *The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham* (Cambridge 1956); C. Green and A. B. Whittingham, 'Excavations at Walsingham Priory, Norfolk, 1961', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 125 (1968), 255–90; B. Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges. Medieval Finds from Excavations in London* (London 1998), 135–48; and D. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England* (Hambledon 2000).
2. B. Spencer, *Medieval Pilgrim Badges in Norfolk* (Norfolk Museums Service 1980), 7.
3. Norfolk Record Office (NRO), Records of the Dean and Chapter of Norwich (DCN), NRO, DCN 2/1/70.
4. King's Lynn Borough Archives (KLBA), Hall Book, KL/C7/4, 469.
5. KLBA, Register of admissions of freemen 1440–1662, KL/C 9/1. Robert Curraunt purchased his freedom on 9 December 1476 for 40s. He was elected a constable of one of the Lynn wards on 3 January 1477 and a member of the council on 29 August 1477. He last attended a meeting of the council on 8 August 1482.
6. KLBA, Hall Book, KL/C7/4, 470.
7. KLBA, Hall Book, KL/C7/4, 471. Meeting of the council on the Feast of the Commemoration of St Paul, 30 June 1483. Beloe misread this item as the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul which took place on 25 January 1484. See E. Beloe, *The Red Mount: A Guide* (Lynn 1897).
8. Archaeological Project Services (Heckington), Report No. 140/02, July 2002.
9. Beloe, Harrod, Hillen and others. See n. 35.
10. The National Archives (TNA), Records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PCC), TNA, PCC, PROB 11/8.
11. KLBA, Hall Book, KL/C7/4, 507.
12. D. Higgins, *The Antiquities of King's Lynn: From the Sketchbooks of the Rev Edwards* (Lynn 2001), 20. This drawing, in pencil and wash, is inscribed, 'Crypt or Chantry of the Red Mount opened 1828'.
13. NRO, DCN 2/1/70.
14. NRO, DCN 2/1/72.
15. NRO, DCN 2/1/73 and DCN 2/1/74. The financial returns to the Norwich priory for this year are split into two. From Michaelmas 1488 to Lady Day 1489 the offerings at the chapel amounted to £4 18s. 8d. and from Lady Day to Michaelmas 1489 to £16 9s. 3d. These figures are perhaps indicative of the comparative number of pilgrims travelling through Lynn during the winter and summer months.
16. W. Richards, *The History of Lynn*, I (Lynn 1812), 445.
17. NRO, DCN 2/1/76.
18. NRO, DCN 2/1/81. Total offerings at the chapel £21 18s. 4d.
19. J. Harvey, *English Medieval Architects: A Bibliographical Dictionary Down to 1550* (London 1984), 316–25; and W. Leedy, *Fan Vaulting: A Study of Form, Technology and Meaning* (London 1980), 176–78.
20. NRO, DCN 2/1/83.
21. NRO, DCN 2/1/82.
22. TNA, PCC, PROB 11/18.
23. KLBA, Mayoral Chronicle 1352–1597, Gd 85. Author unknown. The statue of our Lady of Walsingham was taken to London and publicly burnt.
24. KLBA, Chamberlain's Account 1570–71, KL/C48/2.
25. KLBA, Hall Book, 28 May 1572, KL/C7/7, fol. 60.
26. KLBA, Terrier of the Mayor and Burgesses estates 1577, KL/C48/2.
27. F. Grose, *The Antiquities of England and Wales*, IV (London 1783), 18–21.
28. KLBA, Chamberlain's Account, KL/C39/95, fol. 28, October 1586.
29. NRO, Catalogue of Mayors and Annual Occurrences, 1726, BL IIB/17. Written by John Green.
30. KLBA, Chamberlain's Account, KL/C39/97, fols 119–21, March to May 1608.
31. KLBA, Hall Book, KL/C7/10, fol.16.
32. E. Edwards, 'Some account of the Chapel of our Lady on the Mount, or Red Mount', in J. Britton, *The Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain*, III (London 1811), 66.
33. KLBA, letter dated 18 January 1810, Miscellaneous, not numbered.
34. E. Edwards, in Britton, *The Architectural Antiquities*, III, 61–66.

35. In 2002 archaeological investigations revealed remains of the passage and a small section of the perimeter wall. These were found to be of the same date as the main building. See Archaeological Project Services (Heckington), Report No. 140/02.

36. W. Taylor, *The Antiquities of King's Lynn, Norfolk* (Lynn 1844), 111–17, and *The Pictorial Guide to King's Lynn, Norfolk* (Lynn 1848), 49–54. H. Harrod, *Report on the Deeds & Records of the Borough of King's Lynn* (Lynn 1874), 49–53. E. Beloe, *Our Lady's Hill, Lynn and the Chapels thereon* (Norwich 1884), and *The Red Mount: A Guide* (Lynn 1897). H. Hillen, *History of the Borough of King's Lynn*, I (Norwich 1907), 207–13.

37. The main myth claims there is an underground passage leading from the chapel to Castle Rising. Any such passage, shortly after leaving the building, would have to pass under a river and would be over four miles in length! See H. Ingleby, *Lynn: Its Myths and Traditions* (Lynn 1925), 19–22.

38. E. Obbard, *The History and Spirituality of Walsingham* (Norwich 1995), 89.

39. E. Rose, 'The Red Mount Chapel and supposed motte and bailey', report of an inspection of the building held on 23 August 2000 with Edwin Rose, David Pitcher, Elizabeth James and Anthea Taigel (unpublished, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology 5478 King's Lynn).

40. R. Marks, *Image and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (London 2004), 203–04.

41. N. Pevsner, *B/E, North-West and South Norfolk* (London 1962, rep. 1990), 229.

The Former Nave and Choir Oak Furnishings, and the West End and South Porch Doors, at the Chapel of St Nicholas, King's Lynn

CHARLES TRACY

The high calibre of the master-carpenter engaged to work on the early-15th-century chapel-of-ease at St Nicholas, King's Lynn, is demonstrated by the installation of the first angel roof after Westminster Hall. The albeit fragmentary evidence of the ancient nave and choir oak furnishings is witness to the high calibre of the master-carver. Moreover, an harmonious and productive collaboration between master-carpenter and master-mason is evident in the planning and execution of the portals at the west end, and on the south-west side of the church, as well as in its other doors. The choir-stalls and nave oak pewing will be revisited in this paper, but it is the doors which take centre stage. They will be analysed in detail and placed in a regional and national context.

INTRODUCTION

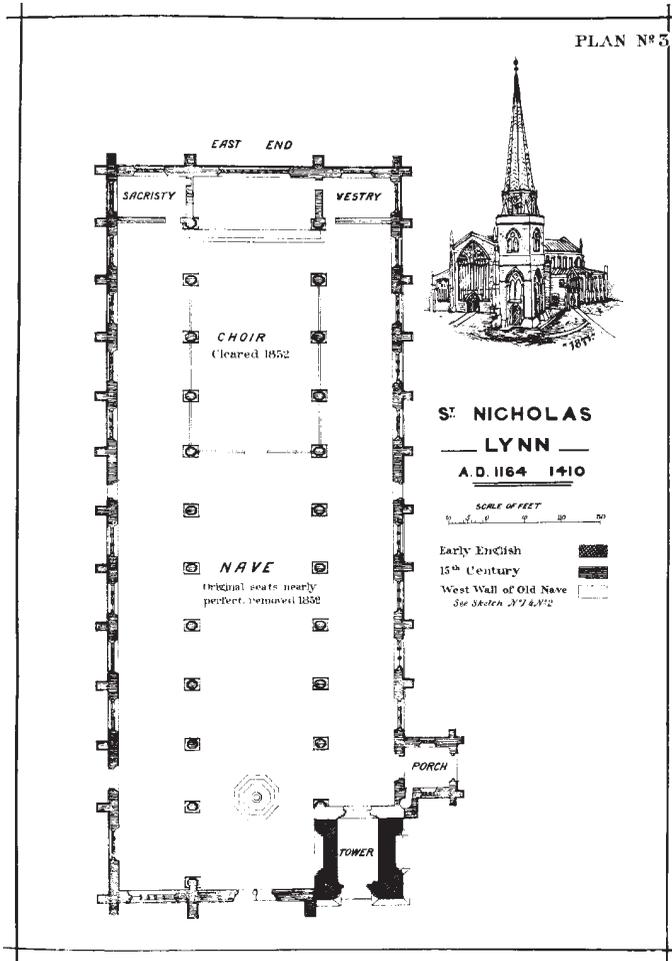
THE Chapel of St Nicholas, King's Lynn, was founded by William Turbe, Bishop of Norwich (1146–74), for the inhabitants of the *New Lande*, the area allocated for occupation north of the Purfleet. His chapel-of-ease was subsequently demolished, but a successor was erected, probably between 1200 and 1210, parts of the west end of which survive in the south-west angle of the existing chapel.¹ The present building was constructed in the early years of the 15th century, and completed around 1419.²

The principal focus of this paper is a discussion of the early-15th-century twin oak doors at the west end, and in the south porch. It will be stressed that both should be considered in the context of the architecturally and stylistically consistent character of this important late-medieval English building. In this connection, the outstandingly successful but quirky design of the open timber roof plays an integral part.³ By way of introduction to the main topic, the art-historical significance of the former choir fittings will be highlighted.

The Oak Benches and Choir-Stalls

A ground-plan sketch of the chapel, drawn by Kerrich in 1800, shows the original position of the vanished medieval rood-screen. It was located on the eastern side of the seventh bay from the west, that is immediately east of the cross passage between

the eastern pair of lateral doors. Another plan, which is based upon the situation before the wholesale reordering of 1852, shows the location of the rood-screen and medieval choir enclosure (Fig. 1).⁴ There is also an aquatint of the church interior, taken from half-way up the nave and dated 1808, by the local architect, Francis Goodman. It shows that already by that time much of the seating, including the banked-up Georgian pews facing west, which stood to the east of the old rood-screen, was centrally orientated, as one still finds in Dutch Lutheran churches.⁵ In the nave, however, only the front row of pews is shown as facing centrally. At Walpole St Peter, there are laterally-placed benches in the nave aisles, presumably representing a residue from an earlier Protestant ordering. In the 1808 St Nicholas aquatint, there is, regrettably, no evidence of the unique medieval desk-ends with semi-detached columns (Fig. 2), one of which is represented in the collection of discarded material at the Victoria and Albert Museum. None the less, Goodman does seem to be attempting to



represent the ancient front row of benches facing into the centre, which are still *in situ* today. The nave must have been fully pewed-out from the beginning. Beloe confirmed that the ancient material remained until the 1852 reordering, and that the ‘carved backs (were) still fairly perfect’, although they would have been hard to see, and must have been boxed-in by the Georgian pew sides. He regretted the ‘deplorable wrecking of a church’ by their removal.⁶ Mackerell simply informed us that ‘... here are two Ranges of Pews in the Middle or Body of the Chapel, besides others on the North and South sides, with two Galleries’.⁷

It was recorded that, before the reordering, the capacity of the nave, with its Georgian period augmentations, was 350 sitting places. Excluding the two galleries in the side aisles shown in Goodman’s earlier drawing, the original nave pew capacity would have been nearer 250. By contrast, at 1,400, the recorded number of worshippers at Easter Communion in 1426 is surprisingly high. It suggests that the regular seating capacity in the nave would have been quite inadequate on that occasion.⁸ It is interesting to note that on the same day the total of 1,600 communicants at St Margaret only topped St Nicholas by 200.⁹ This helps to explain the jealousies which thwarted the several appeals made by the chapelwardens at St Nicholas to the priory church for promotion to full parochial status in the 14th and 15th centuries.¹⁰

Most of the medieval oak furnishings were sold by the chapelwardens in 1852, and a few fragments were purchased by the Royal Architectural Museum, Westminster.¹¹ In the early 20th century, the Victoria and Albert Museum acquired most of this material.¹² Telling details on the fragments in the museum, and a few remains of the fitted furniture in the church today, are found in common. One of the stall/desk-ends displays a contemporary two-masted fighting and trading ship, and the other a single-masted vessel of a type current around c. 1400 (Fig. 3).¹³ Some of the stall ends display heraldic and bestiary creatures (Fig. 4).¹⁴

The six surviving misericords are of outstanding quality. One displays a gorged and chained leopard, with a merchant’s mark as one of the supporters, and on the other side a barrel and a hook (Fig. 5). Does this indicate that one of the donors of the furniture was a ship’s chandler? Another shows an ecclesiastic at prayer. There is also the often-illustrated image of a master-carver seated at his bench, with his dog at his feet, designing with the aid of dividers and a square, while two apprentices are busily carving on the left, and another brings a jug (Fig. 6).¹⁵ William Taylor illustrated these in 1844, but it is clear that by that date the few medieval stalls that had survived must have been in a mutilated and altered state.¹⁶ His tipped-in pencil drawing of the chancel ‘Carved Seat’ in the illustrated copy of B. Mackerell’s *Historic King’s Lynn*, published in 1738, indicates that the panelled backing in the background had been made up from at least one of these misericords.¹⁷ As he informed us:

The misereres or moveable seats have been moved from their original situation and used as ornamental panels, mixed with modern carving, to form a sort of screen at the back of the stalls.

It is a considerable puzzle that only six misericords survive, given that there must originally have been around fifty choir-stalls. It is clear that by 1808 the choir area had been comprehensively reordered, and most of the choir-stalls and misericords destroyed or dispersed. Mackerell’s mid-18th-century account makes no mention of them. However, the graffito date of 1775 on the back of one of the surviving misericords may suggest that the misericords were still in place in Mackerell’s day, and possibly narrows down the date bracket for their effective destruction to

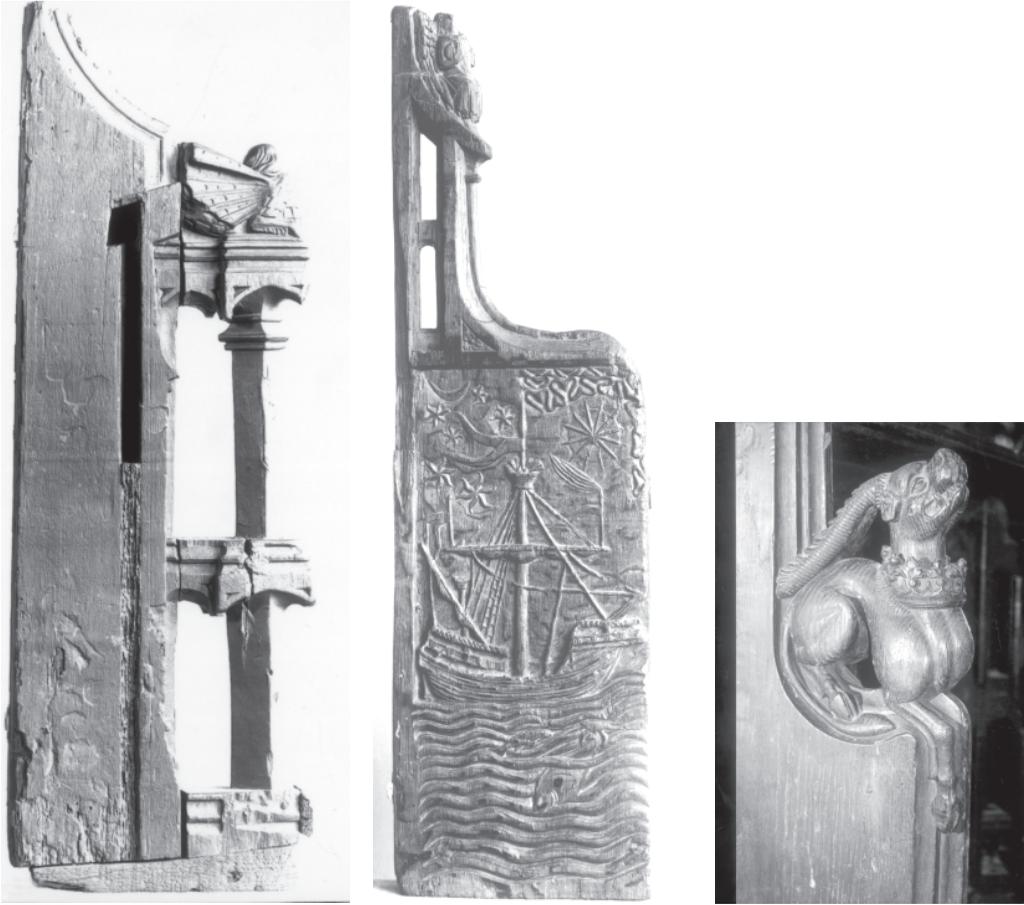


FIG. 2 (*above left*). Victoria and Albert Museum. Fragment of a desk-end from St Nicholas, King's Lynn, in the form of a semi-detached column surmounted by a winged creature (W.9-1921)

Victoria and Albert Museum Picture Library

FIG. 3 (*centre*). Victoria and Albert Museum. Portion of a stall-end from St Nicholas, King's Lynn, displaying two-masted ship (W.16-1921)

Victoria and Albert Museum Picture Library

FIG. 4 (*above right*). St Nicholas, King's Lynn: desk-end with gorged yale

Photograph: C. Tracy

1775-1808. If so, this would explain why the Royal Architectural Museum's acquisitions some fifty or so years later included only six misericords and two fragments of choir-stalls.¹⁸ It also suggests why in this residue there is a massive preponderance of pew furniture.

The 'carved seats', which Taylor depicted, are now located in the sanctuary. According to Beloe, they had been the desks of the choir-stalls on either side of the



FIG. 5. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: misericord from former choir-stalls with gorged and chained leopard (W.6-1921)

Victoria and Albert Museum Picture Library



FIG. 6. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: misericord from former choir-stalls with master-carpenter seated at bench (W.54-1921)

Victoria and Albert Museum Picture Library

choir entrance.¹⁹ Given the importance of the iconography on their poppy-heads (see below), it is very possible that the four desk-ends originate from the choir-stalls. However, whereas the desk-ends are authentic, the traceried desk-fronts of the 'carved seats' appear to be 19th century. According to Taylor's drawing, the desks acted as clergy seating, and stood east of the main block of congregational pews.

The iconography of the carved inset panels on the poppy-heads of these four remaining ancient desk-ends is amongst the most unusual in England. The poppy-head design is quite different from the typical East Anglian type, with its characteristic trilobate shape, although there were plenty of these also amongst the St Nicholas woodwork. In most cases the stall desk-ends consist of a crocketed concave disc (Figs 7-14), containing some standard, but mostly rather recondite, subject matter.²⁰ The crowned figure of the Virgin of the Apocalypse is seated on a throne, with the infant Jesus on her lap (Fig. 7). He reaches out to the left to lift a scroll. She has the rays of the sun behind her, and is placed on a crescent moon with clouds below. There is the figure of St John the Baptist, with one hand on the lamb and the other, surprisingly, on a leather-bound book (Fig. 8).

Another carving displays the image of an ape riding an unidentified clawed quadruped backwards (Fig. 9). It is reminiscent of an ape riding a goat backwards, known to have featured on both the stall paintings, formerly thought to have been of late-12th-century manufacture, but now redated to c. 1230-50, and the extant painted nave ceiling at Peterborough Abbey (Fig. 10).²¹ Either or both of these could have been the inaccurately interpreted source for the King's Lynn carver. The image was also used in the late-13th-century Peterborough Psalter in Brussels, and in a psalter in the Oxford, Bodleian Library (MS Douce 131), c. 1325-35.²² Ruth Mellinkoff stressed that the ape sometimes represented the devil, but could also symbolize 'the sinner, the Fall of Man, avarice, sloth, carnal love, and a host of other vices'.²³ Apes may also refer to the Jews, the Old Testament of the Synagogue, and 'they are usually mounted on disagreeable creatures', such as an ass or goat.²⁴ These carvings must have been often designed to depict the humiliating medieval *skimmington ride*, when an unfortunate object of popular derision and hate was seated backwards on his or her mount and, like the King's Lynn ape, had nothing else to hang on with other than the animal's tail.²⁵



FIG. 7. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: desk-end poppy-head with Virgin of the Apocalypse
Photograph: C. Tracy



FIG. 8. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: desk-end poppy-head with St John Baptist
Photograph: C. Tracy



FIG. 9 (left). St Nicholas, King's Lynn: desk-end poppy-head with ape riding a clawed quadruped backwards
Photograph: C. Tracy

FIG. 10 (below). Peterborough Cathedral: painted nave ceiling. Image of ape riding a goat backwards
Photograph: H. H. Harrison



A particularly opaque subject at King's Lynn is the devil or wild man with a boar on his back, possibly with his feet in the stocks (Fig. 11). The carving is doubly difficult to interpret as it is damaged on the right-hand side. None the less, at top right there appears to be the figure of a vested bishop with crozier, and possibly the bust of another figure above him. By 1420 the vigorous cult of St Nicholas was already more than half a millenium old. If this carving depicts an event from his *vita*, it is a very obscure one. The poppy-head containing the figure of a haloed wimpled female, placed against clouds and an aureole seems to offer little more to go on (Fig. 12). However, the general shape of the badly damaged carving suggests that it may have represented the late-medieval cult of the Virgin and St Anne, in which the latter is shown standing behind her daughter, who in turn holds the Christ child on her lap.

The figure of a haloed bishop with crozier may represent St Nicholas, patron saint of sailors, merchants and of this chapel (Fig. 13). Apparently standing on a platform at left are human figures, which could stand either for the rescued sailors or the three boys raised to life after they were murdered. Another subject is probably the most



FIG. 11. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: desk-end poppy-head showing devil with boar on back in the stocks (?)

Photograph: C. Tracy



FIG. 12. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: desk-end poppy-head with nimbed and wimpled female, probably holding something in her now mutilated hands, and a bird in the apex of the arch above

Photograph: C. Tracy

opaque of all. It is the clawed quadruped displaying its rectum to a shaggy humanoid, who reads from a scroll, which winds itself around the top of the carved disc (Fig. 14). Malcolm Jones has described it as a purely grotesque human depiction.²⁶ As for his mount, the animal is difficult to identify. The carving seems to represent an anthropoid physician, consulting a medical text, and about to administer an enema to the accommodating quadruped. The objects on the table behind may be urine flasks.

Finally, in this catalogue of extraordinary carvings, there is the representation of a sage in a whelk shell, stroking his beard, with an empty scroll to left and bound reeds to right (Fig. 15). This image seems to be of the 'Monstrous Races' type, discussed by Jones in his thesis.²⁷ Seven occurrences of it were recorded on English misericords by Mary Anderson.²⁸ They vary from a child issuing from a whelk shell (Bishop Tunstall's chapel, Durham Castle), a dragon attacking a winged figure emerging



FIG. 13. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: desk-end poppy-head, probably showing a seated nimbed bishop, formerly holding a crozier in his left hand. Behind are clouds and an aureole, whilst at bottom left appears to be a platform on which human figures are standing

Photograph: C. Tracy



FIG. 14. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: desk-end poppy-head displaying anthropoid holding a scroll on right, and unidentified quadruped with tail in the air on left

Photograph: C. Tracy

from a conch shell (Nantwich), to a hooded pilgrim rising out of a shell (Norwich Cathedral). By coincidence there is another example of this conceit on a stone corbel under the vaulting of the tower in the Greyfriars' church at King's Lynn. On it is depicted a tonsured friar emerging from a whelk-type shell, who presents a jug of wine and a loaf of bread. Behind him is a junior clerical assistant with a sack on one shoulder. Jones traces the conceit back to a South German manuscript in the Vatican Library (Pal. lat. 291) of Hrabanus Maurus's *Encyclopedia de res naturis*, dating to 1425, in which on fol. 75v 'the torso of [a] small human figure appears to emerge, hands upraised, from a conical coil which was probably intended for a hole in the ground'.²⁹ He argues that there must have been a misunderstanding of the classical Latin word *caule* in the phrase of the original text 'sub uno caule', whose meaning has been transferred from the seven pygmies who could rest beneath a single 'stem or stalk', to those who could (emerge) from the plural form *caulae*, an 'opening, hole or passage'. The conical host depicted in the Maurus manuscript before long appears to have been transmuted into a marine shell, complete on the St Nicholas's poppy-head with turbulent water, a fish and reeds.

The West and the South Porch Doors, and their Architectural Setting

THE pair of doors at the west end are set below the plain mullioned window (Fig. 16). They are enclosed by a two-tiered central arch hood moulding with prominent human heads as label-stops. The handsome stone frame is supported on a central trumeau, and is surmounted by an image niche, now empty. The tops of the arches of both doors have cusped aedicular-shaped archivolt decoration in the form of a stilted arch. There are iron hinges positioned on each side of the stone framing of the doors, presumably to hang protective external gates, though it is unlikely these were an original feature. There are also complementary mortises at the base of the trumeau. A mid-20th-century photograph shows a pair of outer gates of modern manufacture still in use. The door framing rises about 1,500 mm higher than the base of the west window. The capping of the west wall is forced up in two steps to accommodate it. Both sets of spandrels contain blank shields.

Each door is 3,400 mm high (maximum), 1,350 mm wide, and 70 mm deep (the tracery adds a further 45 mm of thickness (Figs 17, 18). The laminated construction is of three layers, held together with iron nails. On the east side the door is surrounded by a frame, within which are bevel-mortised horizontal boards, crossed with vertical pieces, not halved but fixed on with nails. In the centre is a stout board. There are two hinges on each side, with straps decorated with incised lozenges and punchwork.

The applied traceried decoration on the external elevation is triangular in shape, since it accommodates the unusual soffit decoration of the subsidiary stone arches (Fig. 16). It consists of five vertical bays, punctuated by prominent moulded and studded mullions. On the outside there are two tiers for figures, originally running down to the ground. All but two of the original carvings, both on the south side, have disappeared, and one of these has lost its head (Fig. 19). Above each was a miniature tilted and vaulted canopy. The details of the carving are hard to make out, due to the build-up of paint layers. The three central panels are undecorated for half of their height, but then feature cusped and crocketed gablets with statuary niches above. The central gablet springs from a slightly higher level than the two flanking gablets. Above is a base, from which a taller image housing rises. This is surmounted by a finial,



FIG. 15. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: desk-end poppy-head with sage stroking his beard in a whelk shell, which appears to be floating in water

Photograph: C. Tracy



FIG. 16. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: west portal. Exterior elevation

Photograph: C. Tracy

which rises almost to the apex of the stone arch. Along with the small niches at the sides, it seems likely that all three of these large image compartments at the top of the door originally contained figures. At present three out of four are filled with rather unconvincing-looking finials. The whole composition in oak complements the crisp stone cusping of the door framing.

It has long been felt that the reconstruction of St Nicholas, sometime during the first two decades of the 15th century, was in part cocking a snook at the priory church of St Margaret at the other end of the town. The early-13th-century chapel-of-ease was almost completely rebuilt, only a tower being retained and incorporated into the south-west angle of the new chapel. The sheer size and architectural novelty of this building would have drawn attention to itself. But ornament was also skilfully deployed around the angles of the chapel closest to the Tuesday Market Place — its south and west faces. The stone façade of the two-storey south porch contains, below the gable, an eye-catching zone of low-relief tracery, of a type perhaps more suited for use on an oak chest. It is one of the finest of its kind in England (Fig. 20). The stone lierne vault and oak double entrance doors of the interior, discussed below,

0 200 400 600 800mm

NOTE: due to excessive build-up of overpaint (up to 9mm in places) and decay where surface has been exposed, some of the finer carving detail has of necessity been interpreted and may therefore be conjectural.

March 2003.

note re-used canopy laminates in two side niches where figures missing

replacement lower rail and weathering?

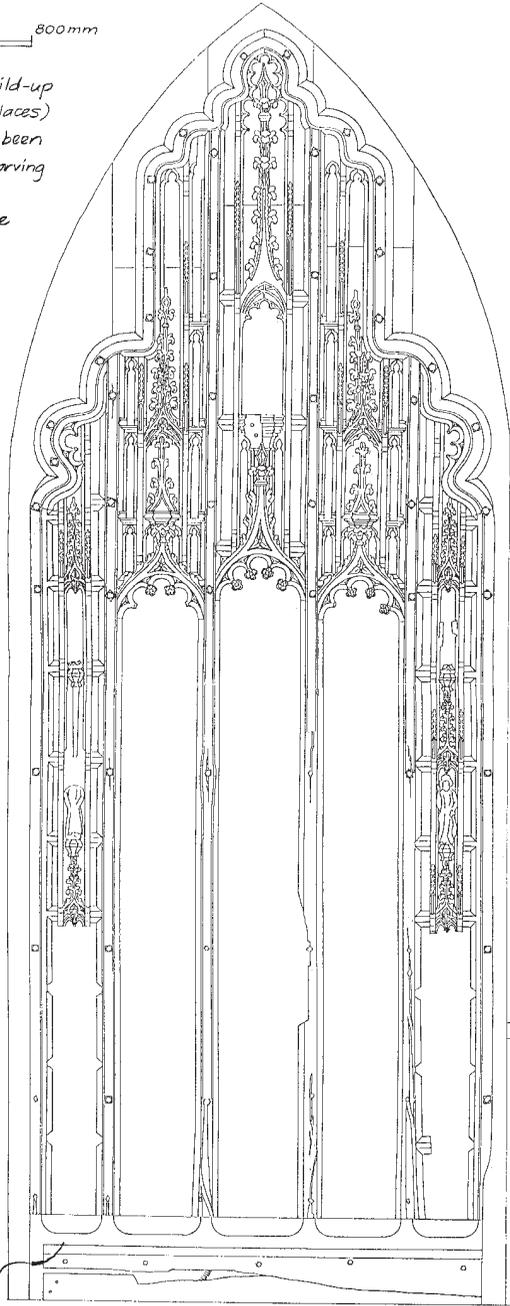


FIG. 17. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: west portal doors. External elevation of south door. Measured drawing by Peter Ferguson

Photograph: H. H. Harrison

Nave and Choir at the Chapel of St Nicholas

0 200 400 600 800mm

NOTE: strap hinges decorated with daisy motifs and double cross banding - see drawing 5.

March 2003.

Overall dimensions of door 3520 X 1340mm.

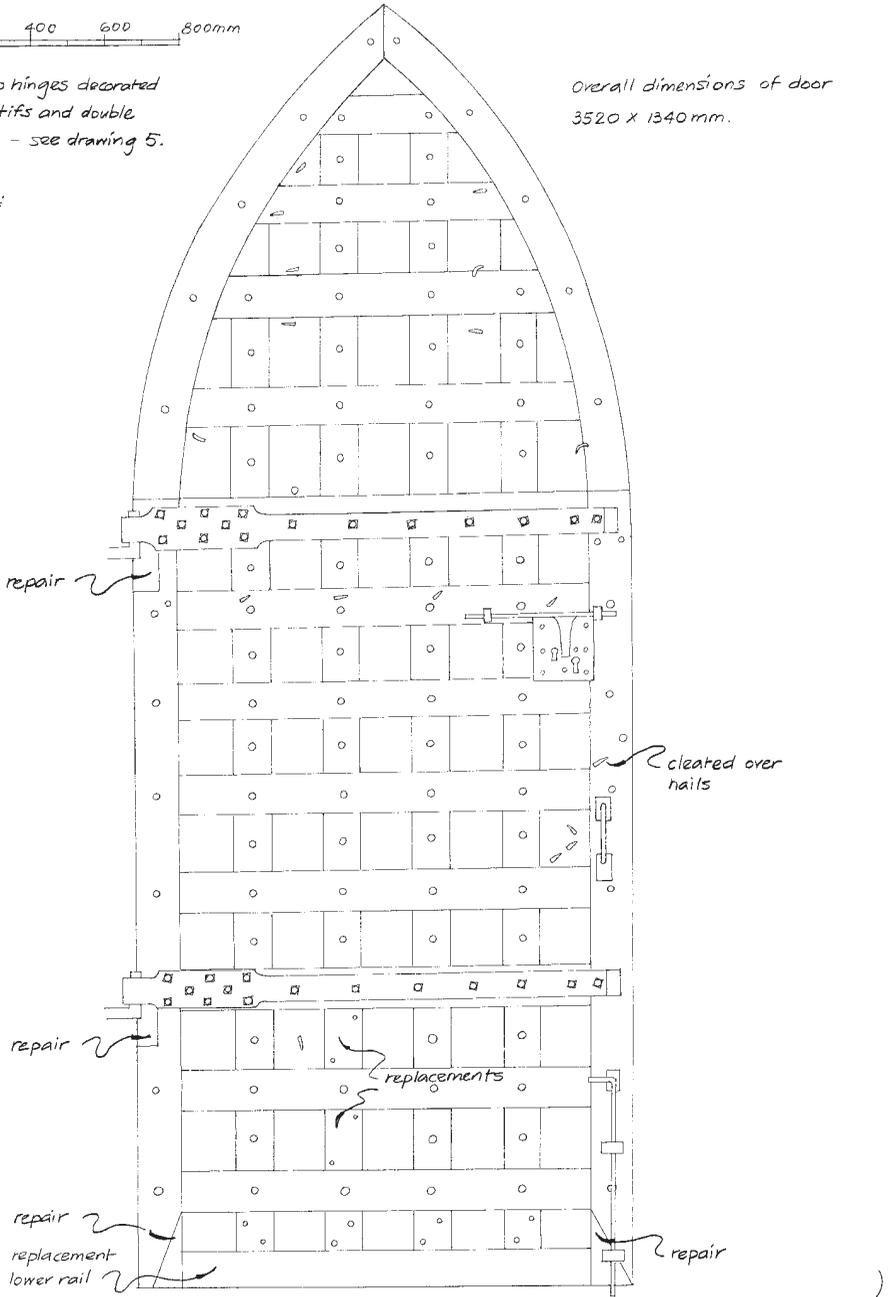


FIG. 18. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: west portal doors. Internal elevation of south side door.
Measured drawing by Peter Ferguson

Photograph: H. H. Harrison

complement its showy façade, while the west front was clearly designed to look impressive from a distance. In spite of St Nicholas's relatively humble status, the exceptional design of its twin west doors, and the way that their framing daringly breaks above the sill of the west window, would alone have ensured that it asserted itself in the public mind.³⁰

The excessively stilted arch of the stone soffit decoration is echoed on the external elevation of the door at the north-west end of the nave (Fig. 21). This conceit, as well as the raising up of the frontispiece itself into the window space, is highly unusual. Taken in combination with the window tracery,³¹ these doors were doubtless in Pevsner's mind when he referred to the details at St Nicholas as 'wilful'. Their character does not seem to compare to Flemish doorways, as one might perhaps suppose, given Lynn's historically intimate connections with the Low Countries. At the same time, there are no west-end compositions which behave quite like this in England. The only comparable stilted arch which comes to mind is the side window of the Chapter House vestibule at Westminster Abbey of *c.* 1300 (Fig. 22).

The continuation of the outer lights of the west window downwards to create a stepped outline around the door is a characteristically Perpendicular attempt to give priority to the window — as instanced in the Fromond Chantry at Winchester College of *c.* 1425–37. The master mason seems to have wanted to emulate the grand double



FIG. 19. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: west portal doors. Single figure under niche on south door

Photograph: C. Tracy

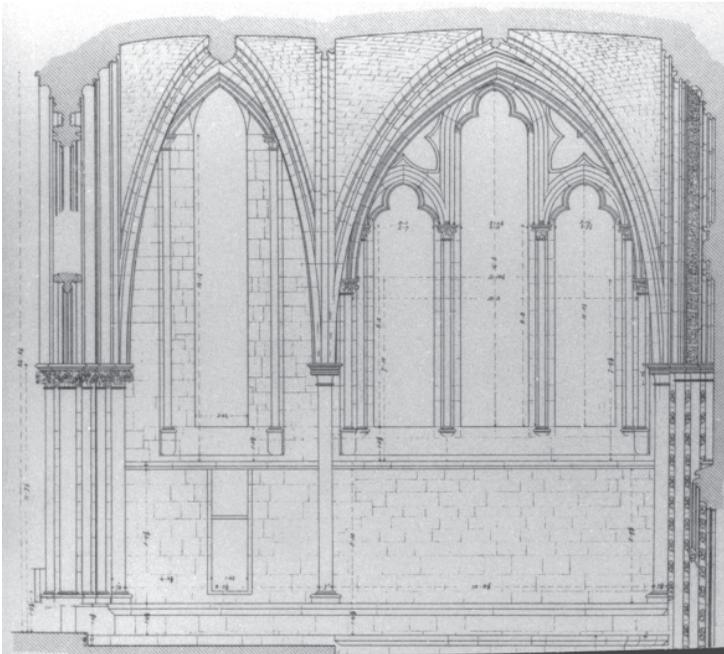


FIG. 20 (above left).
St Nicholas, King's
Lynn: south-west porch
façade

Photograph: C. Tracy

FIG. 21 (above
right). St Nicholas,
King's Lynn: door at
north-west end of nave

Photograph: C. Tracy

FIG. 22 (left).
Westminster Abbey
chapter-house: window
tracery in vestibule.
From
19th-century print

doors of the Galilee Porch at the west end of Ely Cathedral, c. 1200, with their stone-cusped framing (Fig. 23). But also he tried to recreate the interplay between frame and door, achieved on the early-12th-century Monks' Door at Ely (Fig. 24), or perhaps the early-14th-century west door at Cley, Norfolk (Fig. 25). In the last two cases the stone cusped framing is far bolder than that at Ely, and sets up the interesting ambivalence between figure and ground that we find at St Nicholas. At King's Lynn the aesthetic rationalization of the inherently ugly stone stilted arch of the door framing is to draw the eye through to the all-important back plane of an exceptionally sophisticated entrance, which is multi-layered on both the horizontal and vertical axis. It ensures that the ultimate focus is on the pair of exquisitely traceried oak doors, which are fitting portals for a new kind of church.

The five minor doors on the north and south sides of the church display a bewildering range of segmental, two-centred incurving, straight-sided polygonal and round-arched profiles. They are somewhat old-fashioned in appearance, recalling the mature Decorated style of the mid-14th century, as at the cathedral and St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol. At the same time, the vestry door in the chancel (Fig. 26), is reminiscent of Elsing (Norfolk), with its albeit ogee rather than segmental profile (Fig. 27). Both of these hoods finish with a simple right-angle turn, but on two of the minor doors at King's Lynn the label-stops are somewhat out of scale, like the ones at the west end.

The St Nicholas west front entailed close collaboration between master-mason and master-carpenter. One of the cardinal features of the design is the use of a trumeau. These were a feature of East Anglian west fronts, as we have already seen in the Ely Galilee porch, or at the west end of the parish church at West Walton.³² However, in its pretension the St Nicholas frontispiece recalls the framing of the cloister doors at St Albans Abbey, of a decade or so earlier, a design which may be attributed to Henry Yevele (Fig. 28).³³ The latter is one of the most important of its period in England, and it is undoubtedly to this milieu — the type of architecture created by designers associated with the court — that St Nicholas looks. Door frames at the west end of East Anglian parish churches usually sit neatly under the window, as for instance at Worstead (Fig. 29), Redenhall and Salle (all Norfolk), or Earl Stonham and Lavenham in Suffolk, and although double doors do occasionally turn up in parish churches, as at nearby West Walton (Norfolk), they remained rare (Fig. 30). Moreover, the decoration of doors in East Anglia invariably conforms to the uncusped profile of the stone frame. The south porch door of St Lawrence, Harpley (Norfolk, Fig. 31), is a nice example, where bands of figures are arranged under arches as on the St Nicholas west doors, though once above the springing they follow the curve of the arch.

The broader context for fancy and figured doors in East Anglian parish churches is as yet little studied. At St Gregory, Sudbury and St Mary, Boxford (Suffolk), both south doors are framed with decorative bands. At Sudbury they are surmounted by echelons of gablets. Most East Anglian church doors contain little or no figurative carving. One rare exception is the south door of St Mary, Stoke, by Nayland (Suffolk), with a *Tree of Jesse* and figures of the *Ancestors of Christ*. Also at Harpley there are eight figures of saints and, on the wicket, the emblems of St Luke and St John. A careful census might elicit further examples of such iconography in East Anglia, and perhaps ultimately contribute to a nationwide study of this phenomenon.³⁴

A final thought on the intrusion of the door frame into the west window, and whether it constituted a piece of 'one-upmanship' aimed at St Margaret's. The dating

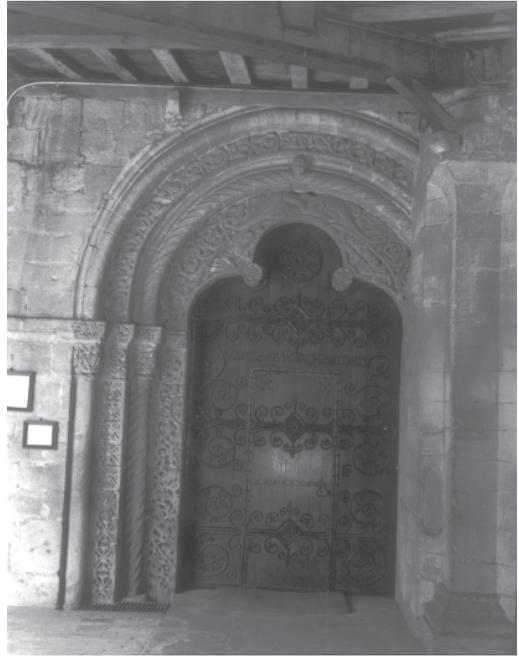


FIG. 23 (*above left*). Ely Cathedral:
west side of cathedral entrance from
Galilee porch
Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art

FIG. 24 (*above right*). Ely Cathedral:
monk's door in north-east corner of
cloister
Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art

FIG. 25 (*left*). Cley-next-the-Sea
Church, Norfolk: west doorway
Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art.
Photograph: courtesy R. K. Morris



FIG. 26. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: interior elevation of vestry door in south-east corner of chancel

Photograph: C. Tracy



FIG. 27. Elsing Church, Norfolk: door detail
Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art.

Photograph: courtesy R. K. Morris

of the west porch in the priory church is uncertain. A prominent crenellated parapet raises the west porch above the springing line of the original 13th-century windows. This feature must have been built before the west front at St Nicholas. The porch at St Margaret's seems to be part of the 13th-century campaign. Above this, there would presumably have risen tall lancet windows. Their sills would have lined up with the string-course still visible at the base of the triple lancets on the extant 12th-century south tower.³⁵ The sill of the present Perpendicular window is lower than this, and the parapet of the porch has been built up with panels of tracery and battlementing above. Thus the priory frontispiece appears to be doing something similar to that at St Nicholas. Is this more than coincidence?

SOUTH PORCH DOORS

AS a pendant to the west doors, the oak double-doors in the south porch at St Nicholas need to be considered (Fig. 32). They incorporate an ingenious double wicket opening. At 3295 mm, they are almost as high as the west doors, 1855 mm wide and

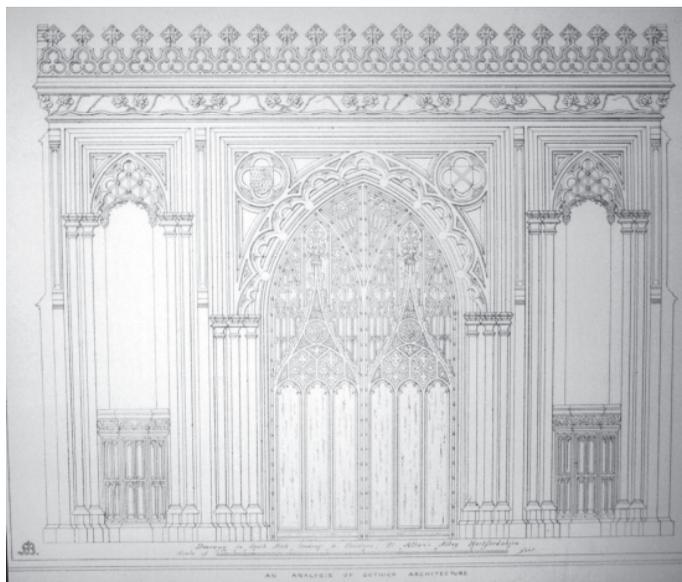


FIG. 28. St Albans Abbey: interior elevation of the cloister door. Drawing by R. Brandon, in his *An Analysis of Gothic architecture* (London 1847), section I, pl. 1

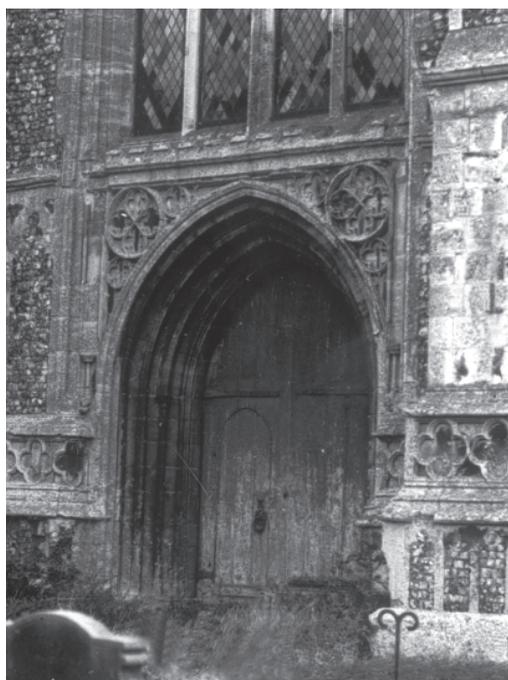


FIG. 29. Worstead Church, Norfolk: west end
Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art.
Photograph: courtesy C. Wilson



FIG. 30. West Walton, Norfolk: west end portal
Crown Copyright. NMR



FIG. 31. Harpley Church, Norfolk: west door

Crown Copyright. NMR

115 mm deep. The construction is also similar, with a network of rectangular posts at the back, an inner core and applied tracery to the front.³⁶

As is the case here, in East Anglia door frames are usually integrated within a three-dimensional flint or limestone set-piece porch design, as can also be seen on the south side at Boxford (Suffolk), or Pulham St Mary (Norfolk).³⁷ The porches of parish churches are mostly later additions, and never had truly external timber doors. Being publicly accessible, they were designed to accommodate the liturgical rites of weddings, the opening ceremonies of the baptism service, oath taking, as well as many secular activities, although, as a chapel-of-ease, some of these activities would not have taken place at St Nicholas.³⁸

The south porch doors are divided by applied tracery mullions into four vertical panels, which are overlaid by fictive blind tracery, with complex canopies emerging higher up. The design of the upper portion is extremely sophisticated, and prefigures the most progressive elements of 15th-century English Perpendicular choir-stall and tomb canopywork. As with the west doors, the sides of the front face are articulated by canopied image niches. Here all the figures are gone. But, given the absence of cusping around the door frame, the image niches continue around the curve of the arch, as at Harpley (Fig. 31). The St Nicholas design is more highly developed, however, with a regular grid of mullions, and decorated and embattled transoms. The

outer containing arches curving off from the vertical, recall the window fenestration of the church. On the other hand the tracery on the door is full of variety, betraying a backward glance to stylistic conventions of the 14th century, typical of much early-15th-century English church furniture. For instance, Bishop Wakering's choir-stalls at Norwich Cathedral, of *c.* 1420, are also a carpet of intricate design, although more old-fashioned than this door.³⁹ The St Nicholas design certainly brings other features of 15th-century English choir-stalls to mind, for instance the precocious inclusion of tipped-up vaulted gablets, blind tracery and variable height finials (Fig. 33), that we know to have existed on the lost York Minster furniture, *c.* 1425.⁴⁰ At St Nicholas the design increases in complexity as it ascends. The bottom zone is plain, after which tracery is introduced with the first layer of canopies. The pairs of canopies beside the wicket developing into finialled high-relief tabernacles (Fig. 33). At the summit, two more tabernacles crown the centre of the door. The placing of the double wicket is handled deftly, the arch of the inner door interfering as little as possible in the grand design. It uses a flattened crocketed ogee arch for the door head (Fig. 34).

The figures on this arch, and the arch itself, are mostly early-19th-century restoration. At that time the door must have been comprehensively restored. The drapery and foliage, as well as the postures of the figures, are clearly modern. Why so many have lost their heads is hard to say, especially as the figures were carved in the solid with the arch. It appears that the heads were glued on and that some of the joints have failed. The woodwork has been darkened down to camouflage the considerable patchings and renewals, recognizable from the sharpness of the mouldings. Only a standing archaeological survey of the door would reveal just how much of this is restoration work.⁴¹ However, there is no doubting the authenticity of the overall design. It is perhaps surprising to find that lay people are depicted. Angels rest on the ogee arch on the tomb of Bishop Roger Mortival (1315–30) at Salisbury Cathedral (Fig. 35). Although this celebrated monument might conceivably have inspired the King's Lynn restorer, the conceit of attaching reclining angels to the sides of an arch instead of foliate crockets can be cited elsewhere, for instance, approximately coevally at Felmersham, Bedfordshire.⁴²

As in the cloister entrance at St Albans, the protection offered by its sheltered position allowed the designers of the St Nicholas south porch door to give decoration as high a priority as functionality. Judging from the extreme rarity of surviving examples, English patrons seem to have been reluctant to commission elaborately sculptured and decorated external doors.

SUMMARY

IN spite of their inconspicuousness today, it is clear that the ancient choir and nave furniture at St Nicholas, King's Lynn, was of considerable originality. The high quality and art-historical importance of the west end and south porch doors is still for all to see.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the Churches Conservation Trust for giving me access to the building, and allowing me to take photographs. Also to Nick Humphrey for facilitating access to the Victoria and



FIG. 32. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: exterior elevation of south porch doors
Photograph: C. Tracy



FIG. 33. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: exterior elevation of south porch doors. Detail of upper part (on west side at top right), showing crested transoms, canopy 'roof' ribbing, variable height finials and applied 'flying' buttresses
Photograph: C. Tracy



FIG. 34. St Nicholas, King's Lynn: exterior elevation of south porch doors. Detail of upper part of west door
Photograph: C. Tracy



FIG. 35. Salisbury Cathedral: monument to Bishop Mortival (1315–30)
Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art

Albert Museum Blythe Road store. The architect of St Nicholas, Julian Limentani, initially brought my attention to the importance of the west doors in 2002, by commissioning a report on their art-historical status. My thanks also to Hugh Harrison, Malcolm Jones, John A. A. Goodall, and David Pitcher and for their help and advice.

NOTES

1. E. M. Beloe, sen., *Our Borough, Our Churches* (Cambridge 1899), 135–36.
2. *Ibid.*, 150–51.
3. E. James and M. Begley, ‘St Nicholas’ Chapel, King’s Lynn, Norfolk’, *The Churches Conservation Trust*, Series 4, no. 28.
4. For T. Kerrich’s sketch plan, see BL Add. MS 6753, fol. 102. Mackerell seems to imply that the rood-screen was in place in 1738; see B. Mackerell, *History and Antiquities of the Flourishing Corporation of King’s Lynn* (London 1738). The pre-1852 printed ground-plan (Fig. 1) was published by Beloe. See his *Our Borough*, Plan No. 3, facing p. 136. The purpose of the reordering is not really clear. Richards noted that it was to increase the seating capacity of the nave from 350 to 800. Perhaps, simultaneously, the galleries were removed. See P. Richards, *King’s Lynn* (Chichester 1990), 101. Some of these galleries are visible in Goodman’s aquatint of 1808. See F. Goodman, ‘Internal view of the Chapel of St Nicholas, King’s Lynn, Norfolk’ (1818), BL Maps K. Top.31.29.g. James and Begley stressed that the real but unacknowledged problem was the lack of *free* seating, the exigencies of the pew rent system and the desertion of the congregation to the Nonconformist chapels in the town. Accordingly, the reordering, whilst satisfying the needs of the pew-holders, did not address the clamour for more free seats, whose numbers were stuck at 200. See James and Begley, *St Nicholas*, 13–14. With the abolition of the chapels in the side aisles after the Reformation, all of the early parclose screenwork was lost.
5. Mackerell mentioned that the screen stood ‘upon an Ascent, to which are joined commodious seats presumably on the west side for the magistrates of the town and other Persons of Distinction’. This sounds similar to the early-17th-century arrangement at St Margaret’s.
6. Beloe, *Our Borough*, 153.
7. Mackerell, *History and Antiquities*, 96.
8. Richards, *King’s Lynn*, 88, where he also gives the attendance figure for St James at 900.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Beloe, 140–49.
11. *Catalogue of the Royal Architectural Museum* (1877), 52–53.
12. H. Clifford Smith, *Victoria and Albert Museum Department of Woodwork, Catalogue of English Furniture and Woodwork, Victoria and Albert Museum* (London 1988), cat nos 158–83. A few items of the original woodwork remain in the church, mainly pew and desk fronts, made up into benches. The side aisles of the chancel area are provided with four benches facing inwards, with mainly authentic pew or desk-ends. Each bench has a different style of pew or desk-end, poppy-head and desk front tracery. Also the width of the bays of the desk fronts varies considerably. The benches are in different stages of restoration, and two of the desk-ends are of entirely modern manufacture. Another complete pew/desk front can be found in the Consistory Court at the north-west end of the nave. The latter is for the most part a ‘mish-mash’, made up in total from seven old pew/stall ends of little structural, although considerable historical, interest. Its significance for furniture history is that the process of cannibalizing the chapel’s seating appears to have been established from at least as early as 1617. For a description of the function of this designated administrative enclave within the church, see Mackerell, *History and Antiquities*, 97.
13. Victoria and Albert Museum accession nos W.6–1916 and W.16–1921.
14. Tracy, *English Medieval Furniture and Woodwork* (London 1988), cat nos 161–66.
15. The surviving misericords with their museum acquisition numbers are as follows: gorged and chained leopard, with on the left a merchant’s mark, and on the right a barrel and a hook, each in ribbon letters (W.6–1921) (Fig. 4); ecclesiastic, apparently the donor, kneeling at prayer. He is vested in a long full surplice, hood and round cap. On the left is a twisted ribbon in the shape of the letter ‘B’, enclosing an eagle displayed, and on the right a ‘Y’ with a pod, probably the donor’s device (W.9–1921); a falcon grasping a rabbit, and on either side a pomegranate (W.10–1921); a stag pursued by hounds. On the left is a hunting horn, on the right a crossbow, each in ribbon letters (W.11–1921); a lion crouching; on either side a rose. On the back are cut the words: ‘W. H. Hubbard, March 19 1775’, and the letters ‘E, P., 1769’ (W. 12–1921); a master-carver

seated at his bench, a dog at his feet, designing with the aid of dividers and square, while two apprentices are busily carving on the left, and another brings a jug. In the background is a completed tracery-head, also two lengths of cresting, fret-cut but not carved, also a plank. On the left the letter 'W' and a fret-saw, and on the right the letter 'V' and a gouge (W.54-1921) (Fig. 5).

16. W. Taylor, *Antiquities of King's Lynn, Norfolk* (King's Lynn 1844), pl. facing p. 72.

17. Mackerell, *History and Antiquities*, facing p. 112. The misericord visible on the back panelling is Victoria and Albert Museum acquisition no. W.12-1921.

18. One of the two surviving standards with characteristically rebated internal quadrants is Victoria and Albert Museum acquisition no. W.60-1921. See Tracy, *English Medieval Furniture*, cat. no. 178. A recent examination of the collection has highlighted two unusual technical traits. First, nails are liberally used to secure joints. Secondly, in some cases, the fronts of the misericord carvings have been laminated on to the body of the object, see *ibid.*, pls 28, 29. In the catalogue there are thirty-two items, relating to acquisitions in 1916 and 1921. It is an unrepresentative collection, given the paucity of misericords and the almost total lack of stall seating. There are three different types of conventionally designed bench-ends, which incorporate some high-quality, if not mutilated, carving.

19. Beloe, *Our Borough*, 155, pl. 34.

20. Another of the posited choir-stall desk-end poppy-heads, bearing the arms of the town of Lynn is preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum. See Tracy, *English Medieval Furniture*, cat. no. 167.

21. P. Binski, 'The painted nave ceiling of Peterborough Abbey', in *The Medieval English Cathedral. Papers in Honour of Pamela Tudor-Craig. Proceedings of the Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. J. Backhouse (Donington 2003), 61-62. The later dating of the Peterborough Abbey stall paintings was first suggested by Lucy Freeman Sandler in 'Peterborough Abbey and the Peterborough Psalter', *JBAA*, 33 (1970), pp. 36-49.

22. L. Freeman Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts 1285-1385* (Oxford 1986), cat. nos 40, 106. It is also found in the Macclesfield Psalter, Fitzwilliam Museum MS 1-2005.

23. R. Mellinkoff, 'Riding backwards: theme of humiliation and symbol of evil', *Viator*, 4 (1973), 169. For apes in medieval art, see also H. W. Janson, *Apes and Ape Lore in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (London 1952).

24. Mellinkoff, *Riding Backwards*, 170.

25. M. Jones, *The Secret Middle Ages. Discovering the Real Medieval World* (Stroud 2002), 97-99. The author cites four examples of backwards-riding on misericords in Britain.

26. M. Jones, pers. comm.

27. M. Jones, 'The iconography and design-sources of the Beverley Minster misericords' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Plymouth, 1991).

28. At Durham Castle, Leintwardine, Nantwich, Chester Cathedral, Manchester Cathedral and Lincoln Cathedral. See G. L. Remnant (with an introduction by L. M. D. Anderson), *A Catalogue of Misericords of Great Britain* (Oxford 1969), 41, no. 6; 64, no. 5; 27, no. 9; 25, no. 31; 81, no. 7; 89, nos 4, 8.

29. This and the following passage is based on M. Jones, pers. comm.

30. As a chapel of ease, the new church was proscribed from the rights to perform the sacraments of baptism, marriage and the churching of women. See James and Begley, *St Nicholas' Chapel*, 5-6; E. M. Beloe, jun., *Extracts from the Chapelwardens Accounts of St Nicholas' Chapel, King's Lynn* (King's Lynn 1926).

31. For instance, in this context the thickened mullions in the centre of the west window. The uncompromising angularity of the side window tracery is reflected in that of two of the chapel's door hoods.

32. On an incidental note, Stow mentioned that at Old St Paul's the west façade had a triple portal 'curiously wrought of stone', with 'a massie pillar of brasse' in the middle of the central doorway. See J. Stow, *The Annales of England, faithfully collected out of the most aut(h)enticad Authors, Records, and other Monuments of Antiquitie* (London), 302. C. Davidson Cragoe, 'Fabric, tombs and precincts 1087-1540', in D. Keene, A. Burns and A. Saint ed., *St. Paul's. The Cathedral Church of London 604-2004* (New Haven and London 2004), 135.

33. E. Roberts, *The Hill of the Martyr, an Architectural History of St Albans Abbey* (Dunstable 1993), fig. 58.

34. English medieval doors with attached metalwork have recently been successfully elucidated by Jane Geddes. Her research undoubtedly benefited from its focus on a mixed medium, the decorative metal component of which has proved to be more hard-wearing than oak. See J. Geddes, *Medieval Decorative Ironwork in England* (London 1999), 38-50.

35. Elizabeth James, pers. comm.

36. What follows is a summary of a report on the south doors compiled by Hugh Harrison, whom the author particularly wishes to thank in this instance. These doors are remarkable for their architectural

ornament and detailed design. The main features of the design consist of a pair of steep lancet arches, a pair of mitred arches, and an ogee arch for the wicket gate. Note how the apex of the lancets exactly link with the adjacent niche bases, how the dentil cornice above the quatrefoil band links with the centre niche base, and how the plinth spreads right across the whole width of the doors pulling the design together on a common base.

The south doors are of similar laminated construction to the west doors, but the rear frame is quite different, having a somewhat more sophisticated structural integrity. The doors are made from three laminates which are structural and a fourth which is decorative.

The back layer of the original construction consists of a 45 mm thick frame, 90 mm wide. The frame is more developed than the frame/rear skin of the west doors, as it has continuous outside members jointed at the bottom corners with mortice and tenon joints. Within this outer frame is a grill of muntins halved over the rails, all of which are tenoned into the outer frame. The wicket gates are the same. Of note are the angled shoulders of the mortice and tenon joints at the springing of both the main doors and the wicket gates, and the notched gunstock-type joint at the springing of the arch in the main doors for the wicket gate. Both the halving joints and the bare faced tenons are all nailed, although there is some inconsistency in the number of nails used at each joint. This is quite different from the pseudo-frame on the west doors, which has no inherent strength of its own, and only strengthens the door by being nailed to the centre set of boards.

The centre layer consists of boards 28 mm thick which vary in width from 250 mm to 355 mm. Of interest is the fact that no effort was made to organize the widths of the boards so that the joints are covered by the back frame.

The front layer consists of very thin boards 11 mm thick which are all pierced with tracery, revealing the centre layer in the piercings. The front layer stops inside the false outer frame, and also above the false lower rail.

The main hinges are fixed to the centre layer in front of the back frame, which had to be housed out to accommodate the hinges. The latter was probably made separately, the hinges being nailed through the centre layer, and the centre layer then nailed from the front into the back frame. Only a few nails are seen on the rear face of the doors. The tracery boards were probably lightly nailed to the centre layer, though whether the nails now visible on the front face are the originals or later has not yet been decided.

The decorative layer is up to 75 mm thick and consists wholly of applied muntins, arch pieces, buttresses and carving laminates. These elements were nailed from the front into the tracery board and centre layers, and quite possibly in places through into the rear frame. Where the nails are positioned with no rear frame behind and project through the back of the centre layer of boards, they are clenched over. Some nails would have been quite big, where they fixed the larger elements. Where the mullions in the tabernacles were only very fine, the nails were very thin.

The construction thinking seems to have been to provide a very strong flat background onto which the rich ornament was nailed. The medieval joiners seem to have studied every piece of decoration and agreed how it could be made as economically as possible.

Two items, not at present understood, are why the lower rail was carved out of the solid and why the inner facing mould of the false outer frame was added, and not carved from the outer frame blocks. The resultant feather edge is difficult to produce without breaking out, and difficult to fix unless glued.

Examples of faults or repairs in medieval joinery always seem to provide wonderful examples of the quality of craftsmanship, often more telling than the finished work.

On the south doors there is a mould which could have been simply run on the inner edge of the outer false frame pieces, whereas it was worked out of a thin strip, the craftsman taking care to maintain the feather edge throughout. It was glued and pinned after the false outer frame pieces had been fixed. This extraordinary correction of an apparent mistake demonstrates the ability of the medieval joiner to solve a problem by the skill of his technique. Whether adding this strip was the intended original construction, rather than the correction of a mistake, is difficult to say.

Considering that evidence of polychrome was found on the west doors, it might have been assumed that it would also have existed on the south doors, particularly given the elaborate design not only of the doors themselves, but also the masonry of the porch. However, no evidence of polychrome was found in the course of our close inspection. It is to be hoped that Hugh Harrison's well illustrated full report on the St Nicholas south doors will be published.

37. See also the north porch at Redenhall.

38. E. Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath* (New Haven and London 2001), 69.

39. C. Tracy, *English Gothic Choir-Stalls 1400-1540* (Woodbridge 1990), 32-36, figs 95-97, 105a-d.

40. Recorded in a watercolour drawing by William Halfpenny in 1796; *ibid.*, fig. 80. See also the modestly tipped-up canopies on the stalls from Whalley Abbey, Lancashire, c. 1430; *ibid.*, fig. 3.

CHARLES TRACY

41. It would be interesting to investigate whether there are any contemporary accounts of the 19th-century restoration programme. The doors, as they now hang, are in need of some tender loving care.

42. These heavily restored figures, on the central arch of the rood-screen at Felmersham, appear to be ancient in origin, even though their upper portions were restored and repainted in the 19th century. See K. Shrimpton, *Felmersham. A History of a Riverside Parish* (Felmersham 2003).

The Pine Standard Chest in St Margaret's Church, King's Lynn, and the Social and Economic Significance of the Type

GAVIN SIMPSON

The medieval chest in St Margaret's Church is made of pine with an arched lid carved from willow or poplar wood. It is one of nearly ninety examples in England whose distribution is concentrated in the east and south-east, particularly East Anglia. As pine did not grow in medieval England, either the chests were made here from imported timber, or they were imported ready-made. Their exotic timber and uniform construction suggest a single centre of manufacture, probably the Baltic port of Gdansk. Iron bands and other fixtures might then be applied by blacksmiths at different times for different owners, so that there is now considerable variation in their outward appearance.

The chests are depicted in English and continental 15th-century illuminated manuscripts. These and other documentary sources show that they had various uses. English customs accounts of the period refer to the importation of 'Flemish' and 'Danzig' (Gdansk) chests which suggest that they are most likely to be found in regions participating in Hanseatic trade.

INTRODUCTION

THE development of dendrochronology over the last twenty-five years has emphasized the extent to which timber was imported into England in the late medieval period.¹ Evidence of this trade is also apparent in numerous documentary sources. However, dendrochronological study of medieval timber in the British Isles has tended to concentrate on oak as used in building and for high-status panelling, and the dating of other kinds of timber is more problematical.² This has led to a neglect of the study of pine which was being imported from Norway much earlier than oak and in as great a quantity. It was often used for similar purposes as oak — the standard chest is one example — but was also suited to other purposes such as masts, scaffolding poles and the making of ladders, for which the straight and slender trunks of conifers were perfect.³ Because the pine tree (*pinus sylvestris*) was a post-medieval introduction, where it can be shown that it is used in a medieval context then it may be assumed that that timber was imported either as logs or planks (deals), or as a finished artefact.⁴

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

THE chest in St Margaret's Church is currently kept at the west end of the north aisle (Fig. 1). The body of the chest is made of five planks which have been sawn

tangentially from a substantial pine log. The arched lid, however, is a single piece of softwood, carved from the circumference of the tree. The side planks are fitted into slightly recessed butt-joints in the front and back boards, and secured vertically by four pegs for each joint and also along the base. Inside the chest there was a small lidded till at the left end. The sides of the chest carry the same arched profile at the top as the lid, which has slightly recessed edges on its underside, and the front and back boards retain the bevelled edges formed by the outer rings of the tree. This made for a lid which was virtually airtight. The chest measures 51.5 x 20 and 21.5 in. high (1310 x 510 mm and 545 mm high) and has traces of red paint which may be original. The lid is about 4 in. (102 mm) longer than the chest itself.

This carpentry is common to nearly ninety pine chests in various parts of England (Fig. 2). The planks are usually just over 1 in. (24 mm) thick and are sawn out one or two thicknesses from the centre of the log since inclusion of the pith could result in their splitting. The log was taken from close to the base of the trunk, usually about 2 ft to 2 ft 6 in. (600 to 800 mm) in diameter, well below the lowest branches. The only variables are the dimensions of the chest itself and the species of wood used for the lid. This last was usually willow or poplar, though pine lids are occasionally found, as with the Westhorpe (Suffolk) and Shipdham (Norfolk) chests.⁵ The St Margaret's chest is of average dimensions for the type (Fig. 3).



FIG. 1. The pine standard chest in St Margaret's Church, King's Lynn

Jenny Alexander

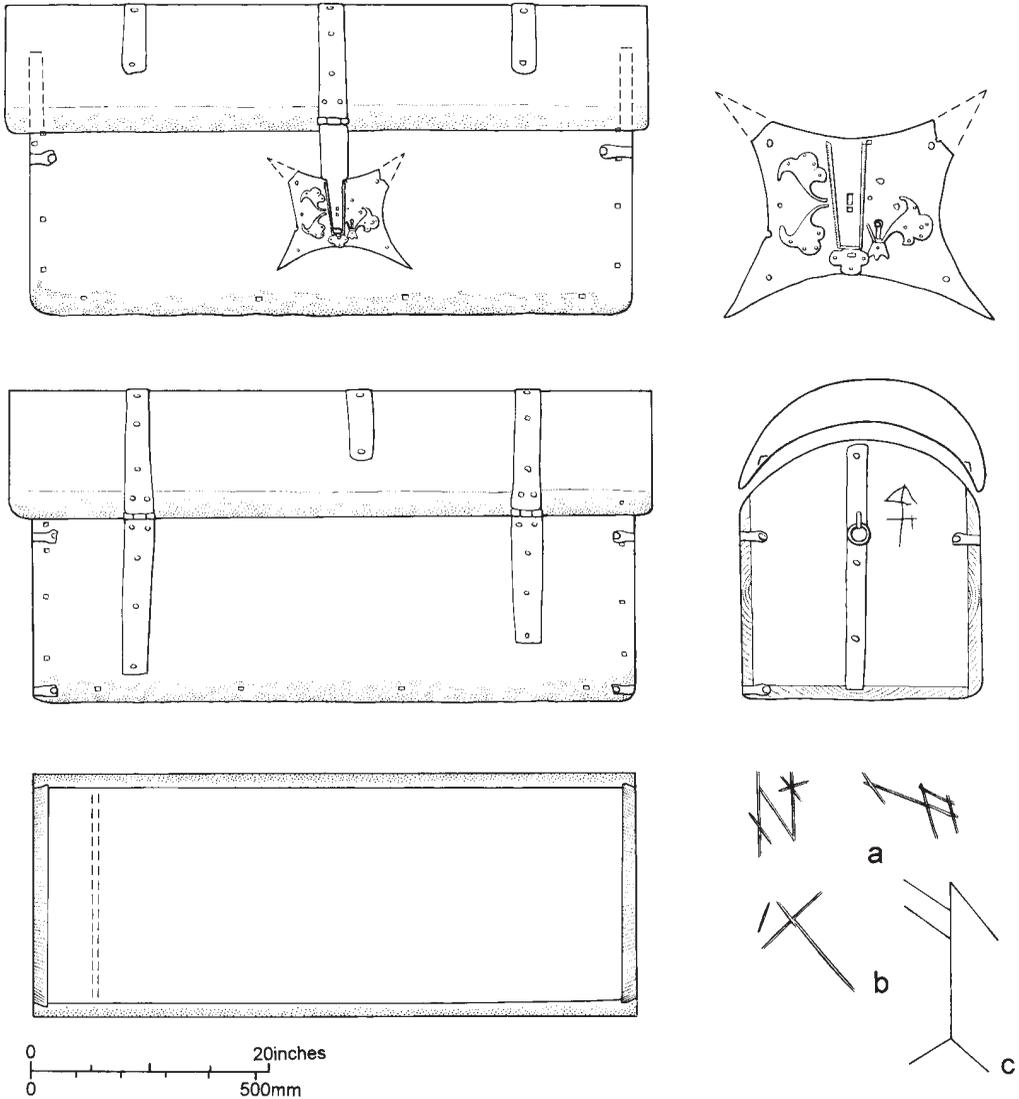


FIG. 2. Chest I in the armoury over the north porch of St Mary's, Mendelsham (Suffolk) — note the ownership mark on the end. Inset are ownership marks from the lids of chests at Christ's College, Cambridge (a) Walsham-le-Willows (b) and South Elmham St James, Suffolk (c)

Jennifer Alexander

All the chests carry ironwork which can be anything from a basic kit of two or three hinges, one or a pair of carrying rings at either end, and a central lock and/or pair of hasps to fasten the lid, to complete armouring with strips of iron, probably the work of the local blacksmith. In addition to the basic kit, the St Margaret's chest

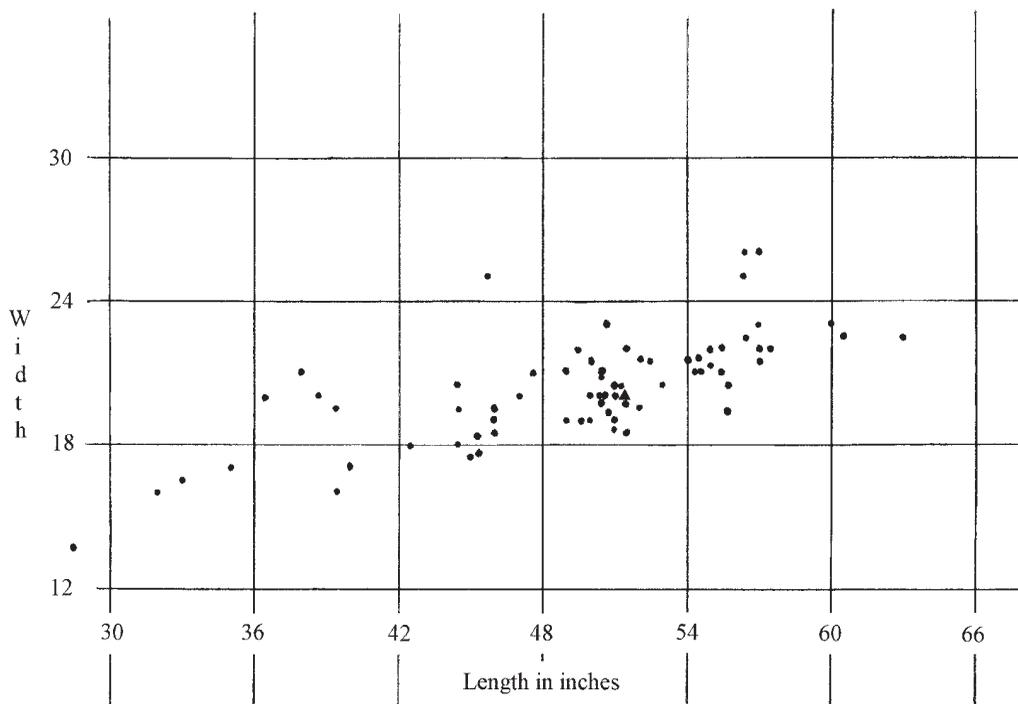


FIG. 3. Diagram illustrating the length/width ratios of eighty pine standard chests in England. The King's Lynn chest is marked by a triangle

employs angle-brackets for reinforcement with internal iron bands used to reinforce a lid which has split longitudinally.

FUNCTION

EAMES identified the type as 'standard', although the term certainly applied, or came to be applied, to oak chests of different form, if not of function.⁶ It first appears in the account of John de Selford, clerk of the privy wardrobe at the Tower of London, 1371-73, as a noun with two meanings. First, 'a large packing case or chest' and secondly, 'a kind of collar of mail or plate armour'. This suggests that the term may derive from the customary storage of the latter in the former.⁷ There are still two standards in the late medieval armoury of the local militia above the north porch of St Mary's, Mendlesham (Suffolk). As these are too large to go down the winding stair, it is likely they are contemporary with the building. A chest in Walberswick church (also Suffolk) is similarly positioned.⁸ Another chest at St Mary's Baldock, Hertfordshire, was found associated with a large quantity of armour and weapons when the room over the porch was opened up in 1850.⁹ Nearly eighty-five per cent of surviving pine standards are to be found in, or originally came from, English parish churches and are often first recorded in upper rooms, which might have once served either as armouries or the administrative office of the parish.

The parish armoury has its origin in legislation of Edward I and its maintenance was the responsibility of the parish constable, an officer in the manorial system. He also had to provide and maintain the parish butts for archery practice and assemble the militia and take them to musters with the parish arms and armour.¹⁰ Besides this connection with the parish church there are also 15th-century English and continental illustrations and documentary references to the storage of armour in standards.¹¹

Although all the chests examined seem to have originally shared the same carpentry there is considerable variation in their size, as can be seen from Figure 3. The largest chest recorded is at St Nicholas's Chapel, Harbledown (Kent), and the smallest was formerly in St Rumbold's, Colchester (Essex).¹² However, there are smaller chests of standard form which could be carried by one person in Belgium and Germany, which are also depicted in medieval manuscripts.¹³ Anything under 2 ft (610 mm) long is perhaps best termed a casket (*forcer*).¹⁴ Whatever the date and origin of the standard chest, it is clear that they were soon used, and were often adapted by the addition of iron, for a variety of purposes. In France an entry in the Duke of Burgundy's accounts for 1386 refers to two large chests to carry banners, pennants and standards, suggesting another means by which the chests may have acquired their name. Another inventory of 1376 mentions '*ij standardes de fer pur j fenestre*', perhaps the earliest use of the term in a French document.¹⁵ They were used also for the storage of books, indeed certain large service books were occasionally called standards; also for the storage of textiles, vestments, plate and documents.¹⁶ Some churches had many chests in which, presumably, different categories of object were stored.¹⁷

The earliest mention of a pine chest in England dates from 1230, when Henry III asked Walter, bishop of Carlisle, to send him a *coffinum de sap[ino]*.¹⁸ This would have been of Norwegian pine as the timber trade with the Baltic did not start much before the mid-13th century.¹⁹ A surviving late-13th-century tax assessment of goods and chattels in 43 households of one ward of King's Lynn informs us that 19 households possessed chests of unspecified type numbering 60 in total, valued at between 1s. and 5s. — most being assessed at around 2s. It is significant that among the possessions of Henry le Iremonger was armour worth 12d. along with eight chests, more than any other householder and probably part of his stock-in-trade. The tax assessment suggests that chests, probably mostly of oak, were already common in houses of prosperous merchants and tradesmen, at least in eastern England.²⁰ Another inventory drawn up in 1454 lists the contents of St Margaret's Priory.²¹ It not only gives the location of eleven chests but also a little information about their characteristics and contents, as below:

In the dormitory ... Three long chests for candles and other items ... One big chest ...

In the parlour next to the garden ... one painted chest ...

In the storeroom ... one big chest for bread (pane). One chest of spreus work. One long chest ...

In the kitchen ... two ironbound standards ... one small chest for storing pots ...

The surviving chest in the north nave aisle might be one of these standards, although since the inventory does not include the church proper, it is impossible to be sure.

CONTINENTAL CONNECTIONS

THERE are many difficulties in trying to correlate manuscript sources with actual chests. While one person might have called a particular chest a standard, another

might have described it as ironbound, or 'the chest in the kitchen', and yet another as a pine or 'spruce' chest or coffer. The St Margaret's chest might fit any of these descriptions. 'Spruce' in this context refers not to the timber but to the origin of the chest, since *Pruce* was the medieval name for Prussia and current opinion has it that the term was not transferred to the timber until the 17th century.²² However, the question remains whether these chests with their characteristic lids were made of imported pine in England, where so many still survive, or were they made overseas and imported readymade? Many chests are recorded in 15th-century English customs accounts for east coast ports, often on the part of Hanseatic merchants who imported them on ships leaving from Gdansk, the principal Baltic entrepot for timber and timber products.²³ An inventory of the property of a King's Lynn shipmaster in 1589 records three old *danske* chests among his possessions, and the Boston accounts for 1398 refer to a consignment of chests and thread valued at 60s. As the thread is described as 'Prussian', Gdansk was probably the ship's port of origin. The chests were imported by an alien merchant, Arnaldus Armourer, who was presumably intending to sell them on to parish armourers or ironmongers. Similarly, the London Port Book for 1567/68 has Edmund Ardimer and William Harris, ironmongers, who imported forty-eight 'Danzig chests' which, presumably, they were hoping to sell on to customers with added iron plating.²⁴

Another possibility is that they were made from Baltic pine in the Netherlands which, like England, also lacked mature pine forest. Dendrochronology has demonstrated that panels of Baltic oak were used by Netherlandish painters in the 15th and 16th centuries, and English wills from the mid-14th to the 16th century mention Flemish chests.²⁵ The great chest of standard form in Sydney Sussex College, Cambridge (brought from the Netherlands early in the 17th century by the Master, Samuel Ward) is so covered with iron and secured with locks that it is impossible to see the internal carpentry, but it is clearly of the 15th century and probably a pine standard.²⁶ Examples of pine standards do actually survive in the Netherlands and north Germany, although the full extent of their distribution is unknown (Fig. 4).²⁷ Drawings and manuscript paintings of the 15th century originating in the Netherlands, Burgundy, Germany, London and Paris sometimes show what appear to be this type of chest. The earliest example illustrates *Les Croniques de Burgues* which was made in France before 1407, and another manuscript produced in London c. 1405–10 shows a chest full of coins.²⁸ The Salisbury Breviary, illuminated in Paris c. 1433–35, includes vignettes showing a standard and a small casket of similar type, while a similar casket appears beneath a crucifixion scene painted in Ghent c. 1450–75.²⁹ An altarpiece, painted c. 1500, shows the city of Dordrecht during the Elizabeth's Day flood of 1421 with the citizens fleeing carrying all manner of baggage, including a standard the colour of pine with minimal ironwork, very like chests at Mendlesham and East Bergholt (Suffolk), Durham Cathedral and Gollern (Kr. Uelzen) north Germany (Figs 2 and 5).³⁰ The two Suffolk chests have typical examples of lock plates with applied foliage decoration of a type also found on German chests. They may be examples of Nuremberg locks which are recorded in English customs accounts, among many others of unspecified type.³¹

It will be seen from the distribution map (Fig. 6) that at least half of the chests are to be found in East Anglia, with Suffolk boasting over a quarter of the total. This concentration could be taken to indicate they were manufactured here, although the relative thoroughness with which chests in the churches of Suffolk and Essex have



FIG. 4. A pine standard chest, very similar to the Mendelsham I example, in St Leonard's Church, Zoutleeuw, Belgium. A merchant's mark on the lid is overlaid by an iron strap to the hinge (see the inset above the chest, where the mark has been enhanced)

Gavin Simpson

been recorded may have biased the statistics.³² The customs accounts for east coast ports refer to Hanseatic merchants and ships from Gdansk bringing in cargoes with chests containing trenchers and bundles of linen, as well as 'nests of coffers' and other timber products.³³ Unfortunately, it is not always clear from the accounts when chests were merely containers for other goods and when they were themselves commodities to be sold on. It would, anyway, be more economical for both shipper and merchant if the latter could also be used as containers on their voyage to market. Specific references to empty chests do occur in the accounts but relatively infrequently.³⁴ The accounts also record Hanseatic, English and alien merchants exporting a variety of goods, including cloth, in bales or bundles (*fardel*), sometimes in chests. A late-15th-century panel, one of a series illustrating the legend of St Romuald in Mechelen Cathedral, shows a dock with merchant vessels, and an open standard containing metal vessels, a bale with wool or cloth prominently displaying a merchant's mark, and other chests along the quay.³⁵ A connection with the wool trade would account for the slight indication of distribution up navigable rivers, along the south coast and up the Severn estuary to Bristol. The concentration of chests in the city of Cambridge and vicinity is a reflection not only of the many and various requirements for them there, but also of the great Stourbridge Fair just to the east where many of King's Lynn's imports would have been marketed.³⁶



FIG. 5. A wing of an altarpiece with The Elizabeth's Day Flood with the city of Dordrecht in the background, 18–19 November 1421, c. 1500, oil on panel

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (inv. No. SK-A-3147b)

LATER DEVELOPMENTS

AN engraving by Frans von Hogenberg published in 1559 illustrating common proverbs shows a man sitting beside an open standard. Its sides are flat-topped, rather than arched, though the lid is still slightly cambered, and it has evenly distributed iron straps. It is reminiscent of a chest, now lost, from Ingatestone Hall, Essex, as well as one which probably belonged to Lady Margaret Beaufort, covered with leather and lined with canvas, in Westminster Abbey (Fig. 7).³⁷ Lady Margaret died there in 1509 and the Ingatestone example was found in a late-16th-century context. Lady Margaret also had a very similar pair of red-painted oak chests. It was one of these, presumably, described as 'a grete Standard with ireon bound a boutte color rede within lyned with canvas . . . vi s viiid' which she bequeathed to Christ's College, Cambridge, together with 'a standere and iij chestes', though there is no evidence that they were ever delivered.³⁸ One of three chests in Hadleigh church (Suffolk) is a small standard made of thick oak boards with a clumsily carved lid which is clearly an English copy of an earlier pine standard, probably of the late 15th or 16th century.³⁹ There are also examples of oak chests which seem to be copies of the Ingatestone type at Anstey (Hertfordshire) and Milton Bryan (Bedfordshire). At Barton-upon-Humber (Lincolnshire), Boxford, (Suffolk), Hilton and Kingston (both Cambridgeshire), there

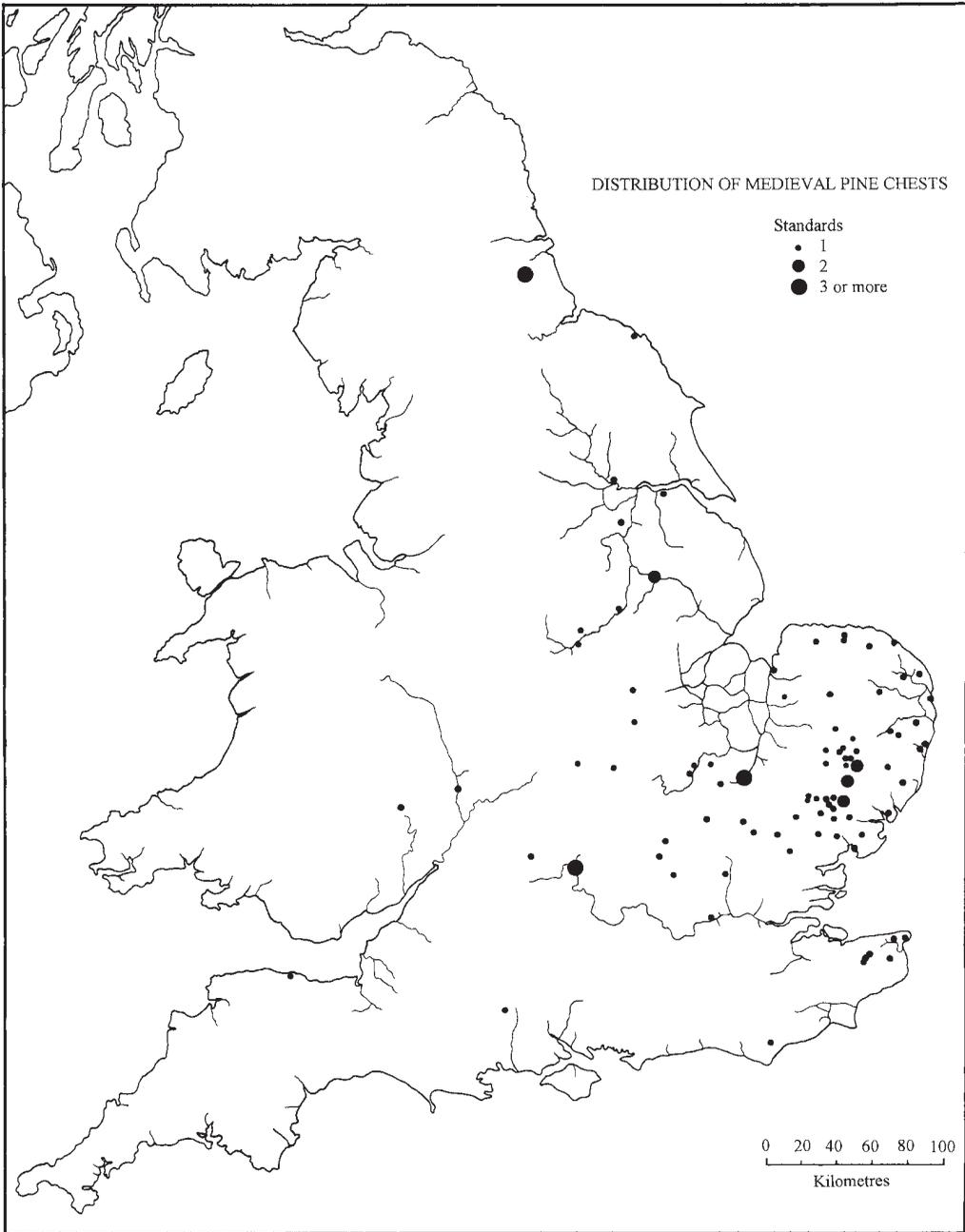


FIG. 6. Map showing the distribution of pine standard chests in England

Drawing: Jane Goddard

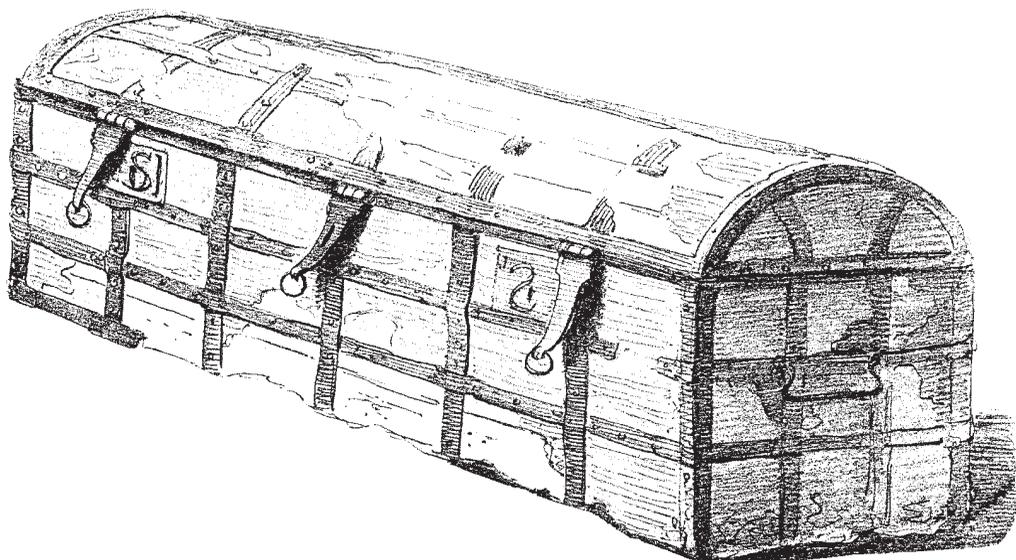


FIG. 7. Drawing of the lost 16th-century leather-covered standard chest from Ingatestone Hall, Essex

are early pine standards which have been repaired or adapted to take flat lids in post-medieval times.⁴⁰

CONCLUSION

THE uniformity of the carpentry indicates a single source of manufacture with documentary records as well as the pine timber suggesting a Baltic origin, probably the Gdansk region and this, and their 15th-century date, has recently been confirmed by dendrochronology (see note 8). Early indications are that standard chests are found quite widely in northern and western Europe, and one might tentatively suggest that they are an artefact of Hanseatic trade. Economic use of shipboard space would make it likely that whenever possible chests would not travel empty, nor be overloaded with iron. Were they then primarily packing cases, which like the foil-lined tea-chests of more recent time were too useful for other purposes to be discarded? This is possible; some of the chests which are in pristine condition and have little iron cover do have merchant's or ownership marks (Fig. 2). The recycling of medieval containers has already been documented in Belgium where herring barrels of Baltic oak were found reused as well linings at the 15th-century fishing village of Raversijde.⁴¹ However, the chests always had a till, probably to contain a candle and strike-alight, which might indicate that they were intended ultimately for household or administrative use.

INVENTORY OF THE CHESTS BY COUNTY

All chests are in the parish churches of the places named, unless otherwise stated. Counties are defined according to their pre-1972 boundaries.

BEDFORDSHIRE: Dunstable

CAMBRIDGESHIRE: Cambridge: St Botolph's; Christ's College (2); Clare College; King's College; Sydney Sussex College; St John's College; the University Registry; Diddington; Hilton; Kingston; St Neots (museum)

DURHAM: Durham City: the Castle; the Cathedral; St Gile's (lost)

ESSEX: Brightlingsea; Clavering; Colchester (lost); Great Leighs; Great Tey; Little Bentley; Pentlow; Stebbing; Ugley

HEREFORDSHIRE: Hereford, Cathedral

HERTFORDSHIRE: Baldock; Cheshunt; Little Gaddesdon; King's Langley

KENT: Ash-next-Sandwich; Canterbury, Poor Priests' Hospital; Fordwich, Town Hall; Harbledown, St Nicholas's Chapel; Minster-in-Thanel; St Lawrence

LEICESTERSHIRE: Oakham

LINCOLNSHIRE: Barton-upon-Humber; Epworth; Lincoln Museum (2)

NORFOLK: Bressingham; East Harling (lost); Erpingham; Fincham; King's Lynn; Ludham; Martham; Norwich (museum); Paston; Saxlingham; Sharrington; Shipdham; South Creake

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: Braunston; Northampton, St Sepulchre's; Rockingham Castle

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: Clifton; Newark (museum); Nottingham, St Mary's (lost)

OXFORDSHIRE: Burford (museum); Oxford, Magdalen College (3); Ashmolean Museum

SOMERSET: Selworthy

SUFFOLK: Beccles; Blaxhall; Boxford; Chelworth; East Bergholt; Finningham; Framlingham; Glemsford; Groton; Hadleigh (2); Honington (lost); Little Cornard; Little Waldingfield; Long Melford, Holy Trinity Hospital; Martlesham; Mendelsham (2); Nayland; Pakenham; South Elmham St Cross; South Elmham St James; Southwold (lost); Stowmarket (2, lost); Thornham Parva; Walberswick; Walsham-le-Willows; Wattisfield; Westhorpe; Wyvestone

SUSSEX, East: Warbleton

WILTSHIRE: Coombe Bissett

WORCESTERSHIRE: Worcester, St Swithun's

YORKSHIRE: Howden; Whitby

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper is dedicated to the memory of the late Dr Chris Salisbury, who contributed much to the academic study of wood and wooden artefacts and from whose friendship and knowledge the writer has greatly benefited over more than twenty years.

I am grateful also to David Sherlock, John Vince and John Steane for generously providing me with information about chests known to them through their own researches; also to Geoffrey Martin and Malcolm Underwood, respectively archivists at Christ's College and St John's College, Cambridge, for helpful discussion and provision of copies of documents relating to chests in their care, and to Thomas Coomans for helpful information on Netherlandish chests. Michael Prater, Brian Thomas and Amy Tuffell provided documentation and assisted with the examination of chests at the National Archives, Kew, and the Reverend Philip Gray kindly facilitated access to the armoury and chests at St Mary's Church, Mendelsham for study and drawing.

NOTES

1. N. Bonde, I. Tyers and T. Wazny, 'Where does the timber come from? Dendrochronological evidence of the timber trade in Northern Europe', in *Archaeological Sciences 1995*, ed. A. Sinclair, E. Slater and J. Gowlett (Oxford 1997), 201–04.

2. C. Groves, 'The dating and provenancing of imported conifer timbers in England: the initiation of a research project', *ibid.*, 205–11.

3. G. Simpson, 'The chancel roof of Carlisle Cathedral: its architectural and historical context', in *Carlisle and Cumbria, Roman and Medieval Architecture, Art and Archaeology*, ed. M. McCarthy and D. Weston, *BAA Trans.*, xxvii (Leeds 2004), 144, n. 39. D. M. Owen ed., *The Making of King's Lynn: a Documentary Survey* (London 1984), 433–36.
4. O. Rackham, *Ancient Woodland, its History, Vegetation and Uses in England*, new edn (Dalbeattie 2003), 463–64.
5. C. Jennings, *Early Chests in Wood and Iron*, PRO Museum pamphlet no. 7 (1974), 5. The lid of the chest in St Lawrence's church, Diddington (Cambridgeshire) was also identified as willow (*salix spp.*) by the late Dr Chris Salisbury. However, chests of this type in Germany are said to have lids of birch, see T. Albrecht, *Truben, Kisten, Laden von Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart am Beispiel der Luneburger Heide* (Petersberg 1997), 36.
6. P. Eames, 'Furniture in England, France and the Netherlands from the twelfth to the fifteenth century', *Furniture History*, 13 (1977), fig. 17, 109.
7. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner ed., *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1989) under 'standard'. The wording in the account of John de Selford is 'j standard magn[um] ferro ligatum, vj Ciste magne ferro ligate', and 'Cxliiij standardis pro loricis'.
8. See D. Sherlock, *Suffolk Church Chests* (Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, 2008). The two pine chests at Mendlesham, Suffolk, were sampled for dendrochronology by M. C. Bridge (Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory). A core sample was taken from the right hand end board of the chest illustrated in Figure 2. It contained 144 rings and this sequence was extended to 171 rings by use of photographs. There were 75 sapwood rings, and the outer year was formed in 1417. However, about 1–2 mm to the sapwood/bark edge were lost on coring, and, making allowances for this, the tree was felled in the 1420s. The best matches were with pine sequences from northern Poland, including Gdansk. The second chest did not retain sapwood, but photographically-derived ring sequences matched the first chest, dating the outer ring to 1388. It seems likely that the two chests are of the same age, which would therefore suggest a terminus postquem of c. 1425 for the building of the armoury.
9. F. Roe, *Ancient Church Chests and Chairs* (London 1929), xi, 42–43.
10. W. E. Tate, *The Parish Chest*, 3rd edn (Chichester 2002), 176–81.
11. F. Deuchler, *Die Burgunderbeute* (Bern 1963), abb. 354; H. W. Koch, *Medieval Warfare* (London 1982), 188; K. L. Scott, *A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles VI: Later Gothic Manuscripts, 1390–1490* (London 1996), fig. 389; H. Kleineke and S. R. Hovland ed., *The Estate and Household Accounts of William Worsley, Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, 1479–1497* (London Record Society, 2004), 53–54.
12. F. Roe, 'Some curious antique coffers', *Connoisseur*, 51 (1918), 77–85; E. W. Lewer and J. C. Wall, *Church Chests of Essex* (London 1913), 109.
13. Albrecht, *Truben, Kisten*, 36. These small chests often have a carrying handle on the centre of the lid. A provisional list would include Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, MS 68, fol. 30, 'Euryalus sends his first letter to Lucretia', French, c. 1460–70; Vienna, Osterreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS 1857, fol. 43v, Hours of Mary of Burgundy, Ghent, c. 1475. See T. Kren and S. McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance: the Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe* (London 2003), fig. 17 for an illustration.
14. Simpson and Weiner, *OED*.
15. Eames, 'Furniture', 129, 132.
16. *Ibid.*, 128. *OED* under 'standard'. Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, MS 9278–80, fol. 10. See C. Kightly, M. Pieters, D. Tys and A. Eryvnc, *Walraversijde 1485* (Instituut voor het Archeologisch Patrimonium, Provincie West-Vlaanderen, n.d.), 71.
17. P. M. Johnston, 'Church chests of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries', *Archaeol. J.*, 64 (1907), 300.
18. *Cal. Close Rolls (1227–31)*, 329.
19. Simpson, 'Chancel roof', 134.
20. Owen, *King's Lynn: Documentary Survey*, 235–49, at 245.
21. *Ibid.*, 123–25.
22. J. Evelyn, *Sylva, or a Discourse of Forest-trees* (London 1670), 103; N. D. G. James, *A History of English Forestry* (Oxford 1990), 165.
23. W. R. Childs ed., *The Customs Accounts of Hull, 1453–1490* (Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 144, 1984), 3–7, 31–32; Owen, *King's Lynn: Documentary Survey*, 369–71, 375–76; N. S. B. Gras, *The Early English Customs System* (Harvard Economic Studies, XVIII, 1918), 504, 509; H. S. Cobb ed., *The Overseas Trade of London, Exchequer Customs Accounts, 1480–81* (London Record Society, 27, 1990), 12, 54–57, 70; J. F. Wade ed., *The Customs Accounts of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1454–1500* (Surtees Society, 202, 1995), 118, 149–50, 227–28.
24. V. Parker, *The Making of King's Lynn: Secular Buildings from the Eleventh to the Seventeenth Century* (Chichester 1971), 180–81; S. H. Rigby ed., *The Overseas Trade of Boston in the Reign of Richard II* (Lincoln

Record Society, 93, 2005), 208; B. Dietz ed., *The Port and Trade of Early Elizabethan London Documents* (London Record Society, 8, 1972), 102, 120, 125, 174, 179.

25. K. Haneca, T. Wazny, J. van Acker and H. Beeckman, 'Provenancing Baltic timber from art historical objects: success and limitations', *Journal of Archaeological Science*, 32 (2005), 261–71; Eames, 'Furniture', 125 — however, actual examples of imported Flemish chests have usually been identified by their carved decoration, *ibid.*, 145–48, and J. Geddes, *Medieval Decorative Ironwork in England* (London 1999), 233–34. J. T. Fowler ed., *The Ripon Chapter Acts* (Surtees Society, 64, 1874), 365, 377, and *Churchwardens' Accounts of Pitlington and other parishes in the Diocese of Durham from 1580–1700*, (Surtees Society, 84, 1888), 141.

26. RCHME, City of Cambridge, pts 1 and 2 (London 1959), 208 and pl. 46; Eames, 'Furniture', 173, 176–77.

27. C. Engelen, *Zoutleeuw: Jan Mertens en de laatgotiek, confrontatie met Jan Borreman; essay tot inzicht en overzicht van de laatgotiek* (Brussels 1993), 228–35; Eames, 'Furniture', 145–47 and pl. 51. There are also examples in St Servatius' Church, Wemmel (Flanders) and St Martin's at Moustier (Hainaut), both now in Belgium. Albrecht, *Truhen, Kisten*, 36, notes a considerable concentration of the chests in Sweden, Denmark and north Germany.

28. London, British Library, MS Royal 19.E.VI, fol. 403 — showing William the Conqueror landing in England. For an illustration, see G. F. Warner and J. P. Gilson, *Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King's Collection*, 2 (London 1921), 349. Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, MS I.1.9, fol. 35, illustrated in Scott, *Survey of Manuscripts*, I, fig. 116; II, 106–09.

29. Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, MS lat. 17294, fol. 106. See J. Stratford, *The Bedford Inventories, the Worldly Goods of John, Duke of Bedford, Regent of France (1389–1435)* (London 1993), pl. IV. There are references to standard chests in the inventories, A4.3, 248 and C1.2, 341. See also Kren and McKendrick as in note 13 above.

30. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-3147a/b. See H. van Os, J. P. Kok, G. Luijten and F. Scholten, *Netherlandish Art in the Rijksmuseum, 1400–1600* (Amsterdam 2000), fig. 21; Albrecht, *Truhen, Kisten*, 36, abb. 47.

31. Albrecht, *Truhen, Kisten*, 36, abb. 48, 101, abb. 183; Cobb, *Overseas Trade of London*, 7–11, 28–29, 63–67; Geddes, *Decorative Ironwork*, 233–34.

32. Morley and Sherlock, 'Suffolk chests'; Lewer and Wall, *Essex Chests*.

33. See note 23. Cobb, *Overseas Trade in London*, 183, considers that a nest is a measure of three and does not necessarily imply a number of graduated chests contained within each other. No such chests are known either as artefacts or in manuscript illustrations. Perhaps the most likely explanation is something like a modern filing cabinet or chest of drawers; see Eames, 'Furniture', pls 4–6, 19; M. Schmauder, B. Steiger-Nawarotzky and R. Vogel, 'Auf dunnen Sohlen', in *Berichte aus der Arbeit des Museums* (Bonn 2003), 1, 13–17, abb. 6.

34. See Dietz, note 24, above; also Gras, *Early English Customs*, 504, and Rigby, *Overseas Trade, Boston*, 93, 97, 103, 123, 125, 208.

35. Gras, *Early English Customs*, 466–68, 473–85; Cobb, *Overseas Trade, London*, 84–86, 144–46; M. J. Friedlander, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, IV, English edn (Brussels, 1967), pl. 97.

36. D. Edwards, M. Forrest, J. Minchinton, M. Shaw, B. Tyndall and P. Wallis ed., *Early Northampton Wills preserved in the Northampton Record Office* (Northamptonshire Record Society, 42, 2005), 65, 155, 210, no. 575, 231.

37. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, etching illustrating common proverbs, 1559, see L. de Vries, 'Bruegel's *Fall of Icarus*: Ovid or Solomon?', *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art*, 30, nos 1–2 (2003), 4–18, see fig. 2, 7; Roe, 'Antique coffers', 80–81; Eames, 'Furniture', 177, pl. 52.

38. R. F. Scott, 'On a list (preserved in the Treasury of St John's College) of plate, books and vestments bequeathed by Lady Margaret to Christ's College', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, 39 (1898), 349–67; Jennings, *Early Chests*, 3; A. H. Lloyd, *The Early History of Christ's College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1934), 337–39.

39. Roe, *Church Chests*, fig. 13.

40. W. G. Simpson, 'The pine chest', in W. Rodwell ed., *St Peter's, Barton-upon-Humber, Lincolnshire: a Parish Church and its Community*, 1 (Oxford forthcoming); H. M. Cescinsky and E. R. Gribble, *Early English Furniture and Woodwork* (London 1922), v.2, 6, fig. 5.

41. D. Houbrechts and M. Pieters, 'Tonnen uit Raversijde (Oostende, prov. West-Vlaanderen): een goed gedateerd verhaal over water- en andere putten', in *Archeologie in Vlaanderen*, V (1995/96), 225–61.

Trading Places: Counting Houses and the Hanseatic ‘Steelyard’ in King’s Lynn

VIRGINIA JANSEN

Medieval merchants engaged in long-distance trading needed places to stay and to store their goods. The ‘Steelyard’ in King’s Lynn, which housed merchants from the German Hanse, represents a type of complex (Kontor) containing lodging with warehouse space, a business-office, and probably, as was usual, shops or stalls for sales. Although lodging for travellers and their baggage was ubiquitous, the particular institutional type of the long-term commercial compound was less common, even if many examples existed in Europe and the eastern Mediterranean (fondaco, funduq) in the medieval and early modern eras.

INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH widespread, European medieval and early modern commercial building is little studied in comparison to church architecture. Hundreds of examples survive in fragmentary or heavily remodelled conditions; others exist only in historical documentation. Both archaeological and documentary evidence for commercial counting-houses figures in this paper focused on the Hanseatic ‘Steelyard’, or factory, at King’s Lynn. The property came into possession of the German Hanse in 1475 as the result of the Treaty of Utrecht (1474), which re-established a commerce between English and Hanseatic merchants interrupted by trade wars and embargoes.

The term *Stahlhof* and its English rendition, ‘steelyard’, is usually derived from Middle Low German *stâl*, meaning a merchant’s sample, and *hof* for yard or courtyard. Its earliest recorded use in English dates from 1384.¹ In the sense used here, ‘factory’ refers to an ‘establishment for traders carrying on business in a foreign country; a merchant company’s trading station’, whose agents were called ‘factors’, a usage current in 19th-century Savannah, South Carolina, where the warehouse row known as Factor’s Walk still exists. The Hanseatic trading station was also known as a *Kontor*, *comptoir*, counting-house, or business-house. On both sides of the Atlantic seaboard into the 19th century, the front office of a merchant’s house was called the ‘compter’, ‘counting room’ or even ‘countinghouse’.²

Counting-houses normally comprised a gated enclosure with spaces for lodging, storage, a kitchen, shops, and a meeting hall, the last responding to the institutional character of the complex. The protected compound served not only to safeguard people and merchandise, but also to maintain discipline in foreign territory and to control dutiable goods. In London, the compound was referred to as a guildhall, the *guildhalla theutonicorum*, among other names, before it acquired the designation Steelyard. Examples in England are known or thought to have existed in London, Boston, Great Yarmouth, Hull, Ipswich, Newcastle, Norwich, Sandwich, and York, all on the east coast, with others in Bristol and

Coventry. Altogether, there may have been more than a dozen.³ Dependent upon vigorous trade, the type resembled the merchant inns-*cum*-storage facilities known as *funduq* in Arabic, *fonticum* or *fundicum* in Latin, and *fondaco* in Italian, which might serve as hostels, 'commercial depots, warehouses, emporia, tax-stations, offices, taverns, prisons, and brothels'.⁴ Common as they once may have been, Lynn represents the only Hanse structure to survive in the British Isles. Once such utilitarian architecture outlives its function, it is usually destroyed, a rate of attrition best understood in the light of the commercial value of the sites such buildings often occupy, coupled with an aesthetic indifference, even hostility, to their plainness.

KING'S LYNN AND NORTHERN SEA-TRADE

WITH proximity to Scandinavia and the Low Countries, medieval Lynn, in addition to Boston and Yarmouth, was among the most active English ports for trade across the North and Baltic seas. A tax on sea trade in 1203 shows that after the port of London, Boston, Lynn, and Southampton contributed the largest sums.⁵ Lynn stood at the head of an enormous and rich hinterland to which it was connected by the Great Ouse and its tributaries. This region provided an abundance of exports, primarily wool and later finished cloth, and offered robust markets for imports. It is said that Lynn 'was the gateway to a fifth of England', and it became a staple port in 1373.⁶

Throughout the North and Baltic lands the Hanse controlled and often monopolized trade, a supremacy which peaked in the 14th and first half of the 15th centuries. With trade susceptible to political disruption, the third quarter of the 15th century was a period of particular volatility. The 1474 Treaty of Utrecht was intended to remedy this instability by renewing Hanseatic trade with England, and subsequently trade volumes exceeded those prior to the embargo. However, internal strife in the Hanse, interlopers, and English, Flemish, Dutch, and Danish privateers all diminished Hanseatic power.⁷ Not only piracy but also boycotts, seizures of ships, and arrests interfered on all sides; the records of Hanseatic meetings are full of complaints, as are English records. Simultaneously, other markets, the development of cloth manufacturing throughout England and the increasing dominance of London as a commercial centre, were reducing Lynn's role in the northern sea trade, even if coastal trade still brought considerable wealth until curtailed by the arrival of the railways in the mid-19th century.⁸ In a customs list detailing five cities from 1474–81, Lynn was placed third, slightly behind Hull in the number of Hanseatic merchants active (43 and 41, respectively), but by value of taxed goods Lynn was fourth after Ipswich; Boston was last with only two Hanse merchants listed and less than half the value of the taxed goods of Lynn.⁹ By the 1490s Hanseatic trade had died in Boston, whereas in Lynn it remained active for another half-century, even enjoying an increase of woollen exports in the 1530s, a period that establishes a *terminus ante quem* for the buildings of the Steelyard.¹⁰

THE STEELYARDS AT LYNN AND LONDON

AT the time of the 1474 treaty, the position of the Hanseatic merchants in Lynn must have seemed full of promise. The Steelyard may be dated to the years after the treaty, but the Hanseatics had been trading actively in Lynn since the mid-13th century, living in their own houses by 1310 and maintaining their own warehouses no later than 1424.¹¹ No evidence for an earlier steelyard is known. For the post-treaty establishment the Hanse

had requested a house in the commercial centre of town, in Checker Street (now King Street), near the Tuesday Market Place, but no house was available for sale.¹² Instead, another site was located at the southern end of town situated opposite the priory church of St Margaret's, the Saturday Market, and Trinity Guildhall. Significantly, the leading Lynn merchants with long-standing Hanseatic trade connections, Walter Coney and Thomas Thoresby, wanted the Hanseatics near their residences.¹³ Indeed, the generally friendly long-term relations between Lynn merchants and their Hanseatic associates was a major reason that Lynn was favoured in the Treaty of Utrecht and thereafter. The property in Lynn was conveyed to the Hanse on 29 April 1475 who took possession on 25 June 1475. Even though custody was granted to Danzig, whose merchants had the closest ties with Lynn, it was actually Lynn merchants who took proxy possession of the property on behalf of Danzig and who alone among English merchants continued trading with Prussia after 1474.¹⁴

The property already accommodated a number of structures: an old house (*alt huys*) with eight chambers, a beautiful hall (*en schone halle*) and a kitchen; seven other houses with a number of stalls (*buden*), doubtless for sales, a courtyard, and a stable, but no warehouses were mentioned, not even in a conveyance of 25 April 1475, which listed on the property a tenement with quay and garden, and seven *messuages* with houses, cellars, solars, etc.¹⁵ This collection of structures was most likely rebuilt into the complex that we know today (Figs 1–4), described in 1639 as containing a 'mansion house' and 'shops, cellars, vaults, warehouses, solars, etc.'¹⁶ Representatives from the London Steelyard, by then responsible for administering all Hanseatic posts in England, took care of the details of establishment, and the London *Kontor* selected a director to live on-site to let the houses and chambers.¹⁷

In its 16th-century form, the Lynn steelyard shared some similarities with what we know of the late medieval Steelyard in London: both had long structures running from a main street perpendicularly to the waterfront, enclosing open space as a courtyard in Lynn or a garden and lanes in London (Figs 5 and 6). The compound was secured either by buildings (Lynn) or a wall (London). In London, the broad plot, approximately 50 m by 125 m, indicated a vigorous German trade, which had continued for centuries. In the early 11th century, King Ethelred II had granted privileges to merchants 'of the Empire' in London; by 1130 the merchants from Cologne had acquired the right to dwell by the Dowgate, the inlet where the Walbrook flowed into the Thames, and a guildhall is mentioned by 1235, which was perhaps already in existence in the 1170s.¹⁸

In Lynn, the Hanseatic authorities most likely remodelled rather than tore down the 'old house' of the property, which, like most Lynn merchant dwellings, must have fronted the street, here facing St Margaret's Place. They probably incorporated the 'beautiful hall' of the older structure with its chambers on either side; older medieval remnants were found under the current 18th-century surfaces during the renovation in 1969–71.¹⁹

The north-south ranges contained the warehouses. Both ranges are approximately 40 m long, visibly extended at a much later date.²⁰ Along St Margaret's Lane, the southern range is built of timber in two storeys with a jettied first floor to the street and a flat face to the narrow courtyard; later medieval brick infill has replaced the original wattle-and-daub, suggesting the range was initially built at speed in order to bring the Steelyard into use quickly (Fig. 2).²¹ Although much of the walling is no longer original, some of the late-15th-century crown-post roof remains.²² The north wing consists of three storeys in brick (Figs 3 and 4), a material common in Lynn by the end of the 15th century.²³ Although Vanessa Parker thought the exterior façade lacked openings, several windows and a small

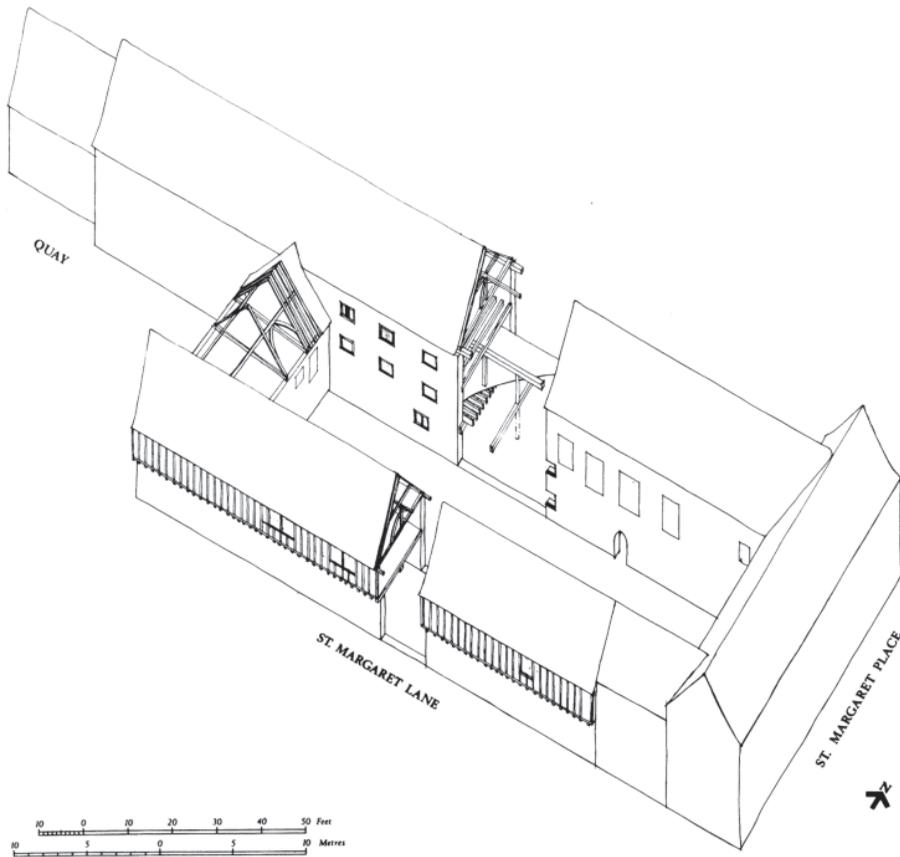


FIG. 1. King's Lynn, Hanseatic Steelyard, reconstruction, axonometric drawing reproduced from Vanessa Parker, *The Making of Kings Lynn* (Chichester 1971), fig. 26
By kind permission of Phillimore & Co. Ltd

door with a pointed arch survive facing into the courtyard.²⁴ She referred to these windows as 'erratically placed in the wall', an arrangement that suggests they originally corresponded to interior utilitarian needs; the use of such terms — 'erratic' or 'utilitarian' — underlining the extent to which the deployment of forms in this kind of building cannot be understood from a purely formal or aesthetic perspective.

Were these warehouses divided up like the spaces shown on the plan of the London Steelyard of c. 1598 (Fig. 6)?²⁵ While acknowledging that the interior 'has been much altered', before the modern conversion Parker wrote that there was no evidence of internal divisions.²⁶ If so, the long undivided spaces would have been impressive. The lack of divisions would suggest that the resident merchants did not feel anxious about individual ownership of their goods, or, perhaps in this small factory, the limited number of users had no cause for concern. Furthermore, much of the Baltic import trade engaged in bulk goods — timber, pitch, tar, wax, iron, copper, grain and fish — in addition to luxury items



FIG. 2. King's Lynn Steelyard, exterior of south range from St Margaret's Lane
Virginia Jansen

such as furs, so that small separated spaces would have been inefficient, whereas much of the trade at the London *Kontor* dealt in smaller consumer goods, especially furs, destined for the well-to-do of the capital city. Even though bulk trade was known in London, luxury imports could explain the existence of the many modest-sized rooms of the London plan. Furthermore, the number of chambers reflected the greater number of Hanseatic merchants resident in the capital city.

In medieval Lynn the three-storey nature of the north range was unusual.²⁷ It suggests a need for further storage at the Steelyard at a time when Hanseatic trade was thought to be in decline; however, until the mid-16th century, both Lynn and Hanseatic merchants had reason to be optimistic about steady levels of commerce as trade in Lynn continued to be robust. Indeed, it was probably at the beginning of the 16th century that the west range at Lynn, roofed with trusses and side purlins, was added, as much perhaps to enclose the courtyard for security as to provide a handsome hall overlooking the river, rather as Derek Keene has suggested for the tower in the London Steelyard.²⁸

With its wharf, warehouses, and chambers, the Lynn Steelyard represented a reduced version of the great London *Kontor* (Figs 5 and 6). In both, the Hanseatics lived under their own rules as granted by the Crown.²⁹ In a view of 1559, the substantial dwelling of the resident warden (*Hausmeister*) can be seen at river's edge with a covered passage leading to the wharf from a lane.³⁰ Adjacent to the right sits the large crane for handling cargo. The guildhall was sited at the left edge of the property along Thames Street, its 12th-century masonry excavated in 1988–89.³¹ South of the Guildhall lay a tower and garden, which can be seen in some views and plans of London. Right of the Guildhall a tavern and cellar sold Rhenish wine, taxed at the same advantageous rate as French.³² Farther right and in between are various lodgings and lanes running to the river.³³ The plan represents nearly one hundred chambers with eight stairways.³⁴ Rooms were rented for a year with lock and key, with a few reserved for short-term traders, as was also true



FIG. 3. King's Lynn Steelyard, courtyard towards west from 'bridge'
Virginia Jansen



FIG. 4. King's Lynn Steelyard, north range, courtyard wall, toward east
Virginia Jansen



FIG. 5. London Steelyard, view, copperplate map of 1559, Museum of London

© Museum of London

in the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* in Venice. Just beyond the Steelyard to the right stood All Hallows Church the Great, patronized by the Germans who often requested burial there.

Even though, in 1474, the Hanse selected Lynn along with London, Boston, and Ipswich as one of four factories in England, its existence was short-lived. By 1571, it was rented out to several Lynn merchants, the Hanseatic trade having dwindled.³⁵ In 1751, a leading merchant, Edward Everard, twice mayor of Lynn, bought the warehouse property behind the east range, and shortly thereafter remodelled the east range facing the street into a house.³⁶ In 1969–71 the County Council converted the property into offices for the Planning and Education Departments, which still occupy the premises.³⁷

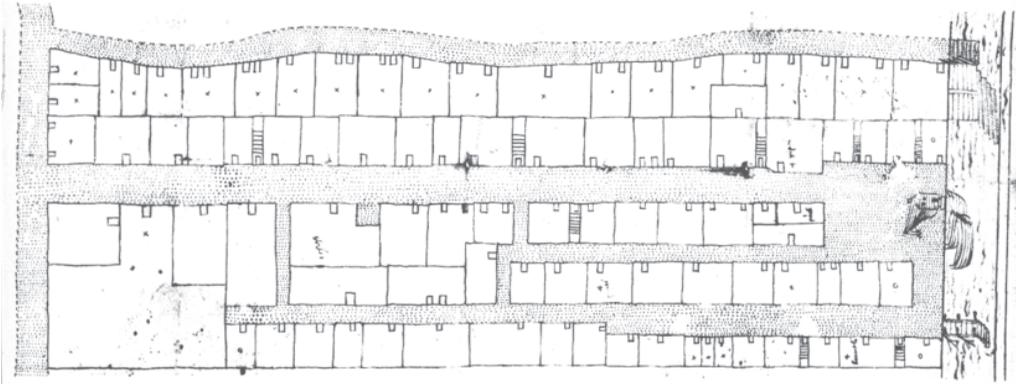


FIG. 6. London Steelyard, plan, the late 16th or early 17th century (c. 1598)
The National Archives (MPF 1/23)

COMPARATIVE EXAMPLES IN NORTHERN EUROPE

AS a north European trading organization, the Hanse established counting-houses, both temporary and permanent, in many of the coastal cities on the North and Baltic seas.³⁸ In this short paper, only brief mention can be made of factories other than Lynn and London in order to clarify an enlarged context. Such trading posts required not only a dynamic import-export market but also long-term housing, and, most important, negotiated commercial and legal privileges. Being under one's own laws and customs underscored the sense of belonging to an enclosed community. Without privileges and protection, long-term stays could be difficult, even though lodging could always be found in inns or the houses of local residents, as is recorded at such locations as Colchester, Copenhagen, Visby, and in Lynn itself before the establishment of its steelyard.³⁹ Although many small Hanseatic *Kontore* — Bergen, Bruges, Novgorod and London — is more abundant. Bergen's 'German Quay' or 'Bridge', the *Tyske Bryggen* or simply *Bryggen*, still exists. Established in the 13th century, it has been repaired after several fires. Even more multifarious than the London Steelyard, Bergen's *Kontor* was composed of a large number of tenement plots (*gårder*), several buildings to each plot, including a public room. At its height around 1400 *Bryggen* had about 300 tenements carrying a population of around 3,000.⁴⁰ Warehouses were located close to the water, whereas stalls for sales fronted the 'High Street' (*Øvrestretet*). Unlike other *Kontore* during the Middle Ages, *Bryggen* comprised not only Hanseatic merchants but also artisans, who outnumbered the traders, as well as Norwegian householders including women.⁴¹

Novgorod's *Peterhof* is known from abundant documentary evidence.⁴² Founded in the early 13th century, its character as an out-post was evinced by a surrounding palisade and single gate. Home to two separate associations of merchants, the winter and summer traders, it contained an assembly-hall, offices, dwellings (termed 'hutments' by Dollinger), separate dormitories and dining halls for apprentices, shops, brew-house, infirmary, prison, and its own church. Free of episcopal regulation, the stone church built on an undercroft served also as the warehouse for valuable goods, archives, scales, and treasury; each merchant was assigned a storage area in the aisles, while wine was stored

in the choir. Space became so tight that on occasion goods were stacked on the altar.⁴³ When the population increased to about two hundred, some traders had to live outside the compound. Compared with these, King's Lynn's steelyard was modest.

The largest of the Hanseatic *Kontore* appears to have been in Bruges, where privileges were granted in 1252. Exceptionally it never organized residences in a compound, and only in 1457 did the city allocate property for a business-house (the *Oosterlingenhuis*). Before then the Hansards had met in the refectory of the Carmelite monastery.⁴⁴ In most instances, however, the Hanse required residence in the *Kontor* for the security and control of its members, who were locked in at night; residence also rendered taxation more effective under the elected aldermen.

Conversely, how were foreign merchants accommodated in Hanseatic territories? Because appeals for reciprocity engendered continual strife with the Hanse but yielded limited results, there is slight evidence of business-houses for aliens. It was the earlier and better organized Hansards, who jealously guarded their privileges, who negotiated property deals, and who evolved a corporate body with stringent rules, that set the standard. Just as in some towns Hanseatic merchants tried and failed to gain a counting-house, so the monopolistic impulses of the Hanse prevented English and other traders from forming companies in its territories.⁴⁵ Without an association and a meeting space, foreign merchants were restricted to renting lodgings, stalls, and warehouses or buying a house, as is recorded for Lynn traders in Baltic locales such as Scania, Wismar, Rostock, Stralsund, and Danzig, but for all of these sites save the last, I have found no evidence of a corporation hall.⁴⁶ In these situations, commercial trading might be conducted in stalls, perhaps provided in the town hall as occurred at Stralsund and Thorn.⁴⁷ In Danzig, which acted as a market for products from a hinterland that stretched as far south as Hungary, there were extensive contacts and consistent trading by Englishmen, particularly those from Lynn, over a long period — two requisites for a business-house.⁴⁸ Yet even in Danzig it was difficult for English merchants to gain economic privileges or an organizational presence. Granted the right to form a company in 1388, the English association seemed to have acquired a meeting hall, but possessed neither a residential complex nor factory warehouses. By 1396, however, the Prussians were complaining about the volume of English commerce and were limiting both English residence and retail trade, even terminating the treaty in 1398.⁴⁹ Consequently, any company structure would seem to have been short-lived, and in 1437 the Treaty of London ruled out a 'corporate organization of the English merchants with internal jurisdiction'.⁵⁰ In any case no physical evidence survives, unlike for the *Artushof* in Danzig, although this was initially simply a corporation hall for home traders, not a *Kontor*.⁵¹

One overseas trading station, however, did exist for English merchants, but it was under English jurisdiction: the wool-staple in Calais between 1363 and 1558. To accommodate the large quantities shipped, an impressive complex akin to a steelyard was built in the 1390s, described as containing 'vast' warehouse storage and 'magnificent' *comptoir* offices.⁵²

COMPARATIVE EXAMPLES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

GIVEN that traders from time immemorial have needed a place to stay and to store their goods, it is not surprising that varieties of this building type can be found world-wide.⁵³ A more intriguing question would consider whether the *funduq-fondaco* type in any way influenced Hanseatic factories. Defined as 'an enclave for cross-cultural business activities' in the Mediterranean, *funduqs* can be traced back to the 9th century and became ubiquitous in the Islamic world in the 11th and 12th centuries.⁵⁴

The *funduq* or *fondaco* was established by the ruling authority for long-distance merchants. It differed from the ordinary inn for travellers and itinerant traders through its constitution and facilities, even though both types derived from the ancient *pandōcheion*.⁵⁵ As Christian merchants made their way into the Islamic world before and after the Crusades, both they and Islamic authorities found the institution useful for community and security, on the one hand, and separation and taxation, on the other. It is essentially the same with Hanseatic *Kontore*. The main difference between the types resided in the initiating body: often native in the *fondaco*, but foreign in the *Kontor* even if it was local government that licensed both establishments.

Like the Venetian *fondaco* in Alexandria of 1173, one type of Anatolian *han* (the *khān* or *caravanserai* of other Mediterranean regions), consists of an enclosed rectangular structure with a single entrance, probably modelled on Roman forts, as in the 13th-century Seljuk Sarihan in Cappadocia near Avanos (Fig. 7).⁵⁶ Around a central courtyard there were areas for lodging, storage, and stabling, and the inn-keeper's room, while at the back a protected hall, sometimes referred to as 'winter hall', provided further accommodation. The *han* raised revenue for the local ruler in return for providing a secure way-station at regular distances for traders and travellers on caravan routes across Turkey, just as the same form did at Cove Fort in 19th-century Utah for largely Mormon traders, travellers, and settlers.⁵⁷ Even though such staging posts take the form of an enclosed compound with rooms and storage around a courtyard similar to a *fondaco*, institutionally they were



FIG. 7. Sarihan, Cappadocia (Turkey) near Avanos, courtyard toward entrance
Virginia Jansen

actually travel inns, like the two-storey Çinci Hani in Safranbolu (Turkey), which reopened as a modern hotel in 2004. They simply provided a secure overnight rather than the long-term sojourn of the *Kontor* or *funduq*.

A *fondaco* linking the worlds of German and Mediterranean commerce was the business-house for German merchants, the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, established on its present site in Venice in the 1220s, earlier than the date at which Hanseatic merchants regarded themselves as a unified group (Fig. 8).⁵⁸ It is possible an even earlier facility may have existed, as a treaty of 1177 between the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa and Venice referred to commercial dealings.⁵⁹ The medieval *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* on the Grand Canal just north of the Rialto Bridge no longer exists, but, as depicted in Jacopo de' Barbari's bird's-eye view of 1500, it had a courtyard plan like a *han* or the King's Lynn Steelyard. Extended and remodelled no fewer than three times around as many courtyards, at least one of which appears arcaded, its additive development reflected its growth as an institution; by the 1480s about 120 merchants plus many assistants were residing here, generally on a short-term basis.⁶⁰ After fire destroyed the *Fondaco* in 1505, it was rebuilt on the same site. Used by northern merchants until 1797 and remodelled in 1939, it currently serves as the main post office (Fig. 9). An enclosed rectangular building with a loggia at the landing of the Grand Canal, the interior consisted of a series of small rooms arranged in three storeys surrounding a large courtyard which housed a cistern-head.⁶¹ Just as in a *han*, the Venetians locked the doors at night and unbolted them by day. There was an altar for worship by the mid-14th century as well as kitchens with ovens.⁶² Despite its name, the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* served not only ethnic German but also northern central European merchants. Other northern travellers, pilgrims, artisans and lesser traders who lacked significant dutiable goods, however, had to stay in inns or houses.⁶³ Administered by the Venetian state, the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi* was meant not only to protect local merchants and guilds but to regulate and to exact duty from large-scale traders. In the late 15th century the tax revenue amounted to a sum of between twenty thousand to one million ducats per annum at a time when the annual rent for a room in the *Fondaco* was only eight to twelve ducats.⁶⁴ The quantity of commerce seemed vast to the pilgrim Pietro Casola, who remarked in 1494 that the trade 'would suffice alone to supply all Italy with the goods that come and go'.⁶⁵ Such an observation offers an insight into the design of the medieval complex, balancing wharfage, accommodation, and warehousing with courtyard space for sales. In sum, the limited entrance and courtyard enclosure resemble the control exerted by a monastery, although here for economic reasons, whereas the *han* served more for travellers' convenience and security.

The regular shape of the *hans* and the Renaissance *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, while offering a general parallel to the rectangular King's Lynn steelyard, seem to differ from the rambling London Steelyard and *Kontore* such as Bryggen or Petershof. However, since many *funduqs* also had multi-building plans, no specific relationship exists between a particular plan form and set of institutions; rather developments seem to have followed the idiosyncratic history of the site.

CONCLUSION

CONSTABLE is perhaps correct in believing that the *fondaco/funduq* and the *Kontor*, while similar and part of 'a widespread pattern', have 'their own unique family history' forming only 'parallels'.⁶⁶ Not only the gradual development of the London Steelyard, in

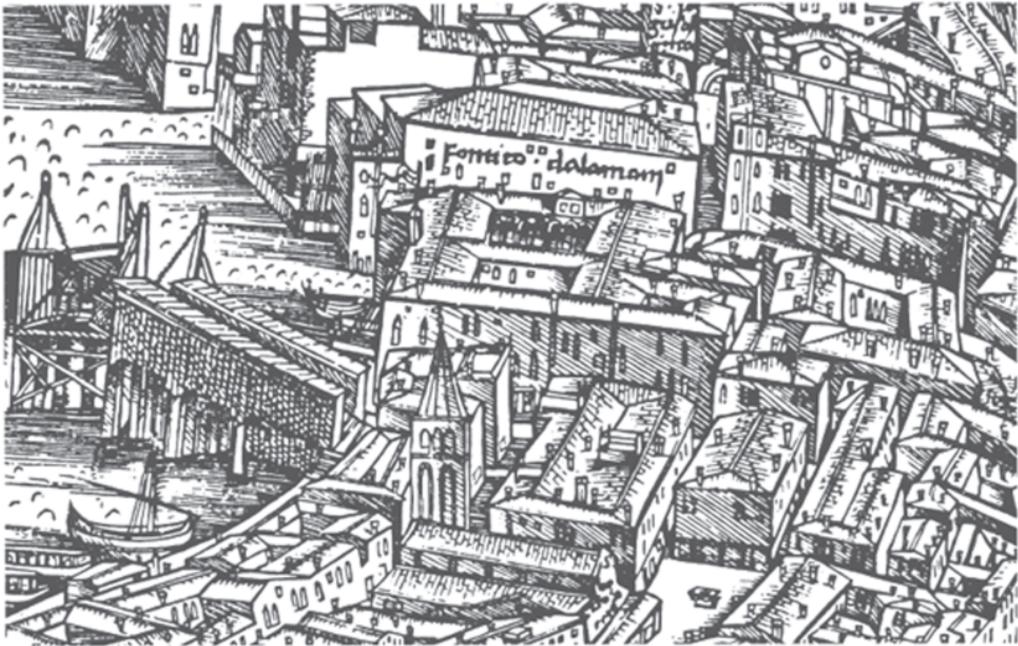


FIG. 8 (above).
Jacopo de' Barbari's
view of Venice, 1500,
detail showing the
Fondaco
dei Tedeschi before
rebuilding in 1505
taken from D.
Howard, *Venice and
the East*
(New Haven 2000)

*Courtesy of the Faculty of
Architecture and History
of Art, University of
Cambridge*

FIG. 9 (left).
Fondaco dei
Tedeschi, 1505, view
from Grand Canal
Virginia Jansen

origin earlier than the recorded building of the *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, but also the differing forms of Hanseatic *Kontore* suggest comparable experiences rather than connected events, unsurprising in a utilitarian structure responding to practical needs. Furthermore, the existence of medieval merchant houses with extensive storage facilities in cellars and lofts, and the history of the English association in Danzig demonstrate the similar configuration of domestic houses and counting-houses. The medieval merchant house known as Hampton Court in King's Lynn serves as a particularly good illustration (Fig. 10).⁶⁷ This house-complex combined accommodation for a sizeable household and a substantial

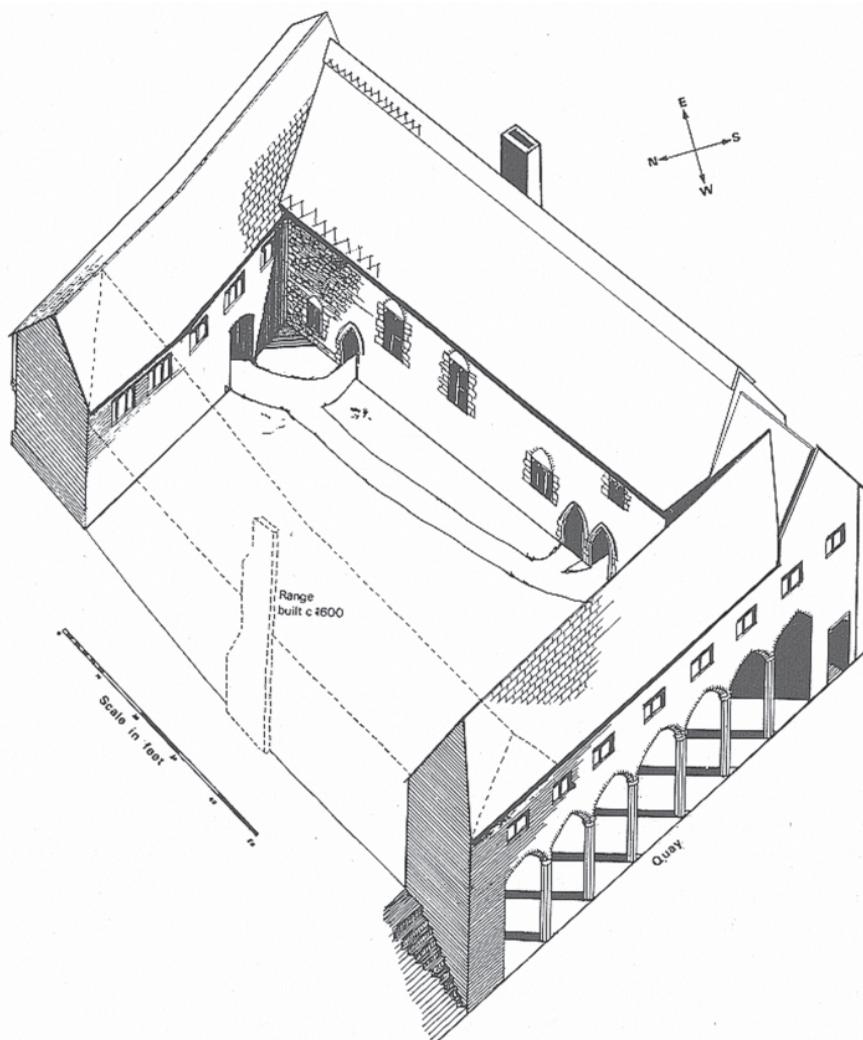


FIG. 10. Hampton Court, King's Lynn, reconstruction, isometric drawing, reproduced from Vanessa Parker, *The Making of Kings Lynn* (Chichester 1971), fig. 8

By kind permission of Phillimore & Co. Ltd

arcaded warehouse on its river side. Its location adjacent to the Steelyard recalls the earlier history of the Lynn factory as a composite residential property before it was acquired by the Hanse, just as the Venetian *Fondaco dei Turchi* began existence as a house before it became a *fondaco*. What, in the end, makes a *Kontor* or *fondaco* is its life as an institution, not any particular form, as is made clear from the examples of Bryggen and Bruges.

Yet a potential connection may link the *fondaco* and the *Kontor*. *Funduqs* and *fondaci* existed in Iberia, southern Italy, and the eastern Mediterranean before the *Kontor* was developed. From the late 11th century crusaders moved through these areas, while Normans and then Swabians ruled in southern Italy.⁶⁸ Might there not have been some interaction, especially as these institutions developed slowly over centuries? By the 13th century Hanseatics were occasionally trading in the Mediterranean in cities with *fondaci* not only in Venice, but also in Seville, Málaga, and Barcelona, at a time, the 1220s, when Emperor Frederick II was regularizing *fondaci* in his lands.⁶⁹ Conversely, Mediterranean merchants including Venetians traded and mingled with Northerners, especially in Bruges and London.⁷⁰ With their locked gates, residence restrictions, and foreigners' justice, *fondaci* and *Kontore* were comparable institutions, even if their administrative agents differed.⁷¹ It is unnecessary to posit direct ties, but perhaps hidden in the shades of the past, there may be links now invisible, and a certain fluidity of mind might benefit historians seeking to make sense of the architecture of merchant counting-houses.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Financial grants toward the research of this paper have been provided by the Arts Research Institute and the Senate Committee on Research of the University of California at Santa Cruz. I would like to thank Dr Paul Richards of King's Lynn for considerable help with my research including arranging my visit to the former Steelyard. I am grateful for discussions with Nicola Coldstream, David Stocker, and John Goodall; to Richard Morris for his question about Baltic business-houses; and to Deborah Howard for assistance with the illustration of the medieval *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*. As ever, I have profited from hospitable conversation with Sarah Pearson.

NOTES

1. D. Keene, 'New discoveries at the Hanseatic Steelyard in London', *Hansisches Geschichtsblätter*, 107 (1989), 24. Keene accepted an alternative derivation from the Low German verb, *stalen*, meaning to attach a seal to goods.

2. For the quoted definition of 'factory', see the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*. For other terms, see B. Herman, *Town House: Architecture and Material Life in the Early American City, 1780–1830* (Chapel Hill NC 2005), 66, 70, 106 and passim in chapter 4. A *Christmas Carol* (1843) opens with Scrooge in his counting-house, i.e., office.

3. M. Postan, 'The economic and political relations of England and the Hanse from 1400 to 1475', in *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. E. Power and M. Postan (London 1933), 148; E. M. Carus-Wilson, 'The medieval trade of the ports of the Wash', *Medieval Archaeology*, 6–7 (1962–63), 198; N. Jörn, 'With money and bloode': *Der Londoner Stalhof im Spannungsfeld der englisch-hansischen Beziehungen im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert*, Quellen und Darstellungen zur Hansischen Geschichte, Neue Folge, 50 (Cologne 2000), 410. The literature on the Hanse is voluminous; in this short paper only the most applicable texts will be cited.

4. O. R. Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World: Lodging, Trade, and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge 2003), 2.

5. Carus-Wilson, 'Ports of the Wash', 182. Chester and Bristol were excluded from the Pipe Roll evidence.

6. V. Parker, *The Making of Kings Lynn: Secular Buildings from the 11th to the 17th Century*, King's Lynn Archaeological Survey, 1 (Chichester 1971), 3; H. Clarke and A. Carter, *Excavations in King's Lynn, 1963–1970*, King's Lynn Archaeological Survey, 2 (London 1977), 445. The quotation is from N. J. Williams, *The Maritime Trade of the East Anglian Ports, 1550–1590* (Oxford 1988), 55.
7. Postan, 'England and the Hanse', 137; P. Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, trans. and ed. D. S. Ault and S. H. Steinberg (Stanford 1970), 316; J. D. Fudge, *Cargoes, Embargoes, and Emissaries: The Commercial and Political Interaction of England and the German Hanse, 1450–1510* (Toronto 1995), ix and xii.
8. Williams, *Maritime Trade*, 7; P. Richards, *King's Lynn* (Chichester 1990), 25–32, 139.
9. Jörn, 'Money and bloode', 410.
10. E. M. Carus-Wilson, 'The German Hanse in the economy of medieval England', in *Aspects of Anglo-German Relations through the Centuries*, ed. P. Kluge and P. Alter (Stuttgart 1978), 21; Fudge, *Cargoes*, 99–101, 105–08, 145, 163, 210–15; Williams, *Maritime Trade*, 59, 100, and 149–50.
11. S. Jenks, 'Trade and relations between Lynn and the Hanse in the Middle Ages', in *Essays in Hanseatic History*, ed. K. Friedland and P. Richards (Dereham 2005), 94 and 97; P. Richards, 'The hinterland and overseas trade of King's Lynn 1205–1537: an introduction', in *Essays in Hanseatic History*, 17; Carus-Wilson, 'Ports of the Wash', 196; Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, 39; Williams, *Maritime Trade*, 97–98; J. M. Lappenberg, *Urkundliche Geschichte des hansischen Stahlhofes zu London* (Hamburg 1851), ii, 205–06; also printed in D. Owen ed., *The Making of King's Lynn: A Documentary Survey*, Records of Social and Economic History, ns, 9 (London 1984), 331.
12. H. L. Bradfer-Lawrence, 'The merchants of Lynn', in *A Supplement to Blomefield's Norfolk*, ed. Clement Ingleby (London 1929), 151, n. 6; Jenks, 'Lynn and the Hanse', 104–05; Richards, 'The hinterland', 18–19; Parker, *Making of King's Lynn*, 27 and 36.
13. Jenks, 'Lynn and the Hanse', 106.
14. The story is complicated; T. H. Lloyd, *England and the German Hanse, 1157–1611: A Study of Their Trade and Commercial Diplomacy* (Cambridge 1991), 285–86; Fudge, *Cargoes*, 159; Richards, 'The hinterland', 18; Jenks, 'Lynn and the Hanse', 94, 103–06.
15. Jörn, 'Money and bloode', 409; Fudge, *Cargoes*, 109; Lappenberg, *Urkundliche Geschichte*, ii, 209–10, extracts in Owen, *Making of King's Lynn*, 336.
16. *With Ships and Goods and Merchandise: King's Lynn and the Hanse*, exhibition catalogue (King's Lynn 1998), 14, Norfolk Record Office, BL VIII (a) 1.
17. Jörn, 'Money and bloode', 11 and 410.
18. Keene, 'New discoveries', 18–19.
19. D. Purcell, 'Der hansische "Steelyard" in King's Lynn, Norfolk, England', in *Hanse in Europa: Brücke zwischen den Märkten, 12.–17. Jahrhundert* (Cologne 1973), 110.
20. Parker, *Making of King's Lynn*, 117; W. A. Pantin, 'The merchants' houses and warehouses of King's Lynn', *Medieval Archaeology*, 6 (1962), 178–79, put the south range at 'about 150 ft long' and believed the north range to be a late-16th- or 17th-century remodelling of the medieval wing; Clarke and Carter in *Excavations in King's Lynn, 1963–1970*, 465, referred to work of 1484 in the south range as the same as walling in the north-east corner; I found no indication of why this particular date was cited.
21. Parker, *Making of King's Lynn*, 117.
22. *Ibid.*, at least as of c. 1970; the sections I viewed showed reconstituted truss-work.
23. Parker, *Making of King's Lynn*, 67–69; T. P. Smith, *The Medieval Brickmaking Industry in England 1400–1450*, BAR British Series, 138 (Oxford 1985), 36, 61, 102.
24. Parker, *Making of King's Lynn*, 117; however, Purcell, 'Der hansische "Steelyard"', 110, found remnants of external windows in the north range during the renovation, commenting that the fragments might belong to the pre-Hanseatic structure given the lack of correspondence of the windows to the extant floor levels.
25. While D. Keene, 'Guildhall und Stalhof in London: Die deutsche Guildhall und ihre Umgebung', in *Die Hanse: Lebenswirklichkeit und Mythos*, ed. J. Bracker, V. Henn and R. Postel, 3rd edn (Lübeck 1999), 207, noted that the small chambers responded to rental conditions of the 17th century, probably seen on this earlier plan, he remarked in 'New Discoveries', 20, that already by c. 1300 the long tracts of land had been subdivided into smaller parcels, each five to ten metres across. Furthermore, he also recognized the existence of larger cellars, both of which are shown in fig. 1, in his earlier article.
26. Parker, *Making of King's Lynn*, 117.
27. Parker, *Making of King's Lynn*, 61.
28. Parker, *Making of King's Lynn*, 117 and 113; a similar roof type has been dated to c. 1510 at Thoresby College, *ibid.*, 73; Keene, 'Guildhall und Stalhof', 208.
29. Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, 39–40; Jörn, 'Money and bloode', 306–07 and 405–07.
30. Windgoose Lane according to J. Schofield, *The Building of London from the Conquest to the Great Fire*, rev. 3rd edn (Stroud 1999), 120; also indicated in Keene, 'New discoveries', 17, fig. 1, and Lappenberg, *Urkundliche Geschichte*, ii, pl. II, who labelled the functions of the spaces including the garden mentioned

below, but the accuracy of the plan of 1667 based on Hollar has been disputed. Keene, *ibid.*, 22, noted that the plan of c. 1598 (fig. 6) must be missing its western edge.

31. Keene, 'New discoveries', fig. 1 shows the site c. 1300; see also 21; *idem*, 'Guildhall und Stalhof', 202.

32. Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, 6.

33. Jörn, 'Money and bloode', 350 and 405. Both Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, 40, and Keene, 'New discoveries', *passim*, mentioned multiple properties in the Steelyard, but the plural 'Stiliards', labelled on a view of London of 1559 (fig. 5), probably derives from the several lanes running through the area.

34. Keene, 'Guildhall und Stalhof', 207, described a typical apartment as containing storage or shop below and dwelling above. Some merchants also lived outside the Steelyard; Postan, 'England and the Hanse', 149.

35. Richards, 'The hinterland', 115; Jörn, 'Money and bloode', 412; Williams, *Maritime Trade*, 150.

36. Richards, *King's Lynn*, 12; Bradfer-Lawrence, 'The merchants of Lynn', 482. The Germans held the London Steelyard until 1853; Keene, 'New discoveries', 15.

37. Purcell, 'Der hansische "Steelyard"', 112; Richards, 'The hinterland', 115.

38. Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, 105.

39. For examples, see Dollinger, *The German Hansa*; Fudge, *Cargoes*, 111.

40. Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, 101–02, 162–63, 314; A. d'Haenens, 'The Tyskebyruggen in Bergen', in *Europe of the North Sea and the Baltic: The World of the Hanse*, ed. A. d'Haenens (Antwerp 1984), 197–205; K. Helle et al., *Bryggen: The Hanseatic Settlement in Bergen*, Det Hanseatiske museums skrifter, 24 (Bergen 1982); I. Øye and A. Ågotnes, *Guide to the Permanent Exhibitions in Bryggens Museum* (Bergen 1986). My thanks to Nicola Coldstream for sending me a copy of the last.

41. Øye and Ågotnes, *Bryggens Museum*, 16.

42. Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, xi, 99–101, 182–83, 312; J. Blankoff, 'The Peterhof in Novgorod', in *The World of the Hanse*, ed. A. d'Haenens, 183–87; N. Angermann, 'The Hanse and the Russian world', in *ibid.*, 267–71, and *idem*, 'Nowgorod — das Kontor im Osten', in *Lebenswirklichkeit und Mythos*, ed. J. Bracker, V. Henn and R. Postel, 234–41.

43. K. Krüger, 'Church and church business in Hanseatic agencies', in *Essays in Hanseatic History*, ed. K. Friedland and P. Richards, 89; Angermann, 'The Hanse and the Russian world', 267.

44. Krüger, 'Church and church business', 83; Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, 103, 182; J.-P. Sosson, 'The Oosterlingenhuis in Bruges', in *The World of the Hanse*, ed. A. d'Haenens, 175.

45. Postan, 'England and the Hanse', 93–94; Carus-Wilson, 'Ports of the Wash', 199; Jörn, 'Money and bloode', 13–16.

46. Carus-Wilson, 'Ports of the Wash', 198; Lloyd, *England and the German Hanse*, 175; and W. Stark, 'English merchants in Danzig', in *Essays in Hanseatic History*, ed. K. Friedland and P. Richards, 65; Richards, 'The hinterland', 19. In Bergen the English acquired warehouses in the later 14th century and later possessed a *gård* on Bryggen; K. Helle et al., *Bryggen*, 24.

47. H. Ewe in H. Lehmann et al., *Die Altstadt von Stralsund: Untersuchungen zum Baubestand und zur städtebaulichen Denkmalpflege* (Berlin 1958), 22–24; Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, 268.

48. Postan, 'England and the Hanse', 108–14; Fudge, *Cargoes*, 100–01, 105–07, 158; Jenks, 'Lynn and the Hanse', 100–01 and 106; Richards, 'The Hinterland', 19.

49. Postan, 'England and the Hanse', 96–97, 101, 109–17, 150; Lloyd, *England and the German Hanse*, 175–76; Fudge, *Cargoes*, 58–63; and Stark, 'English merchants', 65.

50. Jenks, 'Lynn and the Hanse', 102.

51. In existence by c. 1390 the *Artushof*, like the 1535 edifice for the Lübecker *Schiffergesellschaft*, served the long-distance traders of the city and later all such merchants including foreigners; Fudge, *Cargoes*, 97; A. d'Haenens, 'Intermediaries', in *The World of the Hanse*, ed. A. d'Haenens, 72; Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, 409–10.

52. G. A. C. Sandeman, *Calais under English Rule* (Oxford 1908), 64, quoting P. Bernard, *Annales de Calais et du Pays Reconquis* (Saint-Omer 1715), 70.

53. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 4, n. 7, and 110, n. 4; D. Howard, *Venice and the East: The Impact of the Islamic World on Venetian Architecture 1100–1500* (New Haven 2000), 237, n. 99.

54. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 317; also 39–40 and 68.

55. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 2, 6–11, and 161.

56. For Alexandria, see Howard, *Venice and the East*, 36, fig. 31, and p. 123; Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 256–57, discussed terminology. For the Sarhan, see H. Stierlin, *Turkey: From the Selçuks to the Ottomans* (Cologne 2002), 57–62; K. Erdmann, *Das Anatolische Karavansaray des 13. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin 1961), 130–35; B. Ünsal, *Turkish Islamic Architecture* (London 1973), 49; thanks go to Fikret Yegül for bibliographic help, and leading the tour for the Society of Architectural Historians on which I visited these buildings.

57. <http://www.covefort.com>

58. The commune of Venice obtained the site in 1222; Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 318. On forming the Hanse, see Lloyd, *England and the German Hanse*, 14–20; and Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, xi and *passim*.

59. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 316; on p. 317 she noted steady commerce between Venice and German merchants since the early Middle Ages.

60. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 321–22. Remodelling occurred in 1319, 1372, and 1401, because of fires and increasing business; Howard, *Venice and the East*, 130, also cited renovation in 1423–24.

61. From the 1508 leases Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 321, observed that there were sixty-eight leased rooms, eight unoccupied, twenty-five storage vaults and six rooms on the third floor, where rents were cheaper, reserved for short-stay “vendors of cheap cloth”. By 1580 a visitor estimated the number of residents including servants at about two hundred; *ibid.*, 322.

62. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 322.

63. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 318; Howard, *Venice and the East*, 129.

64. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 317–21 and n. 51.

65. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 320, citing Pietro Casola, *Canon Pietro Casola's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the Year 1494*, ed. and trans. Margaret Newett (Manchester 1907), 129.

66. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 4. However, she also referred to slippage in trying to understand these structures. On p. 309, she remarked that the term ‘fondaco’ was hardly used in northern Europe; instead traders there employed local words.

67. Parker, *Making of King's Lynn*, 40 and 57–59.

68. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 201 and 203, cited a *fondaco* in Amalfi that the Norman Robert Guiscard, Duke of Apulia and Calabria, granted in 1080 to Montecassino.

69. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 205–06.

70. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 108, 307, and 318; Dollinger, *The German Hansa*, 86 and 258–59.

71. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 323, noted that the Venetian administration differed from the usual management of a *fondaco*.

Masters of Kirkstead: Hunting for Salvation

PAUL EVERSON AND DAVID STOCKER

This is a paper about interrelationships between buildings and landscapes. It explores the ways that both were moulded by successive lords — religious and secular — in order to make political, social and religious points. In particular, we seek to explore the relationship between two well-known groups of buildings, Kirkstead Abbey and Tattershall Castle, both with each other, and with the distinctive landscape maintained for hunting, in which they were set. We shall use as a focus for our study the beautiful (if somewhat mysterious) surviving chapel of St Leonard, whose raison d'être can be understood more clearly if seen against the backdrop of its surrounding landscape.

INTRODUCTION

BOTH Kirkstead and Tattershall lie towards the southern end of a tongue of land created by the rivers Witham and Bain in Lincolnshire, which has a markedly different character from the surrounding landscape (Fig. 1). To the west lie the Witham fens, an extension of the great fen to the south with the medieval river flowing along its eastern boundary. To the north-east and east, beyond the Bain valley, lie the foothills of the Lincolnshire Wolds; from the 10th century a landscape of nucleated settlements, each with its parochial church. Except along the more fertile alluvial margins, the ridge between the two rivers is poor sandy land, still relatively well covered with a mixture of woodland and heathland. This is the southern end of a continuous belt of such country, five miles wide, that once extended southwards from Market Rasen and was known as 'Linwood'.

Tattershall has always been one of the two gateways to Lindsey — that region of Lincolnshire, north of the Witham and east of the Trent, whose separateness was periodically made explicit by separate administration.¹ The other is Lincoln itself. No doubt this gateway role accounts for the recurrent aspiration amongst great men to hold the lordship of Tattershall and, to some extent, for the architectural ambition displayed by successive buildings here.

ORIGINS OF A HUNTING LANDSCAPE

KIRKSTEAD is that type of place-name formation which scholars of place-names call 'appellative' (i.e. common nouns describing function or status within an estate network, which become used as place-names). It is striking that there are many place-names of this appellative form in close proximity, indeed all the main names within the area under scrutiny seem to be appellatives (Fig. 2). Coningsby, 'the king's farm' for example, is probably a scandinavianization of an earlier OE 'king's tun'.² Kirkby, 'the settlement with a church', is likely to refer to a pre-Viking church and perhaps to be an earlier 'churchton'.³ Tumbly, as 'the settlement related to a — perhaps abandoned or deserted — enclosure',

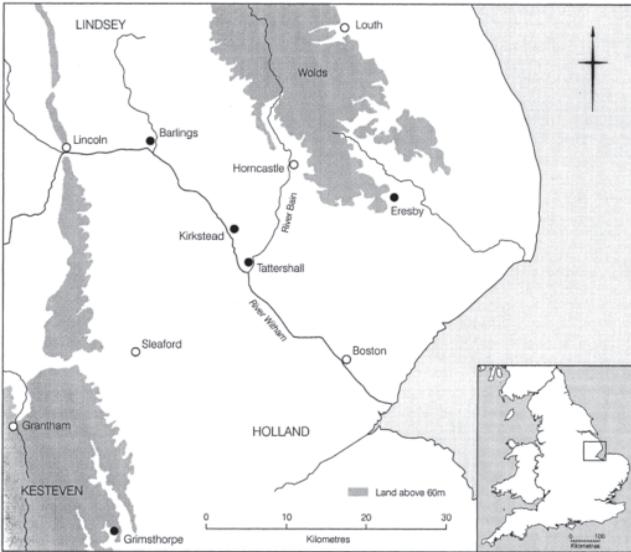


FIG. 1. Location map of principal places mentioned in the text

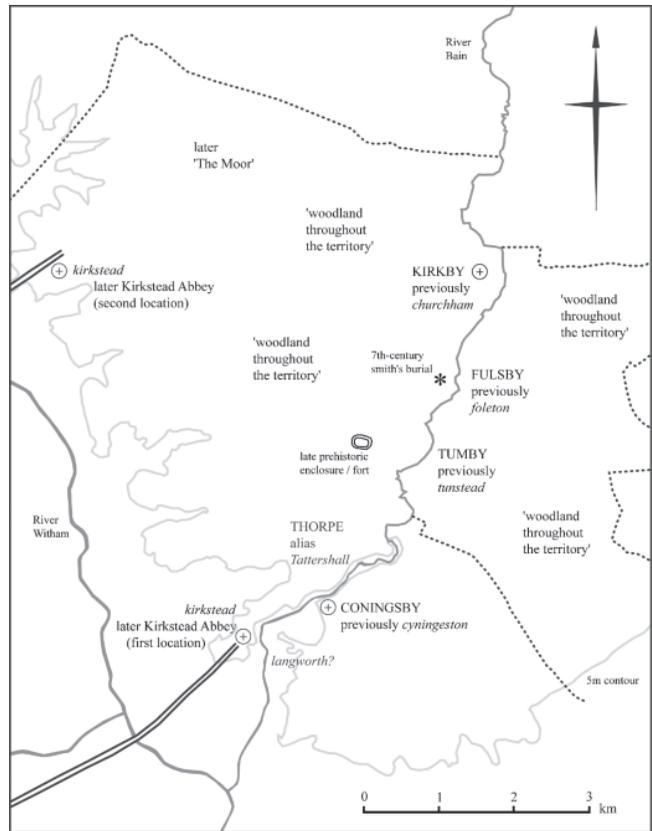


FIG. 2. Diagram of place-names in the Tattershall estate

too, might have been earlier ‘tun-stead’.⁴ Fulsby was ‘the foals’ farm’, or stud farm, analogous to the OE versions of the same place-name at Foulridge in Lancs, Fowberry in Northumberland, or Statfold/ Stotfold in Staffordshire, Bedfordshire and the West Riding of Yorkshire, whilst the minor name of Langworth, ‘the long ford or river crossing’, is an appellative; and Armtree, also recorded in Coningsby, is too, if it meant ‘outlaws’ tree’ (that is ‘gallows’) as its elements suggest.⁵

Even the *simplex* Thorpe, if it replaced an earlier OE Þrop (equivalent to Latin *fundus* ‘farm, estate’⁶) rather than representing a minor, secondary Scandinavian settlement, can be understood as a further and key component of an early estate. Indeed, this is strongly suggested by the way that Domesday Book records land-holding here. No holding is recorded against Tattershall, but all the components that later formed the local elements of the barony are returned against the name ‘Thorpe’. Even more significantly, there were intimate tenurial connections between ‘Thorpe’ and Kirkby-on-Bain, its next neighbour to the north, and with Kirkby’s constituents on the east side of the Bain at Tumbly and Fulsby.

The place-names strongly suggest, then, a single entity: a territory or estate.⁷ In Domesday Book recurrent references to ‘woodland throughout the territory’ confirm its unity. Economically, this territory was characterized by rather low population and settlement density, and small amounts of arable; but there was plentiful meadow, presumably on the river flood plains, and numerous mills and fisheries. But most distinctive were the very large areas of woodland for pannage, and therefore suitable for hunting. It contained specialized features that presumably relate to this specific function: the king’s house at Coningsby (providing accommodation for riding parties from the royal administrative centre at Horncastle), the apparent stud-farm, and the gallows tree, where offenders against the ‘vert’ might be punished. The estate was evidently already established at Domesday, but it may have been considerably more ancient, as it has been proposed that the remarkable later 7th-century so-called ‘smith’s burial’ at Tattershall Thorpe owes its presence to the existence locally of a royal estate.⁸ The earlier focus of the territory may have been the late prehistoric enclosure at ‘Tattershall Thorpe’ across from Tumbly; and we might compare its geographical separation from the putative royal *tun* at Coningsby with that of the late prehistoric enclosure at Crow Hill (where reoccupation in the early Anglo-Saxon period has also been demonstrated) and its associated, documented, 8th-century royal vill at Irthlingborough (both in Northamptonshire).⁹

Three generations after Domesday, the Cistercian abbey of Kirkstead was established in this landscape, some 2.5 miles upstream from Tattershall. This was not the site of its original foundation, however, as Kirkstead was one of those monasteries — including Barlings and Haverholme locally, and nearly half of all Cistercian foundations further afield¹⁰ — which, after establishment at one location, is reported to have moved site. In Kirkstead’s case, the final location was a site which the place-name shows had previously been marked by an ecclesiastical foundation of some kind. But additionally, we wish to propose that the original location was also called ‘Kirkstead’.

We have argued elsewhere that the location where the Kirkstead community first settled was near modern Tattershall.¹¹ Here, we wish to suggest, an early church had already been established that was the fore-runner of the chapel whose documented 13th-century dedication was to St Mary. We suggest, furthermore, that when the Cistercian house of Kirkstead was founded (as a daughter of Fountains in 1139 by Hugh Brito, son of Eudo fitzSpirewic, lord of Tattershall — whose family eventually adopted the name de

Tateshale), it was as the successor to this pre-existing chapel. This was also certainly a ‘kirkstead’ — that is an isolated church site as distinct from a settlement with a church — and the new foundation, we suggest, took this as its name. The foundation charter spells it out: the location was generically a ‘kirkstead’ (as the locals called it), ‘id est locus ecclesiae’.¹²

In the late Anglo-Saxon period, both Kirksteads were distinguished through their place-names from the other sorts of ecclesiastical provision serving this territory, which we might guess was originally based at the settlement called ‘Kirkby’. The two Kirksteads — one at the east end of the Martin–Woodhall cross-Witham causeway; the other at the east end of the Billingham–Tattershall cross-valley causeway — were not only both Christian guardians of their respective causeways,¹³ but they also lay at the entrances from the west onto this distinctive wooded heathland plateau. We shall see that, although both Kirksteads developed into substantial building complexes, both also remained intimately connected with this hunting territory, regardless of whether they were held in religious or secular hands.

KIRKSTEAD AT TATTERSHALL, AND ITS RELOCATION

THE parallels for custodial churches at the ends of causeways, combined with the place-name Kirkstead, then establish the probable presence of an Anglo-Scandinavian church at the southernmost of our two sites: a place which was also called Tattershall, ‘a nook of land’ — OE *halh* — associated with a man with a dithematic, aristocratic name of early type.¹⁴ The detailed topography is precisely ‘a nook’, a narrow low promontory as defined by the 5m contour poking out into the peat lands (Fig. 3 upper left) and lying, furthermore, at the tip of the well-wooded estate we have already identified. Here, if we wish to match the abbey’s foundation documentation literally, is a location ‘*horroris et vastae solitudinis* . . . containing a limited level area but surrounded by brambles and marshes’, as the foundation account has it.

This putatively early chapel that stood on the promontory where Tattershall Castle now stands was first securely documented in 1160.¹⁵ But one ‘Ralph the priest of Tattershall’, who was connected to the de Tateshale family and to the newly founded Kirkstead Abbey, gave land to the abbey in *c.* 1140 and it seems likely that he was also associated with this chapel.¹⁶ In 1243 and 1250 institutions were made to a rectory at Tattershall and E. M. Sympson thought that this represented the creation of the parish church here.¹⁷ Certainly, the church of Tattershall is listed routinely in the taxation surveys of 1254 and *c.* 1291, in the latter case with the high value of £21 6s. 8d.¹⁸ The relationship between the later parochial church and the earlier chapel is unclear, but the major change preceding the apparent foundation of the rectory was the establishment of the castle somewhere in the same vicinity. The ecclesiastical situation here remained complicated, however, and the church itself had a rector and a staff of four or five priests in the later 14th century.¹⁹ The complexity of the institution had not been resolved by the time of the death of Ralph Lord Cromwell’s grandmother Matilda in 1419, when she — like Joan de Driby in 1323 before her — held the advowsons (plural) of the church of St Peter at Tattershall and those of the chapels in the same church.²⁰ According to Dorothy Owen one of these separately endowed chapels was dedicated to St Mary, and, given its dedication, may represent the earlier chapel on the promontory around which the monastic community first settled. Owen thought it lay in the churchyard of Holy Trinity College, and Douglas Simpson presumed it lay ‘more or less on the site of the present



FIG. 3. Tattershall: church, castle and market, (top) in the mid-12th century; (bottom left) in the time of Robert de Tateshale 3; (bottom right) in the time of Ralph Lord Cromwell

building' (Fig. 3).²¹ Simpson was probably referring to the same discovery of foundations 'beneath the south transept floor' that had been reported before the First World War.²² In the early 16th century, the dedication to St Mary was linked with St Nicholas 'within the castle'.²³

A feature of the present layout of Holy Trinity is its constrained and formal rectilinear layout, closely integrated with the college and bedehouses. It looks (one might think) like a new, planned creation, superseding and overlying rather than continuing a pre-existing church and churchyard. The choice of dedication, too, may have been intended to trump or tidy up a pre-existing complexity, though without, in its full form of 'the Holy Trinity, the Virgin and SS Peter, John the Baptist and John the Evangelist', eliminating all trace of it.²⁴ Prior to the establishment of Holy Trinity, however, St Mary's certainly had a churchyard,²⁵ though the evidence may have a more complex story to tell than hitherto supposed. Burials have been found outside the western boundary of the present churchyard, the earlier and more extensive graveyard having been cut through by the castle's eastern moat. This arm of the moat has always been attributed to Ralph Cromwell's reorganization of the castle in the 1430s and 1440s, in which case the burials should pre-date the establishment of Holy Trinity College.²⁶ Unfortunately, there appears to be no direct evidence for such an early date, and one of the burials within the original, larger area can be dated by a finger-ring of 16th- or 17th-century type.²⁷ In 1594 the second Clinton Earl of Lincoln was accused by the parishioners of Tattershall of throwing part of the churchyard into the castle and disturbing fresh burials.²⁸ The evidence points, then, towards the conclusion that the dyke between the eastern castle wall and the churchyard was cut in the late 16th century and that the present constrained churchyard represents a contraction of that date rather than the expansion, much earlier, of the castle across the former monastic site.

We remain no closer, then, to understanding precisely where the church we believe preceded the castle at Tattershall was located. It could have been towards the eastern end of the available space, beneath Holy Trinity; but as yet we do not have the evidence to rule out the possibility that its graveyard once extended much further west, beneath Tattershall Castle itself. In such circumstances, the parochial chapel would have been enveloped by the new de Tateshale castle in the early 13th century, like that at Castle Rising or that at Framlingham.²⁹

But even if uncertainty persists about the precise location of the early chapel of St Mary, near or within which, we suggest, the abbey of Kirkstead was first founded, we may still be able to say something about its appearance, as a 'few moulded stones of Norman workmanship', which are earlier in date than the foundation of the castle, were removed from the castle ditches by Lord Curzon's workmen during the rehabilitation of the site after 1912. They had probably been dumped there during the rapid period of demolition and clearance of the site in the 1790s.³⁰ They bear witness to an expensive building of the mid-12th century on the castle site, before the castle itself was founded. This structure might represent the first monastic foundation of Kirkstead there following 1139.

But, as we have seen, the Cistercian community moved from this location within a generation, although at what precise date is unknown. And, as was also the case with Haverholme and Louth Park, the factors that made the first establishment at Tattershall appropriate were replicated at the second. The community's new site was also located at the Lindsey end of a cross-valley causeway (the next to the north), and we have suggested that here too it may have been the successor to an earlier ecclesiastical guardian. The same place-name was in use as at the first site, that is the generic, common-noun,

'kirkstead'; a founding name that could be carried from Tattershall and, with delightful appropriateness, applied anew.

Cistercians were frequently attracted to earlier Christian sites in this way, some of which had also enjoyed a pre-Christian religious and ritual past, as we have suggested was the case with certain monastic houses of other orders in the Witham valley.³¹ At its new site Kirkstead Abbey stood in a similar setting to the post-Conquest re-foundation at Bardney, 7 miles to the north, on the south side of a peaty embayment (Fig. 5). Since the approach from the north was across the embayment and was causewayed, the new monastery effectively recreated the relationship between the church and the cross-valley causeway. This contrived setting may confirm our suspicion that the new Cistercian foundation was fully alert to the semiotics of place in the Witham valley. But, like its first site at Tattershall, the new location was also set alongside a principal entrance to the great lordly hunting estate from the west.

Such reoccupation of significant early sites is well documented at Cistercian houses elsewhere. At Roche, the founding party were drawn to an existing chapel; and a pre-existing chapel and numinous group of springs form part of the backdrop to the



FIG. 4. Engraved general view of St Leonard's Kirkstead from the north-west, from Parker, *St Leonard's Church, Kirkstead*, pl. VI

foundation of Fountains, as created by a dissident group of monks from York. The name Kirkstall indicates an earlier church or chapel; a chapel-of-ease formed part of the lands given to the monks of Netley before they moved there; and one of us has suggested that a pre-Viking monastic community might have occupied the site that became Louth Park.³²

The cause for the move to Kirkstead is usually attributed to the monks' dissatisfaction with the 'horror and solitude' of Tattershall. But it may have had as much to do with the constrictions of the site and excessive proximity to a notably expansionist lordship. This is already evident in Domesday Book, which shows Eudo, Hugh's father, asserting tenure of every holding that made up 'Thorpe' — either directly of the king or of the bishop of Durham.³³ By c. 1115, the date of the Lindsey Survey, that lordship was consolidated in Hugh's hands and was known as Tattershall. In the run of de Tateshale *Inquisitiones Post Mortem* from 1233 on, this is the established form of the Lincolnshire core of the barony, with Tattershall held part from the crown and part from the bishop of Durham. It seems that the early-12th-century de Tateshale lords were promoting their new secular estate at the expense of the older royal vill of Coningsby just across the River Bain, and the growth of this centre may have made the first site of Kirkstead less attractive to the monks by the mid-12th century.

The tenurial consolidation of their estate centre at Tattershall was matched by a series of landscape developments typical of vigorous 12th- and 13th-century lordship. Robert de Tateshale 2 (d. 1212) obtained the formal right to found the market at Tattershall in 1201, perhaps confirming an existing initiative but essentially founding a new town and transforming the settlement (Fig. 3, below left).³⁴ The fine paid by Robert for this important grant reflected the hunting purpose to which this estate had previously been devoted and will have been intended by the Crown as a symbolic reminder to the de Tateshales of the history of the territory into which they were now importing a larger population. The fine for the licence to establish the market and town was 'a well-trained goshawk'.³⁵ Robert de Tateshale 3 (c. 1201–49), who married Mabel, heiress of Hugh d'Albini earl of Sussex, twice received licence to crenellate his castle at Tattershall (in 1231 and 1239) and so develop the family *caput*.³⁶ The 1231 licence also confirms Robert's right to free warren on the 'chase'. These steps formalized the hunting landscape enjoyed by Tattershall's lords in later eras — by Ralph Cromwell in the 15th century and Charles Brandon in the 16th. Both of these later masters of Tattershall were also serious huntsmen, and the hunting background of the estate was, as we shall see, an important aspect of their public image.

THE CHAPEL IN THE FOREST: ST LEONARD'S AT KIRKSTEAD

APART from the fragment of the conventual church south transept,³⁷ the only element of the monastic buildings of Kirkstead standing above ground today, is the little chapel of St Leonard. The significance of this dedication, and its specific appropriateness to the context of lordship and hunting, is something to which we must return. But first, it is necessary to determine the function of this distinctive building, and to do so by combining the evidence of its architectural distinction with its location in the broader monastic landscape.³⁸

Architecturally, St Leonard's is an exceptionally stylish building of early-13th-century date (Fig. 4). The detailing is consistent with a date in the 1220s or 1230s, and is of the highest quality, with clear connections to contemporary work at Lincoln Cathedral.³⁹ The chapel is situated on the southern boundary of the monastic precinct, the core of whose layout survives clearly as earthworks of exceptional quality⁴⁰ and most recent scholars have confidently identified it as a *capella ante portas*.⁴¹ That this cannot be an adequate explanation of its function, however, has been demonstrated by a site survey carried out

by former RCHME staff, combining ground survey of earthworks and transcription of air-photographs of features now levelled by ploughing.⁴² This work revealed a layout with the principal conventual buildings organized around the main cloister in the southern part of a large precinct, with additional monastic buildings to the east and south-east and water supplies servicing them, as expected. It also identified the foundations of a gatehouse in the north boundary of the ditched inner core of the precinct, on the opposite side from St Leonard's. This is probably an inner gatehouse, as occurs in many Cistercian layouts, since the order's regulations placed great emphasis on the reserved status of the conventual buildings, from which seculars were wholly excluded.⁴³ And, even though it looks as though the Kirkstead precinct might have been laid across an existing routeway from the east end of the Kirkstead cross-Witham causeway to the east end of the parallel cross-Witham route at Tattershall, it is unthinkable that seculars might have been given access to a throughway immediately adjacent to a Cistercian cloister.⁴⁴ Indeed, the field archaeology gives no hint of a major access route from the monastic inner core towards the chapel to the south, apart from the modern farm track.

Rather, it is now firmly established that access to the monastic precinct was from the north, via a short road — now 'Abbey Lane' — that sprang at right angles off the ancient east-west cross-valley causeway (Fig. 5).⁴⁵ A mid-13th-century agreement describes following the east-west highway 'as far as the stone cross which is at the end of the causeway which comes from the gate of the abbey'.⁴⁶ That causeway is probably the ditched line of Abbey Lane — which would place the outer gatehouse either at the crossing of the stream latterly known as 'The Sewer', near to Old Hall and Old Hall Farm — or, perhaps at the southern end of the causeway across the embayment, known as 'Gaythusbrigg' near the north-western corner of the abbey's fishpond complex. There may even have been three gatehouses, including one at either end of the causeway. Whatever the details of the approach route to the monastery, however, St Leonard's chapel is quite unrelated to any public approach. It is clearly not *ante portas*.

What, then, was the function of St Leonard's in relation to the abbey itself? In a complementary paper, we have explored two further suggestions: that it might somehow have been a monastic infirmary chapel, tucked away on the reserved or 'quiet' side of the precinct, or alternatively might have served a parochial function. Neither proposition carries any conviction. In particular, there is no record of a medieval parish here, and subsequently the chapel was extra-parochial and a donative. In fact, its rather unusual post-Dissolution history tends to confirm its non-parochial status during the medieval period. None of the suggestions made previously for the building's medieval function, then — as a *capella ante portas*, infirmary chapel, or parochial church — seems satisfactory. Instead, we have used the positive evidence of the building's architectural form to propose that its original function was as a detached chantry chapel created by the de Tateshale lords of Tattershall.⁴⁷ A brief description of its principal features will help illustrate this proposition.

St Leonard's is an elaborate three-bay structure, oriented east-west and lit by pairs of lancets in each bay and a triple lancet composition in the east wall (Fig. 6a). It is vaulted throughout, and the east bay is distinguished from those further west by an additional transverse rib and a historiated vaulting boss depicting the *Agnus Dei* (Fig. 6b). These details suggest there was an altar in this east bay — one presumably served by the fine piscina in the south wall. Perhaps there was a dais or altar step occupying the east half of the east bay, as Nicholson's idealized drawing of the interior envisages, though NMR photos of the building cleared during its restoration just before the First World War show neither clear evidence for this step, nor any survival of original paving.⁴⁸

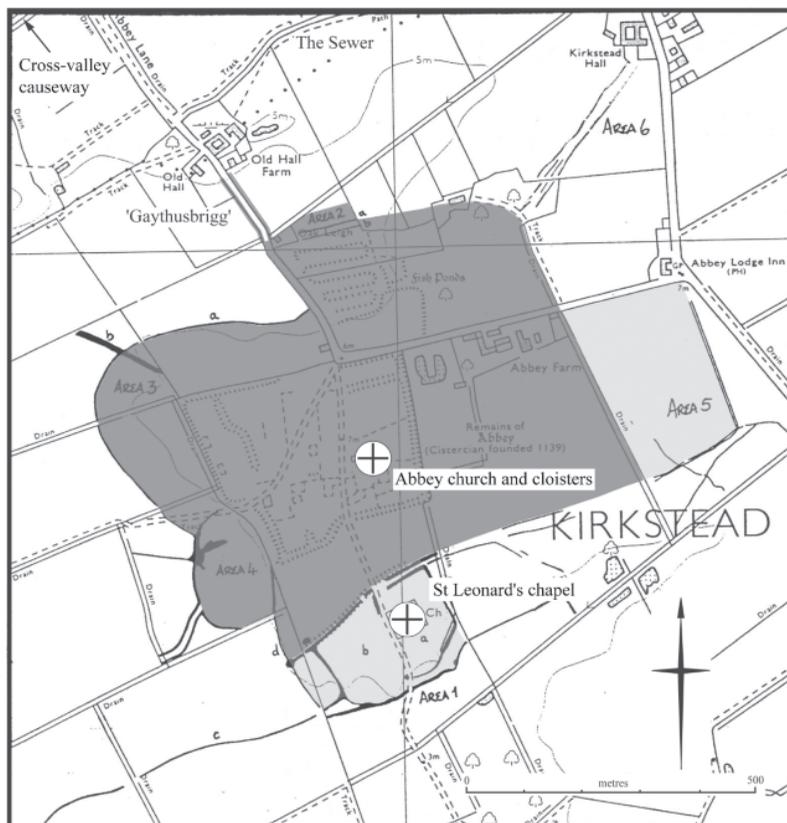


FIG. 5. St Leonard's Kirkstead in context of interpreted plan of the abbey precinct, based on Jecock et al., *Kirkstead Abbey*, Appendix 4 fig. 1

Crown copyright. Courtesy of the National Monuments Record

There is a substantial space above the vault, now lit by a new window in the modern wooden western gable. This gable replaces the hipped form of tiled roof that covered the building until the Edwardian period, and itself replaced a thatched predecessor belonging to its Nonconformist chapel phase. With a vertical stone gable implied by the original design of the façade, however, the roof space would still have been quite large and adequately lit. That it was not a negligible space, but rather accommodation related to the original function of the building, is demonstrated by the integral vice incorporated into the north-west corner of the building. Next to it, in the west bay of the north wall, there was a second original doorway, in addition to the main door in the western, 'show', façade. The specific location of both these features — the vice and the north doorway — at the western end of the chapel is significant, in that it demonstrates that those who serviced the building had access to the whole interior. It was a unity. The staff were not confined to a liturgical arena in the east bay, as might have been expected had this been a parochial chapel or other public ecclesiastical structure.

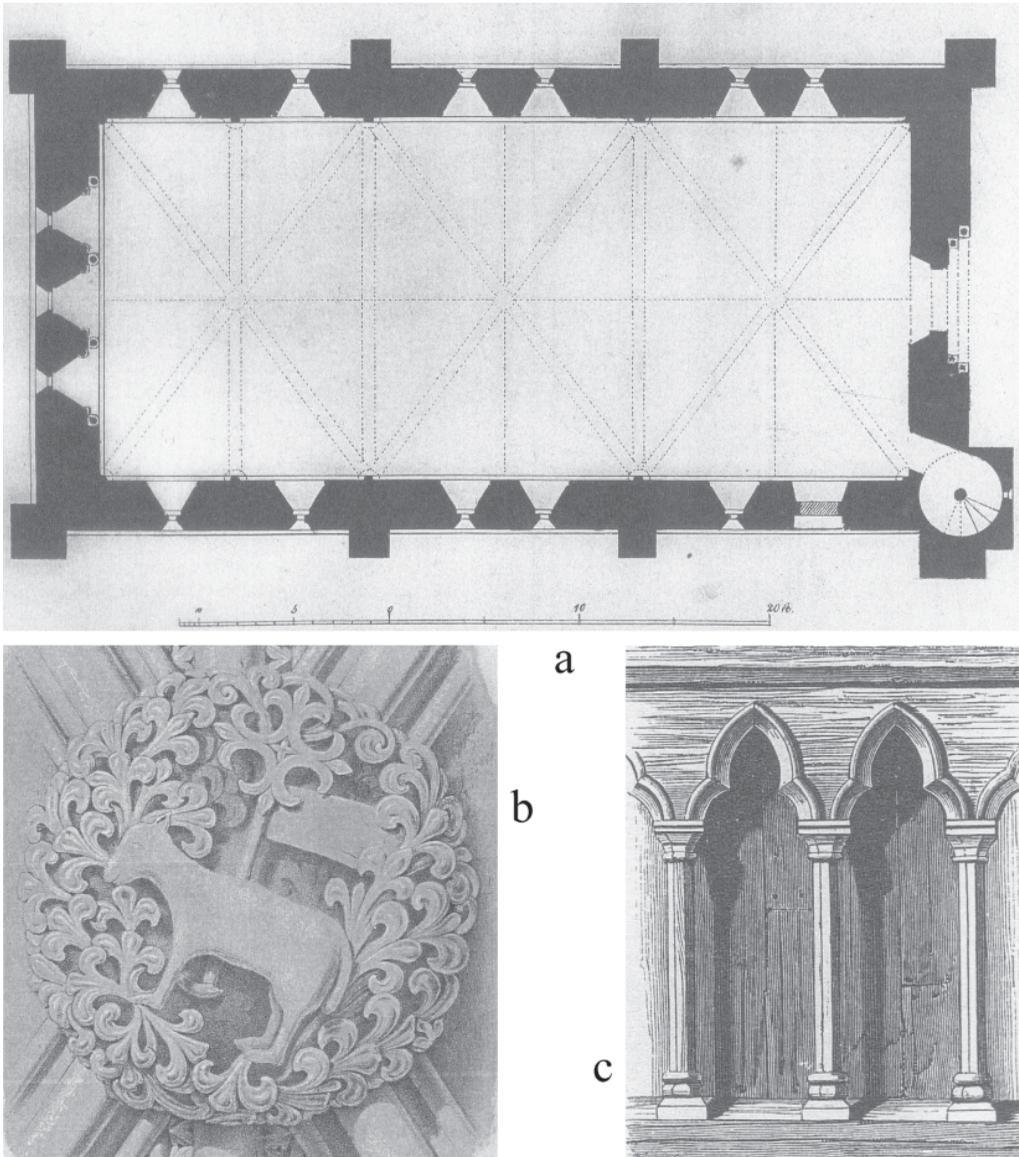


FIG. 6. Architectural details from St Leonard's Kirkstead: (a) plan, (b) eastern vault boss, (c) section of wooden screen, from Parker, *St Leonard's Church, Kirkstead*, 19 and pls I, V

The one factor distracting our attention from that original spatial unity today is the wooden screen, which currently divides the interior into a two-bay 'nave' and one-bay 'chancel', in keeping with the chapel's modern parochial functions. In itself a notable survival, with polygonal shafts and simple pointed trefoiled arches (Fig. 6c), the screen might well — as Pevsner and others have noted — be coeval in date on style-critical

grounds with the building.⁴⁹ But it was made up as late as the early 20th century from bits recovered from pews inherited from the Nonconformist chapel, when its fittings were finally swept away.⁵⁰ That woodwork might not even have come from Kirkstead at all when the Nonconformist chapel was fitted out in the late 17th or 18th centuries; even if it did, there is no reason to presume that the medieval screen from which it in turn derived came from this building rather than from some other part of the monastery.

So we must deduce that the chapel originally consisted of a single unsubdivided internal space. It was serviced by staff who might also use the integral space above the vault, but who enter and leave by the doorway in the north-western corner, towards the monastic conventual buildings; and who circulate throughout the building and not just at the east end. Anyone else with business here approaches through the showy west façade. Such people probably approached the chapel directly from the south on a minor road, rather than from the north. In fact, the route from the south comes only to this building and seems to go no further. St Leonard's chapel, then, has limited, privileged, access and is sited on the monastic boundary.

We argue that this combination of architectural form and topographical location points to a function as a chantry chapel, deliberately situated at the periphery of the monastic precinct. Furthermore, adducing well-documented examples of just such endowments at other Cistercian houses — notably Meaux (East Riding of Yorkshire) and Boxley (Kent) — we have established that such detached chantry chapels represent a building type hitherto scarcely recognized in the archaeological literature. Topographically, they are typically sited within a peripheral zone of closes, which — rather than a single wall-or ditch-line — can be understood to represent the monastic boundary; and their presence seems commonly to reflect agreement negotiated between the monastic house (which supplies or supports the staff) and the patron, who desires a privileged, accessible and often rather visible presence from the endowment.⁵¹ Such endowments occupied a position of interface between the secular and religious worlds: a liminal location that might have had a particular appropriateness for an institution created to accommodate the negotiated transition between life and death.⁵²

The earliest clear documentation for this type of chapel matches the architectural evidence at Kirkstead. Its context is the promotion of the concept of purgatory, and of the power of prayers for the dead, developments given liturgical impetus in the early 13th century by Popes such as Innocent III.⁵³ At this time, the Cistercians came under particular pressure not simply to accommodate secular burial within their precincts, but even more problematically, to sustain an ever increasing volume of suffrages and commemorations for individual souls. The General Chapter ruled broadly in 1217 that seculars could be buried in Cistercian monasteries, but, though numbers of altars within their conventual churches grew, increasingly commemorations were bundled together into periodic intercessions for the whole community of the dead, a process within which memorial masses for the souls of individuals were less prominent. One way, evidently, for influential patrons to maintain their individuality and assert their special relationship with a monastery was to institute a detached chantry. The chapel at Kirkstead is the best surviving example that our preliminary review has identified; but the practice evidently continued through to the generation before the Dissolution, as is shown at Boxley Abbey by both documentary evidence of the endowment of what sounds like a similar institution to that at Kirkstead through the will of Sir Thomas Bouchier in 1512 and by the archaeological evidence of a surviving chapel, apparently of later 15th-century date, there and its very similar topographical relationship to the monastery.⁵⁴

At Kirkstead, two further archaeological details give this interpretation significant support. One is the knight's effigy in Purbeck marble, which was recovered from reuse — face down — as part of the pavement (Fig. 7). Stylistically it dates from the mid-13th century,⁵⁵ and its foliate decoration is close enough to that in the chapel's west door to suggest that they are broadly contemporary. The effigy has traditionally been identified with Robert de Tateshale 2 (d. 1212), whose market grant effectively founded a new town at Tattershall. However, an alternative, more suitable to the style-critical dating, is Robert de Tateshale 3 (d. 1249), whose marriage and royal service — including custody of the royal castles at Bolsover and Lincoln — marked a notable step up, reflected too in his development of the family *caput*.⁵⁶ A last possibility is that the effigy is intended to represent the father, with the institution of the chantry and commissioning of the purbeck memorial being the son's work. We have already seen that the de Tateshales were hereditary patrons of Kirkstead abbey and there is little doubt that they would have pressed the

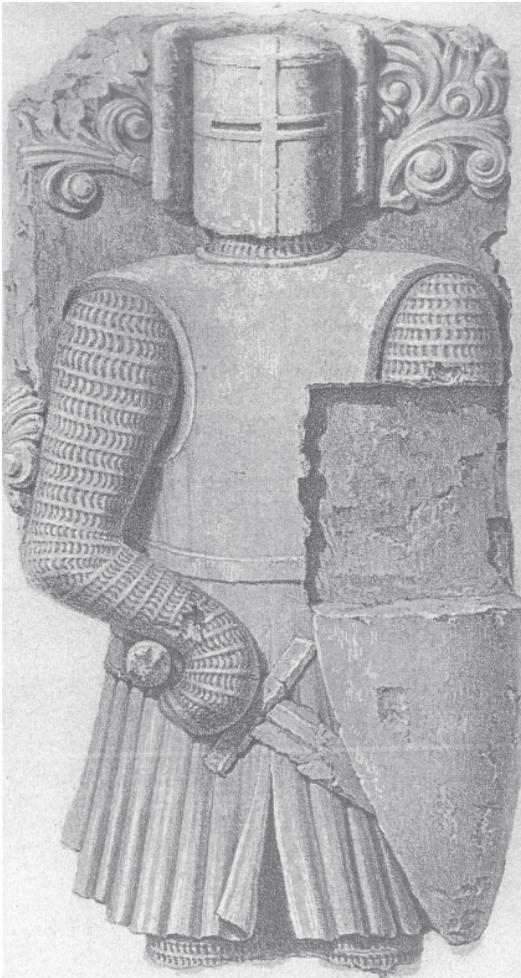


FIG. 7. St Leonard's Kirkstead: effigy, from Parker, *St Leonard's Church, Kirkstead*, pl. V

monks to provide for individual commemoration in the conventual church of their family mausoleum. St Leonard's chapel might be evidence that the monks of Kirkstead resisted this pressure successfully and that a detached chantry chapel on the 'private' side of the monastery was the compromise solution. If this is correct, we might envisage the chapel with the effigy (possibly on a podium) as its principal furnishing, centrally placed within the two western bays.

The second distinctive detail is the west window of *vesica piscis* form (Fig. 4). It functions not so much to illuminate the chapel generally but specifically to light the western bays where we suggest the de Tateshale monument stood in isolation. There is no doubt that it is an original feature.⁵⁷ The decision to use this unusual shape may relate directly to the building's function as a chantry chapel. The *vesica piscis* is, after all, the shape of the 'mandorla', which is used iconographically in a limited number of contexts, typically apocalyptic. It is most likely to have housed a depiction of Christ in Judgement in stained glass, which would be an appropriate iconography for the function we have envisaged for St Leonard's. A rarer but attractive alternative, however, would be the Assumption of the Virgin, for St Mary was taken as their special patron by the Cistercians and dedicatee of all the Order's houses.⁵⁸ Examples of the Assumption in oval mandorlas in stained glass survive from the first decade of the 14th century,⁵⁹ though they are more common in the 15th century, including a local example of c. 1410–30 at Wrangle in Lincolnshire.⁶⁰ There is even an early-16th-century Cistercian example in the gatehouse chapel at Merevale Abbey memorializing Thomas Skevington, former monk at Merevale, abbot of Beaulieu and bishop of Bangor.⁶¹ The unusually narrow paired lancets of the side walls of the building, which might plausibly have contained grisaille glass and produced a relatively ill-lit internal space,⁶² would have tended to emphasize the effect of this west window. On sunny afternoons, we propose, it would have thrown a shaft of light onto the monument, touching the effigy with the image of intercession and promised redemption.

While the architecture persuades us that St Leonard's functioned as a chantry chapel, the best evidence for its identification with the de Tateshales is actually the building's location and landscape context (Fig. 8). The dedication to St Leonard — presuming that it is an original aspect of the chapel⁶³ — also appears to support its identification as a chantry chapel. Leonard was a 6th-century hermit living within the forest of Noblac, where there was a royal hunting lodge. When the Frankish king, Clovis, was hunting one day, accompanied by his pregnant wife, he lent his spiritual aid to the emergency and safe delivery of the child. The king offered Leonard the whole forest for his monastery in return for prayers for his soul, but the hermit requested only an enclave with a boundary only as long as he could ride around on his ass. Leonard is quoted as offering the king what might be seen as a perfect *apologia* for Cistercian monasticism: 'What I desire is only to live in the forest and serve Christ alone, shunning all the riches of this world.'⁶⁴

St Leonard's story translates directly to Kirkstead. Here too, the monastery site granted by the de Tateshales was a mere enclave within the larger forest. There is even an episode in St Leonard's *vita* when the founding monastic community moved to a second site, because the original was deemed unsuitable. Being Cistercian, the de Tateshales' monastery at Kirkstead was dedicated to St Mary, but St Leonard's chapel is located at a critical point on its periphery. It is not only at the boundary between the secular world and the religious, and between life and death, but it is also between the chase and the monastery. In an inversion typical of the complexities of medieval iconography, it can also be seen, therefore, not just as a celebration of the hunter, but also as a place of refuge for the hunted. The human soul was often figured in medieval thought as the hind or the hart, no

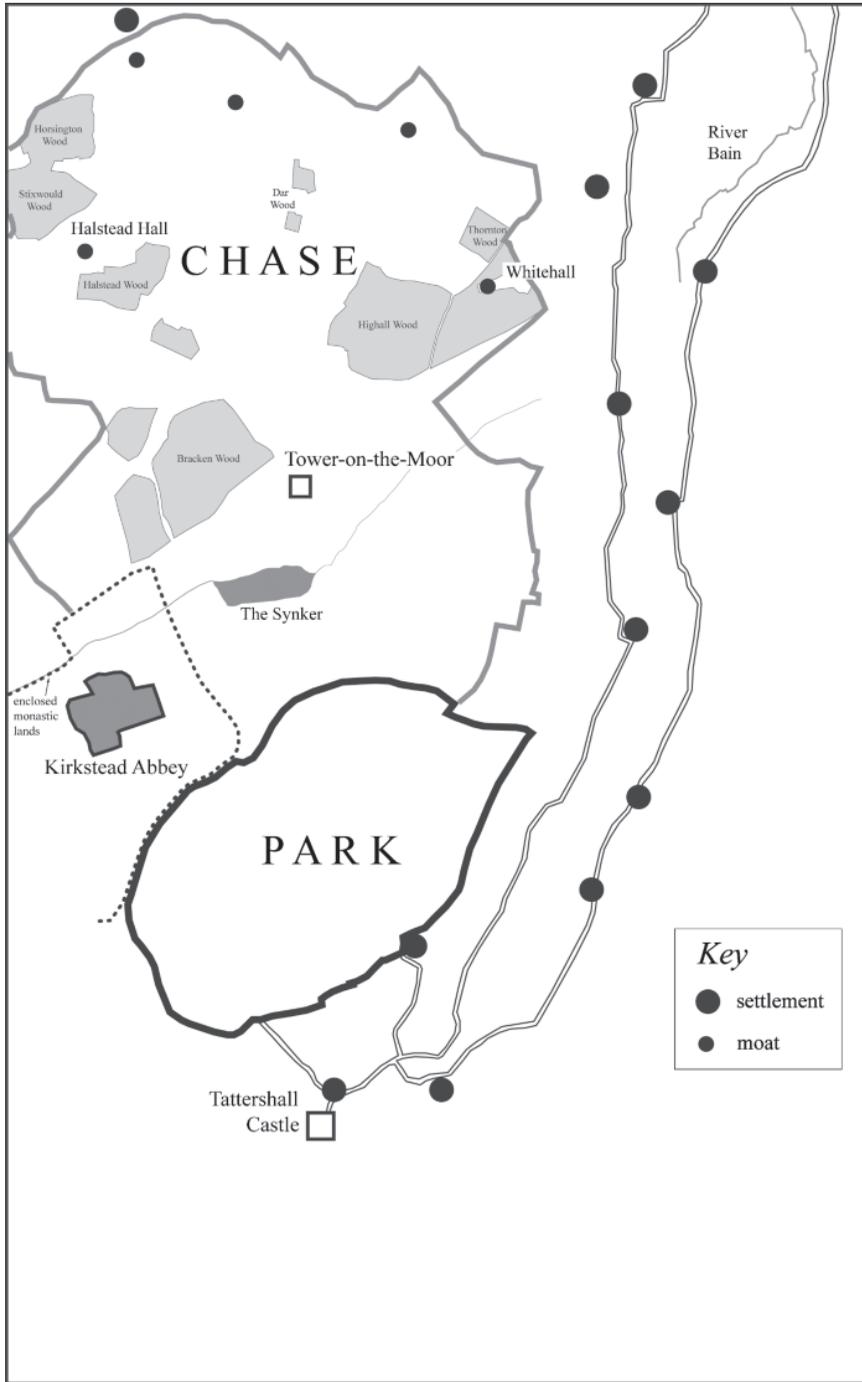


FIG. 8. Tattershall Chase and Park

doubt following the famous opening to Psalm 42: 'As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.' The close in which it is set, forming the south boundary of the precinct of Kirkstead, is a location of privileged access on the secluded side of the complex. Coming from the south, the de Tateshales would have approached, as Clovis approached Leonard's hermitage, through the forest. When later this was modified by the creation of an enclosed hunting park, the presence of an exclusive reserve between the abbey and the town of Tattershall will have further discouraged popular access to the monastery from this direction. The lords of Tattershall will have relished the regal connotations of this approach to 'their' abbey, with its chapel of St Leonard, directly from their castle by way of their own hunting grounds. Taking this route, they would have breasted the low rise now occupied by Old Abbey Farm and seen ahead of them, we suggest, the family chantry chapel across a shallow valley as if on an island and the extensive structures of the abbey rising beyond. The final approach from the south, across a small peaty valley, crossed a bridge, as was the case also with the similar chantry chapels at Meaux and Boxley, thereby evidently evoking the motif of a perilous bridge of access to paradise that was persistent in the visionary literature surrounding the concept of purgatory.⁶⁵

CHASE AND PARK

WE have seen that hunting grounds existed in the area that subsequently became Tattershall in the Anglo-Saxon period, and that Domesday seems to indicate a large area of open chase. By 1231 this was actually called the Chase (above) and was a hunting ground of long-standing when the elaborate agreement between the Abbot of Kirkstead and Robert de Tateshale 4 was signed in 1259.⁶⁶ The details of this agreement make it clear that the Chase was open heathland, containing substantial woodlands, some of which belonged to the abbey and were fenced and gated. If the de Tateshales wanted to drive animals from these woods into the open chase, they were required to follow a set procedure safeguarding the abbey's rights. This document also defines a *cordon sanitaire* around the abbey (Fig. 8) and rules were laid down for the pursuit of game into this zone also.

Before it was commercially planted with oak and fir in the early 19th century, the Chase was 'a veritable Sahara on a small scale',⁶⁷ although this undoubtedly reflects a period of neglect through the 17th and 18th centuries rather than its actual use and value in the medieval period. The residual or replanted blocks of woodland on modern maps have names indicating links with surrounding settlements (such as Horsington Wood, Stixwoud Wood or Thornton Wood) or they have names such as Highall Wood, Dar Wood, White Hall Wood, Woodhall or Halstead Wood, which link them with farmsteads within the Chase, some of which are moated sites and are likely to date from the later medieval period. The scatter of moated sites within the northern bounds of the Chase contrasts in settlement form with the ancient villages and townlands that flank its north-eastern edge. They are absent from the southern part of the Chase, lying exclusively 'over the horizon' as it were from the focus of lordship at Tattershall. Yet it seems probable that they represent a means for the lord, secular or monastic,⁶⁸ to manage and exploit the Chase's specialized resources. As such they may be analogous to the managed farms of the Pennine dales, known variously as lodges or vaccaries.⁶⁹ As in those very different Yorkshire landscapes, such holdings might be leased out to tenants. In addition to the value of the bark for tanning and the timber as building material and fuel, the castle building accounts record charcoal being made in 'Kirkbywood' within the Chase. Lime was also

being burnt, although exactly where is not specified and a number of sites may have been involved, using timber from the various woodlands for fuel. In particular, we know a little about the moated site at Halstead Hall, in the north-western corner of the Chase, which has been linked with the production of bricks for the construction of Tattershall Castle in 1434–35.⁷⁰ Certainly the earthworks of later brickmaking are very evident to the west of the moated site and this complex lies on Edlington Moor, which the building accounts pinpoint as the location for the industry.

Tattershall Chase seems to have been reorganized, enhanced and improved in the mid-15th century, after Ralph Lord Cromwell inherited the estate from his grandmother in 1419. The most striking sign of the presence of a new owner with great prestige, status and wealth was the elaboration of a complex of buildings at its very highest point. Most prominent of these was the brick tower, known as the Tower-on-the-Moor (Fig. 9). There has been some unnecessary doubt whether the tower itself was built by Ralph, but the case that he did so is very strong;⁷¹ certainly he has been given credit for it since at least the 1530s when Leland recorded him as its builder. Despite (unpublished) excavations carried out by Lawrence Keene in the 1969,⁷² the building is imperfectly known today. The surviving brick stair-turret stood at the northern angle of a square brick tower, of which Hussey Tower in Boston and Rochford Tower at Skirbeck were probably imitators.⁷³ The Tower-on-the-Moor may have been added by Cromwell to an existing lodge. In addition to demonstrating its prominence in the landscape, with long views to the north and west as well as to the south and east over Tattershall, the Buck engraving of 1726 seems to show it surrounded by earthworks, which may represent the remains of other buildings. There was, however, another house within less than a mile, known as Whitehall or Whitall, on which Cromwell spent money in 1438–39 and 1445–46.⁷⁴ This house, and not Tower-on-the-Moor, was used by Cromwell as a temporary residence for two periods of four and five weeks respectively in early 1438–39.

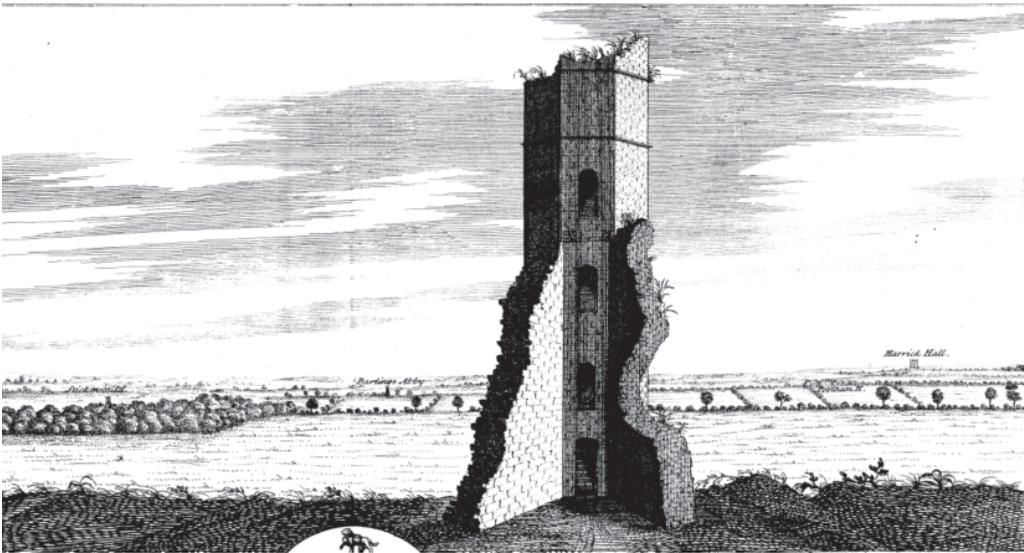


FIG. 9. Samuel Buck's engraved view of the Tower-on-the-Moor, Lincolnshire, 1726

To the south of Tower-on-the-Moor was a further ornament in the man-made, brick-built landscape. The Tattershall accounts for 1445–46 make it clear that the stream which emerges around here and flows into the embayment north of Kirkstead Abbey was dammed with a brick and masonry structure (perhaps its banks were lined with brick also) to create a pool called ‘The Synker’. This was a notable enough structure for Leland to comment on it in ruin in the 1530s.⁷⁵ In dereliction it came to be marked by Synker Pool Wood, which in turn was cleared and cultivated in a phase of agricultural improvement in the mid 19th century. A wooden boat reportedly unearthed here subsequently may have belonged with the pool.⁷⁶ The Synker is likely to have played its role in the pleasures of this hunting landscape. Controlling the only major watercourse in this barren landscape, it must have been intended to attract game to the vicinity of Tower — and perhaps especially the ‘great deer of the chase’, the red deer which in the 16th century were ‘kept rather for show than for to be hunted’⁷⁷ — presumably so that they could be inspected from its confines. Shooting animals with bows whilst drinking, however, would have been thought improper.

So, the function of the Tower-on-the-Moor complex probably related to the use of the Chase for hunting. To quote Buck, ‘It seems probable to have been a House of Pleasure, with Towers to overlook ye moor at the time of sports or ye like’.⁷⁸ The ensemble sounds comparable to that built by Henry Clifford at Barden Tower within Barden Forest in Wharfedale, at the end of the 15th century. This was also a distinctive building, with a prominent tower-porch, that served both as a viewpoint within the chase and probably a banqueting house.⁷⁹

The interest in the pleasures of the Chase that Ralph Cromwell’s investment in the Tower-on-the-Moor represents presupposes the maintenance of substantial numbers of riding horses at Tattershall, beyond the everyday needs of an already large household. It also presupposes facilities for stabling them. Indeed there was a ‘magnum stabulum’ in the outer ward and ‘outer stables’ beside the great bridge. The former is a substantial surviving building in the north-west corner of the castle site, adjacent to the main gate. Its foundations were dug in 1438–39, when the costs of 236,000 bricks for its construction were also met, and it was paved in brick the following year.⁸⁰

Tattershall Park (*parco*), as distinct from Tattershall Chase (*chacea*), is first mentioned in accounts of Maud Cromwell’s time, when there was a ‘custus clausarum parci’, and again as a distinct entity in the building account for 1438–39, when it is said that 300 ‘heaths’ (*brueriae*) were being made and carted against Lord Cromwell’s arrival at Tattershall.⁸¹ It is perhaps more likely that these represent live plants, or turves for enhancing the lawn, than the 300 ‘heather-beds’ that Simpson suggested. The park was a source of timber according to the building account of 1472, which was rendered by one Richard Parker,⁸² and it was called ‘the King’s new park and the conies within it and without, within the lordship of Tattershall’ in 1484 after the lordship had fallen to the Crown.⁸³ A ‘Keeper of the Great Park and Chase’ and of the ‘Little Park and Warren’ occur in the grants of 1525, 1537 and 1551, and the same distinction occurs in Brandon’s will in 1545.⁸⁴ The area was still known as Tattershall Park at the end of the 19th century even though long broken up into fields and under cultivation,⁸⁵ but substantial sections of continuous curving field boundaries allow its bounds to be recognized quite confidently, enclosing an area of over 800 ha (Fig. 8).

The Park, clearly cut out of the larger Chase by the creation of a pale, may originate in the early 13th century as yet another demonstration of the de Tateshales’ assertive lordship, something already seen in the foundation of Kirkstead, the aggrandisement of the manorial caput at Tattershall as a stone castle, and the foundation of a new market town.

If so, however, we might wonder why it is not documented earlier. It seems more likely, therefore, that the enclosed Park was the work — for exactly these same reasons — of the Cromwells and especially of Ralph Lord Cromwell, successively Master of the Royal mews, King's Falconer and Master of the King's Horse, in this (as in so much else at Tattershall) developing and consolidating the initiatives of his influential grandmother. Whether a creation of the de Tateshales or the Cromwells, however, it gave the same message to the world: this was a landscape under the control of a major lord whose monks were located, physically and symbolically, within his broader hunting landscape.

KIRKSTEAD RE-FORMED

THE RCHME's survey of the earthworks at Kirkstead revealed a further reform of the landscape following the Lincolnshire Rising in 1536. Indeed, it showed that, whereas the Cistercians may have briefly challenged the lords of Tattershall for dominance in this distinctive landscape in the 12th and 13th centuries, by the mid-16th century new secular lords emphatically demonstrated that they had been merely a temporary feature of a lordly hunting landscape. Kirkstead, Benedictine Bardney and the Premonstratensian house at Barlings ten miles away, were the principal renegade Lincolnshire monasteries implicated in the Rising. Barlings was intimately associated with Lincoln city and the earldom of Lincoln, whilst Kirkstead, the second key to Lindsey, was associated with the lordship of Tattershall. After the Rising was suppressed, in 1537, both houses were condemned as traitorous, dissolved and placed in the safe hands of the king's brother-in-law, Charles Brandon. To bolster his lieutenancy of Lincolnshire during this crisis, Brandon also received the equally desirable — and symbolically relevant — lordship of Tattershall, which had been in royal hands for more than half a century, and he subsequently used the castle as his principal formal residence in Lincolnshire.⁸⁶

The field archaeology of all three sites and the manipulation of their surrounding landscapes reflect the exercise of Brandon's new local power following the Rebellion. At Barlings a massive house was built on the site of the dissolved monastery, probably with a brick façade and corner turrets, which emblematically incorporated the remains of the former abbot's house. Here, the desecrated ruins of the monastic conventual buildings were displayed as one compartment of a garden layout that occupied the whole former precinct. The monastic gatehouse was reused as the entrance to the complex in its 're-formed' state. Brandon's new palatial residence at Barlings, we believe, was eventually intended to display the ruination of the Old Faith, whilst it also made architectural references to Tattershall's great tower, with its new brick turrets and distinctive spirelets.⁸⁷

Brandon, however, spent most of his time in Lincolnshire at Tattershall Castle, which Ralph Lord Cromwell had developed into a seat of power fitting for the principal courtier resident in the county. Not only was it an extremely large and prestigious house but it retained its strategic significance in 1537: any new rebellion in eastern or southern Lindsey would have to pass by Tattershall on its way out of the county. Brandon may also have seen the house as particularly appropriate because he, like Cromwell, had been Master of the King's Horse and will have hunted in the extensive park and chase, imitating, to the full extent of his pocket, the king and brother-in-law he so resembled. In this way he brought the king's presence and authority to the 'brute and bestly' county of Lincolnshire.

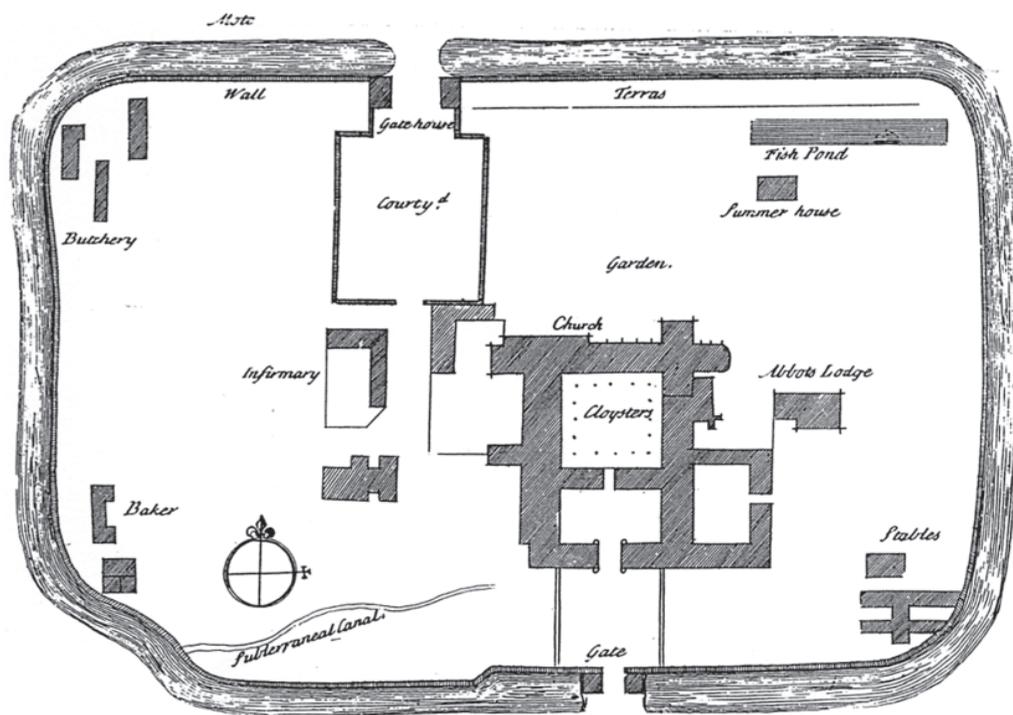
At first sight, Kirkstead appears an appendage to these two more important locations, with a main successor building that has perhaps the scale and footprint of a banqueting house or lodge rather than a great house. It was, however, clearly set in a newly designed

landscape of ornamental ponds and terraces having the appearance of a garden.⁸⁸ Set on the fringe of the Chase beneath a gentle slope leading from the river towards Tower-on-the-Moor, we might suspect that Brandon used the complex as a replacement hunting lodge; for we know that Tower-on-the-Moor, or at least parts of its prominent brick tower, had been demolished in 1472.⁸⁹

The former monastic lands around the precinct were thrown into the Chase by Brandon, inflicting on them the very fate of invasion by game and the hunt that the Cistercians had sought to avoid by a web of legal agreements in the 13th century. The ditched enclosure containing the main conventual buildings, once redefined by Brandon, was much smaller than the medieval precinct. While this new enclosure may reflect an inner monastic court, what we actually see today is the boundary Brandon imposed on the site in the late 1530s, no doubt to form a barrier between the former monastic buildings and the game animals of the enlarged chase.

The RCHME survey showed clearly that William Stukeley's well-known, but greatly undervalued, plan published in 1724 (Fig. 10) depicts the site precisely as arranged by Brandon and not the abandoned monastery he thought he was surveying.⁹⁰ Even though he

The Ichnography of the Monastery of *Kirsted* Line.



Stukeley delin.

FIG. 10. Kirkstead Abbey, Lincolnshire: plan by William Stukeley, c. 1720

persists in the antiquarian tic of applying monastic labels to all the features he observes, his plan of what was prominent around 1720 is remarkably accurate, and can easily be read in the final phase of stratigraphy in the earthworks in the RCHME survey plan (Fig. 11).⁹¹ However, it shows not the pristine medieval monastery simply abandoned by the monks and left to fall down, but the site after it had been completely reconstructed by Brandon in the late 1530s. We need to look afresh at this familiar plan and understand it not as an inept attempt to illustrate monastic remains, but as a revelation of the site as left by Charles Brandon and his immediate successors. What Stukeley demonstrates is that the site of the conventual church and cloister had been transformed by Brandon into a series of three courts entered by a sequence of aligned gateways from the south. The plan-form of the main buildings is clearly that of an enormous double-courtyard. Yet this was probably not a new mansion house. Brandon's new *caput* was at Tattershall a couple of miles away and we know that he did a great deal of building there as well. Nevertheless, later evidence points to the probability that there was a residential element at Kirkstead: the loyal royalist Henry Clinton Fiennes is referred to in February 1643 as 'of Christed Abbey' as if resident there.⁹² What Brandon's conversion of the abbey might have produced, however, was a variation of the sort of secondary house or lodge, which Henry



FIG. 11. Kirkstead Abbey, Lincolnshire: interpreted post-Dissolution layout, (a) stable courts (b) kennels (c) mews or lodge (d) north gate and exercise yard (e) south entrance. Based on RCHME survey plan; see Jecock et al., *Kirkstead Abbey* Crown copyright. Courtesy of the National Monuments Record

VIII had been developing contemporaneously around his principal residences like Hampton Court and Greenwich in order to maximize his facilities for hunting in the face of an increasing incapacity to sustain that obsession.⁹³ Typically such locations afforded short-term accommodation for the 'riding household' or a limited group of the king's intimates. At Amesbury Abbey in the 17th century and at Wakefield Lodge in the 18th century, the residential component at such an establishment comprised a hall-like central room for hunting feasts plus some apartments, but the architectural and functional focus lay in the stables and the associated requirements of the hunt.⁹⁴ Satellite hunting houses have a long history, extending to men below royal rank,⁹⁵ but the arrangement imposed by Brandon in the late 1530s would certainly have evoked contemporary royal practice.

Kirkstead, we propose therefore, was transformed into an equestrian centre, incorporating Brandon's famous stables and stud farm. It would have aped the quadrangular arrangement of stabling created at that very moment, 1537–38, for the king at Hampton Court.⁹⁶ And, as Giles Worsley has emphasized, stables in a quadrangular layout were in themselves a phenomenon with distinctively royal connotations through the 16th and 17th centuries.⁹⁷ Such a conversion at Kirkstead would accordingly have fitted Brandon's commission as the King's Lieutenant in Lincolnshire. Whether the complex also contained that other facility of the enthusiastic connoisseur of horsemanship — which Brandon clearly was⁹⁸ — the 'riding house' is uncertain. The nave of the monastic church, which Stukeley shows was apparently retained, might have served the purpose admirably. But in the 16th century, even at a royal palace like Greenwich, the delicate art of fine horsemanship was practised outdoors, using the same or similar facilities as for jousting. For Brandon too it may have formed an alternative use for the tiltyard that he created at Tattershall,⁹⁹ although the curiously formal 'court' inside the north gatehouse on Stukeley's plan and in the earthworks at Kirkstead (Figs 10 and 11) might equally have provided a suitably enclosed space to practice this most superior activity. The scale and organization of this establishment is impressively reflected in the listing in 1546 and 1547 of the widowed Duchess of Suffolk's horses, numbering 90 horses and geldings and 35 stud mares, held at Grimsthorpe in the exceptional circumstances following Brandon's death — Kirkstead having been returned to the King under Brandon's will because of its traitorous status.¹⁰⁰

In contrast to the former monastic approach from the north, the evidently elaborate new southern entrance to the double court faced the road to Tattershall and, in addition to looking out into the chase, may also have given onto a network of smallish paddocks of 3–4 acres maximum, suitable for foals to run loose, that were characteristic of studs from an early date.¹⁰¹ Other distinctive buildings, L-shaped in plan with attached walled yards (all clearly extraneous to any monastic layout and later additions), have the equally characteristic plan-form of kennels. The 'pale' 230 feet long, supplied to surround the royal kennels at Deptford in 1539, might produce a similar enclosure or yard attached to a set of buildings. Contemporary kennelling for dogs was indeed sometimes located at a distance from a royal residence or attached to a park lodge, like the kennels at Deptford in relation to Greenwich or those included with the lodge of the new park at Eltham in 1534.¹⁰² Henry Clinton, Earl of Lincoln, as a successor to Brandon kept both hounds and greyhounds (i.e. badger hounds) for sport in Tattershall Chase, presumably in these very kennels — the different types of dog accounting for the presence of several sets of kennels.¹⁰³ Hawks, too, were accommodated within the park at The More, and their housing could be architecturally quite substantial and involve a detached building, such as that at Nevill Holt in Leicestershire.¹⁰⁴ Given this context, we might also ask whether the peculiar footprint of the 'main building' at Kirkstead is not so much a banqueting house or lodge, as a mews, to house that other crucial element of the great lord's hunting equipage.

Several buildings that Stukeley identified at the north-west edge of the site — somewhat improbably perhaps in a monastic context — as forming a butchery, might reflect a necessary function in the post-Dissolution complex, both in processing the carcasses of hunted animals, and in feeding both dogs and hawks year-round. Perhaps the ‘bakery’ in the south-west of the complex similarly reflects the specialist preparation of feed for prize horses, on an exceptional scale.

The fate of the monastery of Kirkstead and of its lands, then, is revealed by the field archaeology as the famous stud farm and stables of Henry VIII’s sometime Master of Horse, the renowned huntsman and boon companion of the king in all displays of lordship. What is more, in sponsoring a stud on a conspicuous scale Brandon was promoting public policy, and a national interest in reviving English horsebreeding to which Henry’s name was specifically attached. In doing so he was giving a lead, in imitation of the king himself, to his peers and to the local gentry.¹⁰⁵ That he did so by restructuring the site of Kirkstead Abbey redoubled the message of how much and how fundamentally policy and national interest had changed.

Personally, too, Brandon can perhaps be glimpsed playing out a chivalric fantasy in this landscape. His prize horses had names, which can be understood to indicate their source as gifts of diplomacy or affinity.¹⁰⁶ His ‘baye Flanders mare Aroundell’, however, evoked not its donor but rather the equine companion of the legendary hero, Bevis of Hampton.¹⁰⁷ Arundel was the Pegasus or Bucephalus of medieval romance, the gift of Bevis’s life-long love, his aid in mighty feats of arms at home and abroad, and died just before the joint death of its master and mistress. The popularity of this tale was given fresh impetus by printed editions in the first decade of the 16th century and it must have been familiar to Brandon.¹⁰⁸ Indeed many of its themes matched his own life closely — the early death of Bevis’s father at the hands of a usurping enemy, his service to a great ruler and reciprocated (but disallowed) love for his only daughter, that princess’s retention of virginity through an enforced marriage, Bevis’s return and their elopement and married life of mutual love and happiness, a nominal marriage to another lady, his conversion of unbelievers, his recovery of property and standing, and triumphs in combat and horsemanship. So many of these themes chime with Brandon’s own experience that the naming of his horse might reveal him identifying personally with the hero. A number of episodes in the tale were played out in just the sort of forested landscapes that Tattershall Chase afforded.¹⁰⁹ When, in describing the splendid champions of the Field of the Cloth of Gold of 1520 (an event in which Brandon was both planner and protagonist), Shakespeare chooses to evoke Bevis of Hampton, could it even be an allusion to a long-remembered, notorious personal fantasy?¹¹⁰

The privileged approach to Kirkstead from the south, previously available to the medieval lords of Tattershall, riding through the exclusive zone of their park and hunting grounds, was now available to Charles Brandon. The main difference, one suspects, is that in the 16th century the lay public were totally excluded. No chantry at Kirkstead appears in the records of chantries suppressed in 1547,¹¹¹ but Brandon evidently allowed the building to survive in his reconstruction of the approach to his new stud buildings. Between 1536 and 1547, however, the retention of a chantry chapel by someone like Charles Brandon, while requiring royal sanction, would have been perceived as an action pertaining to lordship rather than as an expression of monkish sympathies. After all, Brandon believed in the efficacy of prayers for the souls of the dead and requested them in his will.¹¹² The chapel may have been thought of by Brandon as one of the key symbols of the lordship of Tattershall, to which he was heir, rather than as part of the apparatus of monachism. In contrast to the de Tateshales’ visit 300 years earlier, when Brandon

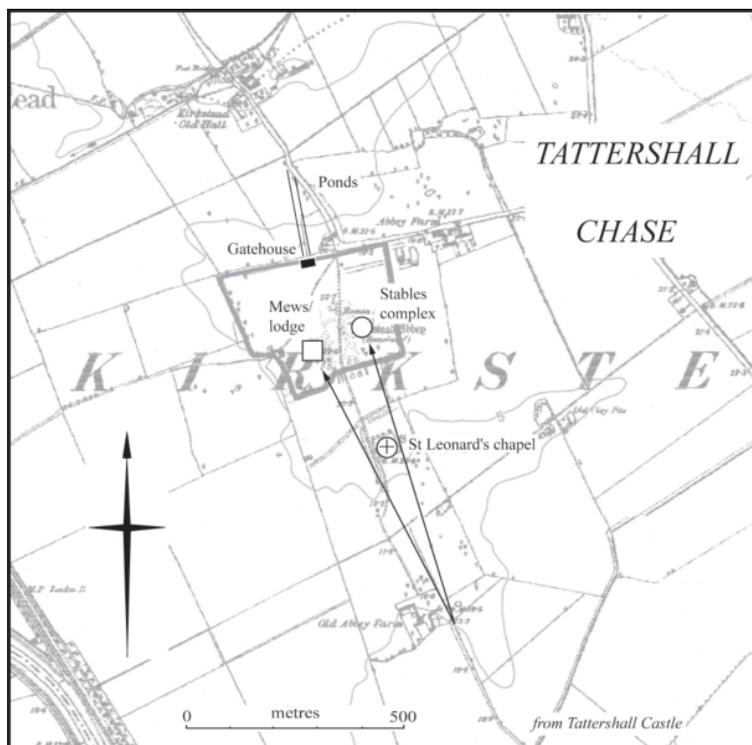


FIG. 12. Kirkstead Abbey, Lincolnshire: re-formed traitorous house as viewed by Charles Brandon

breasted the hill to the south, *he* would have seen the abbey's conventual core a little to the right, remade by him into stables (Fig. 12). A little to the left stood a substantial new building (perhaps a lodge or mews), and, between the two, St Leonard's chapel, representing the lordship of Tattershall itself — intact and permanent in the landscape. Thus he enjoyed a view which represented both a continuity with, and a contrast to, that originally arranged by the de Tateshales. Brandon's view, showed a 'reformed' ecclesiastical landscape; 'reformed', as he would have believed, by the King's justice, of which he himself was the local embodiment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to record our gratitude to a number of friends and colleagues who have been helpful in the production of this paper. The initial survey on which our subsequent work was based was conducted by Marcus Jecock, and our debt to the painstaking quality of his analysis is, we hope, quite evident. We have leaned heavily on the skills of English Heritage's air-photo transcription team at NMRC and we have also benefited from the time and good-will of Jo Bell and Shelley Garland of the National Trust, who have attempted to answer every enquiry about Tattershall with enthusiasm. Sarah Brown, Peter Fergusson, Jackie Hall, Julian

Munby, Nicholas Orme and David Roffe have all provided a sequence of helpful comments on various parts of the text, saving us from many errors, whilst John McNeill has proved a wise and steadfast editor, preparing a long text for publication. Finally we would like to record our thanks, as ever, to Dave Start and his team at Heritage Lincolnshire, who have helped behind the scenes in many ways and who present our ideas to the Lincolnshire public, who are not automatically inclined to sympathise with new interpretations of much-loved buildings and landscapes.

NOTES

1. Most obviously in the early Anglo-Saxon period, Barbara Yorke, 'Lindsey: the lost kingdom found?', in *Pre-Viking Lindsey*, ed. Alan Vince, Lincoln Archaeological Studies No. 1 (1993), 141–50.
2. G. F. Jensen, *Scandinavian Settlement Names in the East Midlands* (Copenhagen 1978), 18–19, 42, 287.
3. M. Gelling, 'The word "church" in English place-names', *Bulletin of the CBA Churches Committee*, 15 (1981), 4–9, esp. 8–9.
4. Jensen, *Settlement Names*, 24, 75–76.
5. Jensen, *Settlement Names*, 48; E. Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th edn (Oxford 1960), ad locc. The field remains characteristic of this specialist sort of settlement, in their later medieval form, have been described by Stephen Moorhouse, 'Anatomy of the Yorkshire Dales: decoding the medieval landscape', in *The Archaeology of Yorkshire: An Assessment at the Beginning of the 21st Century*, ed. T. G. Manby, Stephen Moorhouse and Patrick Ottaway, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Occasional Paper No. 3 (2003), 293–362, esp. 332–34. In the late 13th century, Robert de Tateshale had a gallows at Coningsby; Alfred Welby, 'Private gallows in Lincolnshire, c. 1274', *Lincolnshire Notes and Queries*, 23 (1936), 108–13, drawing information from the *Hundred and Quo Warranto Rolls*.
6. A. H. Smith, *English Place-Name Elements, Part II*, English Place-Name Survey 26 (Cambridge 1956), 214–16.
7. P. Everson, D. Roffe and D. Stocker, 'Tattershall in Domesday Book' (forthcoming).
8. D. A. Hinton, *A Smith in Lindsey: the Anglo-Saxon Grave at Tattershall Thorpe, Lincolnshire*, SMA monograph series no. 16 (2000), esp. 116; Elizabeth Coatsworth and Michael Pinder, *The Art of the Anglo-Saxon Goldsmith. Fine metalwork in Anglo-Saxon England: its practice and practitioners* (Woodbridge 2002), 227–46, esp. 234.
9. P. Chowne, M. Girling and J. Greig, 'Excavations at an Iron Age defended enclosure at Tattershall Thorpe, Lincolnshire', *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*, 52 (1986), 159–88; A. E. Brown and G. Foard, 'The Anglo-Saxon period', in *The Archaeology of Northamptonshire*, ed. M. Tingle (Northampton 2004), 78–101, esp. 89, fig. 4.2.
10. P. Everson and D. Stocker, *Barlings Abbey and its Granges* (forthcoming); R. A. Donkin, *The Cistercians: Studies in the Geography of Medieval England and Wales*, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Studies and Texts 38 (Toronto 1978).
11. D. Stocker and P. Everson, 'The straight and narrow way: Fenland causeways and the conversion of the landscape in the Witham Valley, Lincolnshire', in *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300–1300*, ed. M. Carver (Woodbridge 2003), 271–88, esp. 274–80. No less an authority than Sir Frank Stenton proposed that the site of original foundation lay 8.5 miles to the north at Great Sturton, on the basis of the terms of a grant of land there by Hugh, son of Eudo, c. 1140–50; *Documents Illustrative of the Social and Economic History of the Danelaw from Various Collections*, ed. F. M. Stenton, British Academy Records of the Social and Economic History of England and Wales V (London 1920), 103–04, 140–41, no. 202. This view was repeated by Kathleen Major; *The Registrum Antiquissimum of the Cathedral Church of Lincoln Volume VII*, ed. K. Major, Lincoln Record Society 46 (Hereford 1953), 86. We find it unconvincing and believe rather that this grant created a grange of Kirkstead at Little Sturton, see P. Everson and D. Stocker, 'Little Sturton Rediscovered. Part I: The Grange of Kirkstead Abbey', *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*, 40 (2005), 7–14.
12. William Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, V (London 1825), 418.
13. Stocker and Everson, 'The Straight and Narrow Way'; P. Everson and D. Stocker, "Coming from Bardney . . ." — the landscape context of the causeways and finds groups of the Witham valley', in *Time and Tide: the Archaeology of the Witham Valley*, ed. S. Catney and D. Start (Heckington 2003), 6–15.
14. K. Cameron, *A Dictionary of Lincolnshire Place-Names*, English Place-Name Survey Popular Series 1 (Nottingham 1998), 123; Patrick Stiles, 'Old English *halb*, "slightly raised ground isolated by marsh"', in *Names, Places and People: an Onomastic Miscellany in memory of John McNeal Dodgson*, ed. Alexander

R. Rumble and A. D. Mills (Stamford 1997), 330–44. Compare Wulfhere, Mercian king; Trumhere, bishop of the Mercians; Herefrith, saint.

15. ‘Warin the chaplain of Tattershall’ is both scribe and witness to a series of early Kirkstead charters, Stenton, *Danelaw Charters*, 128–29 [187], 129–30 [188], 130–31 [189], 131–33 [190].

16. Stenton, *Danelaw Charters*, 140–41 [202].

17. F. N. Davis ed., *Rotuli Roberti Grosseteste necnon Rotulus Henrici de Lexington*, Lincoln Record Society 11 (Horncastle 1914), 68, 115; Anon, ‘Churches visited by the Society from Woodhall Spa on 25th and 26th June 1913’, *Associated Architectural Societies Reports and Papers* 32 (1913–14), 1–20, esp. 3, drawing on Mansel Sympson, ‘Tattershall Castle and Church’, *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, 14 (1910), 28–45; subsequent institutions of rectors can be traced from 1290 to 1432 and are superseded by the foundation of the college, LAO, FL 113/e8.

18. W. E. Lunt, *The Valuation of Norwich* (Oxford 1926), 237; *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae auctoritate P. Nicholai IV* (Record Commission 1821), 60.

19. A. K. McHardy ed., *Clerical Poll Taxes of the Diocese of Lincoln, 1377–1381*, Lincoln Record Society 81 (Lincoln 1992), nos 638, 1604, 1982.

20. Anon., ‘Churches visited . . . June 1913’, 3; Sympson, ‘Tattershall’, 41.

21. Dorothy M. Owen, ‘Medieval chapels in Lincolnshire’, *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology* 10 (1975), 21; W. Douglas Simpson, *The Building Accounts of Tattershall Castle 1434–1472*, Lincoln Record Society 55 (Hereford 1960), xi.

22. Anon, ‘Churches visited . . . June 1913’, 3.

23. J. Caley and J. Hunter ed., *Valor Ecclesiasticus Vol. IV* (London 1821), 42.

24. Dugdale, *Monasticon VI* part 3 (London 1830), 1432–33; Richard Marks, *The Stained Glass of the Collegiate Church of the Holy Trinity, Tattershall (Lincs.)* (New York and London 1984), 12.

25. Simpson, *Building Accounts*, 23, 62.

26. *Ibid.*, xii fn. 1, fig. 1.

27. M. A. Pickworth, *History of Tattershall* (Lincoln 1901), 47.

28. G. N. Curzon and H. A. Tipping, *Tattershall Castle, Lincolnshire* (London 1929), 136.

29. Beric Morley and David Gurney, *Castle Rising Castle, Norfolk*, East Anglian Archaeology 81 (1997), 24–38; G. M. Knocker, ‘Excavations at Framlingham Castle, 1954’, *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology* 27 (1957), 65–88.

30. Curzon and Tipping, *Tattershall Castle*, 3, 161 fn. Simpson, *Building Accounts*, xi fn. 4 reports four Romanesque stone fragments preserved on the site: (1) a nook cap, cushioned, with scallops and half-cone moulding in the hollows, (2) a voussoir with chevroned enrichment, (3) a corbel with a grotesque human mask, (4) a large grotesque ‘beak-head’. With the assistance of National Trust staff, we have sought but as yet have been unable to find these important items.

31. Stocker and Everson, ‘The straight and narrow way’; Everson and Stocker, ‘“Coming from Bardney . . .”’.

32. David Stocker, ‘The Early Church in Lincolnshire’, in *Pre-Viking Lindsey*, ed. Alan Vince, Lincoln Archaeological Studies No. 1 (1993), 101–22, esp. 114.

33. Everson, Roffe and Stocker, ‘Tattershall in Domesday Book’.

34. Curzon and Tipping, *Tattershall Castle*, 2–3.

35. The same fine was paid by Robert 4 in 1249 on entering his inheritance, Cal. Close Rolls (1247–51), 199.

36. Cal. Pat. Rolls (1225–32), 435; Curzon and Tipping, *Tattershall Castle*, 18–20, 161–64.

37. P. Fergusson, *Architecture of Solitude: Cistercian Abbeys in Twelfth-Century England* (Pinceton 1984), 130–31; C. Wilson, ‘The Cistercians as “missionaries of Gothic” in northern England’, in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles*, ed. C. Norton and D. Park (Cambridge 1986), 86–116, esp. 108–10.

38. P. Everson and D. Stocker, ‘St Leonard’s at Kirkstead, Lincolnshire: the landscape of the Cistercian monastic precinct’, in Mark Gardiner and Stephen Rippon ed., *Medieval Landscapes*, Landscape History after Hoskins 2 (Macclesfield 2007), 215–30. The above paper is complementary to this one. It presents the arguments about our interpretation of St Leonard’s chapel more narrowly from a perspective of the monastic precinct than is the case here, and, more especially, cites parallel cases in other English Cistercian contexts, exploring their consequences for our understanding of the physical and conceptual nature of the precinct.

39. An engraved view of the chapel interior appears in successive editions of Bloxam’s *Principles* from at least the early 1840s; but amongst a diverse literature, the most important for its text as well as early engravings is J. H. Parker, *An Architectural description of Saint Leonard’s Church, Kirkstead, published under the superintendence of the Lincolnshire Architectural Society* (Oxford 1846). Further independent architectural record drawings, also made and published before the chapel’s wholesale reordering, include *The Spring Gardens Sketch Book, volume VII*, printed for the Spring Gardens Sketching Club (London 1878), pls 63–66 [drawings made in 1872 by J. Norton] and *ibid., volume VIII* (London 1890), pl. 8 [drawings made by Albert Hartshorne in 1882 and published in A. Hartshorne, ‘On Kirkstead Abbey, Lincolnshire, Kirkstead Chapel, and a remarkable monumental effigy there preserved’, *Archaeol. J.*, 40 (1883), 296–302]; also *The Builder*

- (1 March 1912), 239 and facing 258 (Arthur Cates Prize drawings by J. B. F. Cowper). Bishop Hicks noted the completion of the refurbishment in 1914, and commented presciently on the desirability of viewing Tattershall Castle, Tattershall church and Kirkstead chapel together, G. Neville ed., *The Diary of Edward Lee Hicks, Bishop of Lincoln, 1910–1919*, Lincoln Record Society 82 (Woodbridge 1993), 73–74 no. 450. See also N. Pevsner and J. Harris, *B/E: Lincolnshire*, 2nd edn, revised by N. Antram (Harmondsworth 1989), 417–18.
40. For example, D. Knowles and J. K. St Joseph, *Monastic Sites from the Air* (Cambridge 1952), 126–27; D. R. Wilson, *Air Photo Interpretation for Archaeologists* (London 1982), 28–29; C. Platt, *The Abbeys and Priors of Medieval England* (London 1984), 225; C. Platt, *Medieval Britain from the Air* (London 1984), 197; M. Aston, *Know the Landscape: Monasteries* (London 1993), 98–99.
41. For example, Knowles and St Joseph, *Monastic Sites*, 126; R. Gilyard-Beer, *Abbeys. An introduction to the religious houses of England and Wales* (HMSO London 1959), 38; Pevsner and Harris, *B/E: Lincolnshire*, 1st edn (Harmondsworth 1964), 287–88; Dorothy M. Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincolnshire*, History of Lincolnshire V (Lincoln 1971), 18, pl. VI; Platt, *Abbeys and Priors*, 156–57; Pevsner and Harris, *B/E: Lincolnshire*, 2nd edn, 417–18; G. Coppack, *The White Monks: the Cistercians in Britain 1128–1540* (Stroud 1998), 108; D. Robinson ed., *The Cistercian Abbeys of Britain. Far from the Concourse of Men* (London 1998), 134; J. Hall, ‘English Cistercian gatehouse chapels’, *Cîteaux*, 52 (2001), 61–92, esp. 68–74; J. Bond, *Monastic Landscapes* (Stroud 2004), 228–29. Earlier antiquarian opinion, notably the formidable Bishop Trollope, thought it a chantry chapel; e.g. E. Trollope, ‘The churches of Horncastle and other parishes, visited by the Society on the 14th and 15th of June 1876’, *Associated Architectural Societies Reports and Papers*, 13 (1875–76), 153–76, esp. 157–58. It seems to have been the building’s rediscovery by modern scholarship that lost touch with this earlier understanding and labelled it as a gatehouse chapel.
42. H. M. Jecock, C. Tuck and H. Winton, ‘Kirkstead Abbey, Lincolnshire: incorporating monastic precinct, fishponds, and air photographic transcription’, unpublished RCHME reports in NMR (1994).
43. P. Fergusson, ‘“Porta patens esto”: notes on early Cistercian gatehouses in the north of England’, in *Medieval Architectural and Intellectual Context: Studies in Honour of Peter Kidson*, ed. E. Fernie and P. Crossley (London 1990), 47–60.
44. P. Fergusson and S. Harrison, *Rievaulx Abbey* (New Haven and London 1999), 164–66.
45. Everson and Stocker, ‘St Leonard’s at Kirkstead, Lincolnshire’.
46. Owen, *Church and Society*, 58, citing *Final Concords of the County of Lincoln, Vol II*, ed. C. W. Foster, Lincoln Record Society 17 (Horncastle 1920), 171–72.
47. Everson and Stocker, ‘St Leonard’s at Kirkstead, Lincolnshire’.
48. Parker, *Saint Leonard’s Church, Kirkstead*, pl. VII; photos in NMR.
49. Pevsner and Harris, *B/E: Lincolnshire*, 2nd edn, 418. For antiquarian notice of these screen fragments, see Hartshorne, ‘On Kirkstead Abbey’, 299–300; E. M. Sympson, ‘On Lincolnshire rood-screens and rood-lofts’, *Associated Architectural Societies Reports and Papers*, 20 (1889–90), 185–213, esp. 198–99, 209; G. E. Jeans, ‘Rood screens in Lincolnshire (with additions by C. Moor and E. M. Sympson)’, *Lincolnshire Notes and Queries*, 2 (1891), 90–92.
50. Photos in NMR; also in Lincoln Archives Office, LLHS 1; LLHS 5/50; EXLEY 8/3/68, 8/7/72, 31/4/39, 31/7/48/8.
51. Everson and Stocker, ‘St Leonard’s at Kirkstead, Lincolnshire’. John McNeill makes the useful point (pers. comm.) that another type of Cistercian boundary chapel, functionally unrelated but also in a sense a compromise, is the reliquary chapel. For example, the originally Savignac house of La Boissière in Anjou builds one after 1244 when it acquires a relic of the true cross, with a principal entrance actually in the precinct wall and staff entry from inside the precinct. Hall, ‘Gatehouse chapels’, 81–83, also discusses pilgrimage uses of that class of chapel.
52. M. Cassidy-Welch, *Monastic Spaces and their Meanings: Thirteenth-century English Cistercian Monasteries*, Medieval Church Studies 1 (Turnhout 2001), 217–41.
53. See generally J. Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago 1984) and esp. 174–75 for the role of Innocent III and 295–96, 300–10, 324–26 for that of the Cistercians in developing and promulgating *exempla* illustrating the concept of purgatory, notably in the 13th century; J. Sayers, *Innocent III* (London 1994), 19–20, places this in the context of Innocent’s papacy. Also Fergusson and Harrison, *Rievaulx Abbey*, 164–66; Cassidy-Welch, *Monastic Spaces*.
54. Everson and Stocker, ‘St Leonard’s at Kirkstead, Lincolnshire’.
55. F. H. Crossley, *English Church Monuments A.D. 1150–1550* (London 1921, re-issued 1933), 208, 236; B. Kemp, *English Church Monuments* (London 1980), 44; see also Hartshorne, ‘On Kirkstead Abbey’.
56. Cal. Lib. Rolls, I, 11, 30, 55, 62, 104, 107, 126, 127, 134; Cal. Pat. Rolls (1232–47), 12. Though no Cromwell or Brandon in the king’s service, Robert 3 was nevertheless the most active of Henry III’s magnates actually resident in Lincolnshire. Required routinely to be in Lincoln at least through the later 1220s, he would have been familiar at first hand with up-to-date work on the cathedral, including the chapter-house and completed west front.

57. Parker, *Saint Leonard's Church, Kirkstead*, 12–14.
58. For discussion of the iconography of the Assumption and its devotional occurrences, see T. S. R. Boase, *The York Psalter in the Library of the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow* (London 1962), 8–14; R. Marks, *Image and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (Stroud 2004), 148.
59. P. A. Newton, *The County of Oxford: a Catalogue of Medieval Stained Glass*, CVMA Great Britain Volume 1 (London 1979), 31, 1d, 16c and d; also illustrated and discussed in *Age of Chivalry. Art in Plantagenet England 1200–1400*, ed. J. Alexander and P. Binski, Royal Academy of Arts Exhibition Catalogue 1987–88 (London 1987), 212–13.
60. P. Hegbin-Barnes, *The Medieval Stained Glass of the County of Lincolnshire*, CVMA Great Britain Summary catalogue 3 (Oxford 1996), 363; and see, for example, C. Woodforde, *The Norwich School of Glass Painting in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, 1950), 42–55, for East Harling (Norfolk), where the present east window glass was given in memory of two of the husbands of Anne Harling; RCHM, *City of York: Volume V The Central Area* (HMSO London 1981), 8b and pl. 55 [York, Holy Trinity Goodramgate], 19a [York, St Denys].
61. R. Marks, 'Cistercian window glass in England and Wales', in *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles*, ed. C. Norton and D. Park (Cambridge 1986), 211–27, esp. 221–23; J. D. Austin, *Merevale Church and Abbey. The stained glass, monuments and history of the church of Our Lady and Merevale Abbey, Warwickshire* (Studley 1998), 49, 51–52, 74–75.
62. Marks, 'Cistercian window glass', 213–17; see also the comments of Sarah Brown in Austin, *Merevale Church and Abbey*, 1.
63. A reference to 'St Leonard's close' among the former monastic demesnes rented out in 1537 shows that the dedication is not an innovation of the 18th or 19th centuries; D. M. Owen, 'A Kirkstead Abbey valuation of 1537', *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*, 24 (1989), 41–45, esp. 41.
64. Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. W. G. Ryan (Princeton 1993), II, 244.
65. Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, 19, 35, 36, 94–95, 109, 111, 188, 196, 297.
66. Foster, *Final Concords*, 171–72.
67. Walter, *Woodhall Spa*, 6, 11.
68. Kirkstead's woodlands in 1538 were Belsham, Barneshag, Synkerholt, Basywode, Brakyn, Hyall, Dowodde, Lyndall, Cotewode, Freerwode and Braunston, LP Henry VIII, 1538–47, Addenda, vol. 1 pt 2, 475. Other local possessions, outside the immediate surroundings of the monastery, included granges at Woodhall and Doffwood within the Chase but lay principally beyond in the Bain valley, see Stenton, *Danelaw Charters*, 103–65; Dugdale, *Monasticon*, V, 423–44.
69. Moorhouse, 'Anatomy of the Yorkshire Dales', 341–46.
70. Simpson, *Building Accounts*, 46.
71. T. P. Smith, 'Hussey Tower, Boston: a late medieval tower-house of brick', *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*, 14 (1979), 31–37.
72. D. M. Wilson and D. G. Hurst, 'Medieval Britain in 1969', *Med. Archaeol.*, 14 (1970), 191.
73. Smith, 'Hussey Tower', 34–36.
74. Simpson, *Building Accounts*, 61 and fn. 1, 75–76.
75. Curzon and Tipping, *Tattershall Castle*, 63–64; John Leland, *Itinerary*, ed. L. Toulmin Smith (Carbondale 1964), vol. 4, 115.
76. Walter, *Woodhall Spa*, 115–16.
77. *Ibid.*, 142.
78. Rubric to engraving, Fig. 9.
79. Moorhouse, 'Anatomy of the Yorkshire Dales', 345–48.
80. Simpson, *Building Accounts*, 21, 25, 32, 38, 60, 65, 73, 78; Curzon and Tipping, *Tattershall Castle*, 167.
81. Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the MSS of Lord De L'Isle and Dudley preserved at Penshurst Place*, I (London 1925), 203 no. 55; Simpson, *Building Accounts*, 23, 63. The distinction between park and chase is illustrated by the actions and attitudes of the earl of Lincoln as lord of Tattershall in the late 16th century, quoted by Walter, *Woodhall Spa*, 144: in the Chase he argues with, bullies and assaults his neighbours, but cannot dispute their legal right of access; with the Park he 'tried to entice into the park the younger Saviles and laid ambushes for them'.
82. Simpson, *Building Accounts*, 38, 78.
83. Cal. Pat. Rolls (1478–85), 486.
84. Curzon and Tipping, *Tattershall Castle*, 118, 121, 128; J. G. Nichols and J. Bruce, *Wills from Doctors' Commons. A Selection from the Wills of Eminent Persons Proved in the Prerogation Court of Canterbury 1495–1695*, Camden Society Old Series 83 (1863), 28–41.
85. Walter, *Woodhall Spa*, 239.

86. P. Everson and D. Stocker, 'The archaeology of vice-regality: Charles Brandon's brief rule in Lincolnshire', in *The Archaeology of Reformation 1480–1580*, ed. D. Gaimster and R. Gilchrist, Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology Monograph 1 (2003), 145–58. The repeated view that Brandon was granted Tattershall in 1520 — e.g. Curzon and Tipping, *Tattershall Castle*, 116–17 — is just wrong.
87. Everson and Stocker, 'Archaeology of vice-regality', 151–54, fig. 5.
88. *Ibid.*, 150, fig. 4.
89. Simpson, *Building Accounts*, 38, 78; Wilson and Hurst, 'Medieval Britain in 1969', 191.
90. W. Stukeley, *Itinerarium Curiosum*, 2nd edn (London 1776), vol. 1, 28.
91. The accuracy of Stukeley's observations at Kirkstead, demonstrated by direct comparison with a modern survey of the highest quality, points to the need to take more seriously other of his survey plans whose value have been similarly discounted, including — for example — those of Crowland; see [Rev. John M. Gresley], *Some Account of Croyland Abbey, Lincolnshire, from the MSS and drawings of the Rev. William Stukeley* (Ashby-de-la-Zouch 1856), between 8 and 9.
92. Walter, *Woodhall Spa*, 250–51, citing the note by E. L. G., 'Henry Fynes of Kirkstead and the Civil War, temp. Charles I', *Lincolnshire Notes and Queries*, 1 (1889), 21–22. The Fiennes family certainly occupied Whitehall and buried prominently in Roughton church; see Walter, *Woodhall Spa*, 135–36. That residence may have counted as part of 'Cristede hamlet', recorded with sixteen households in 1563; Gerald A. J. Hodggett, *Tudor Lincolnshire*, History of Lincolnshire Volume VI (Lincoln 1975), 193.
93. Simon Thurley, *The Royal Palaces of Tudor England* (New Haven and London 1993), 68–70.
94. Giles Worsley, *The British Stable* (New Haven and London 2004), 202, 204; Richard Hewlings, 'Wakefield Lodge and other houses of the Second Duke of Grafton', *Georgian Group Journal*, 3 (1993), 43–61.
95. K. Mertes, *The English Noble Household 1250–1600: Good Governance and Politic Rule* (Oxford 1988), 15, 84–85, 128.
96. Thurley, *Royal Palaces*, 70–72, figs 93 and 94.
97. Worsley, *The British Stable*, 21–23, 79, 90, 133.
98. S. J. Gunn, *Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk c.1484–1545* (Oxford 1988), 221–21.
99. Worsley, *The British Stable*, 52–71, esp. 55; Everson and Stocker, 'Archaeology of vice-regality', fig. 3.
100. Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of the Earl of Ancaster preserved at Grimsthorpe* (Dublin 1907), 453–56; Everson and Stocker, 'Archaeology of vice-regality'.
101. Worsley, *The British Stable*, 190–95; see also Moorhouse, 'Yorkshire Dales'. The other requirements of a stud are stabling that is more spacious than the norm and, commonly, separate accommodation for the stallions, which might account for Stukeley's identification of a building complex in the south-east corner of the enclosure as 'stables'.
102. Thurley, *Royal Palaces*, 192.
103. Walter, *Woodhall Spa*, 142.
104. Thurley, *Royal Palaces*, 193; according to the 1661 estate plan, the 'Hawkes Mew' in the Nether Yard at Nevill Holt stood by a gate into the park and adjacent to the viewing stand, see Leicestershire Record Office DE 221/14/9, redrawn and reproduced as illus. 17 in N. A. Hill, 'Nevill Holt: the development of an English country house', *Archaeol. J.*, 156 (1999), 246–93. The conjunction of stables, dog-kennels and provision for hawks is also commonly recorded in Scottish royal palaces, often as a detached group; see John G. Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces: the Architecture of the Royal Residences during the Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Periods* (East Linton 1999), 189–91.
105. Joan Thirsk, *Horses in Early Modern England: for Service, for Pleasure, for Power*, The Stenton Lecture 1977 (Reading 1978), esp. 7–16.
106. S. J. Gunn, *Charles Brandon*, esp. 221–22.
107. We owe this point to Professor Nicholas Orme. See *Bevis of Hampton*, ed. E. Kölbing, Early English Texts Series extra series 46, 48, 65 (1885–94), reprinted as a single volume 1973; trans. Laura A. Hibbard, *Three Middle English Romances* (London 1911).
108. Printed in London by Wynkyn de Worde, 1500; by Richard Pinson, 1503; by J. Notary, 1510; and reprinted 1533; see conveniently the on-line listing in EEBO (<http://eebo.chadwyck.com>).
109. Laura A. [Hibbard] Loomis, *Medieval Romance in England* (New York 1969), 115–26.
110. *King Henry VIII*, act 1, scene 1, 4–38.
111. C. W. Foster and A. Hamilton Thompson, 'The Chantry Certificates for Lincoln and Lincolnshire returned in 1548 under the Act of Parliament of 1 Edward VI', *Associated Architectural Societies Reports and Papers*, 36 (1921–22), 183–294; 37 (1923–25), 18–106.
112. Nichols and Bruce, *Wills*, 28–41.

‘Sadly mangled by the insulting claws of time’: Thirteenth-Century Work at Croyland Abbey Church

JENNIFER S. ALEXANDER

Despite its fragmentary state, the 13th-century nave and west front of Croyland Abbey Church can still be seen, embedded in later work. The west front is the main survival, albeit reduced and modified, and this has long been recognized as a work dependent on Lincoln. A reconstruction of its 13th-century appearance is offered here, its debt to Lincoln acknowledged and developed and certain published comments challenged. The elevation of the nave is also reconstructed on the basis of the surviving masonry, and its influence on the subsequent remodelling in the Perpendicular period assessed.

Croyland Abbey in the fens of south Lincolnshire has long attracted the attention of artists like John Cotman, or Peter de Wint, as a picturesque feature in a watery landscape. It has also been of considerable interest to antiquarians, most notably Richard Gough and William Stukeley, both of whom made frequent visits to Croyland, and their observations add considerably to our understanding of the site (Fig. 1).¹

THE DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

THE abbey was founded to commemorate a Saxon hermit who had established a cell there; Guthlac and two followers left Repton *c.* 699, and settled on an island in the fens at Crowland to live a reclusive life. By the late Saxon period a Benedictine monastery had grown up close to the site of his cell but no fabric survives from the early period.² The documentary history is very rich, but unfortunately the detailed account of the Anglo-Saxon period, from a foundation by King Aethelbald in 716, through the ravages of the Danes in the 9th century and its refoundation in the 10th century — supposedly written by the abbot Ingulf between 1085 and 1108, and continued by Peter of Blois — is now thought to be a 14th-century composition. This led earlier writers to regard the accounts as forgeries, but more recent scholars have argued that the entries may have been based on original material, in particular on the writings of Oderic Vitalis, who visited Croyland between 1109–24, and that they should not be dismissed as a source.³

A less controversial later Chronicle provides evidence for a serious fire in 1091, which damaged the church and part of the monastic buildings, and for rebuilding undertaken after 1114.⁴ Guthlac’s relics were translated in 1136, and again in 1196



FIG. 1. Croyland Abbey: church from the south

Jennifer Alexander

after a major restoration campaign by Abbots Edward (d. 1175) and Robert (d. 1190), following a second fire in 1146. In 1219 the body of St Waltheof was moved to a new shrine. Waltheof was a benefactor who had been executed by William I in 1076 and his body brought to Croyland to be buried in the chapter-house. A cult grew up around his tomb and he was moved to the church in 1092 where miracles were documented.⁵ Part of his gift to the abbey was an estate at Barnack that will have provided building stone. The Chronicle describes building work by two 13th-century abbots; Henry de Longchamp who died in 1236, 'had renewed nearly the whole church'; Ralph de Mersh, 1254–81, built the tower 'beyond the choir', presumably the crossing tower, and a chapel to St Martin near the almonry. He also undertook repairs to the nave and its west front necessitated by a gale. His successor, Richard of Croyland (abbot 1281–1303), began rebuilding the east end of the church.⁶

There were two royal gifts of timber to assist the building works. In 1235 twenty tree-trunks (*'fusta'*) were sent from Clive and Brigstock forests 'ad operationem ecclesie de Croylaund' as a gift to the abbot, presumably for the building works of Abbot Henry, and in 1269 the sacrist of the abbey was to have four good oaks with their loppings for building works from Geddington.⁷

The Chronicle makes no further reference to building work until the 15th century, when there was a large-scale rebuilding campaign under William of Croyland, master of works, for Abbots Richard Upton (1417–27), and John Litlyngton (1427–70). The first phase, under Upton, included ‘the lower part of the nave (*inferior navis*) of the church to the west and both its aisles, with their chapels, from the ground to the roof’ (Fig. 2).⁸ The construction of the transepts, the Lady Chapel on the north side, and the ‘western cloister’ followed. The west window and the vaulting and gilding of the nave dated from the period of Litlyngton, paid for in part by donations from several of the monks (Fig. 3 & Col. Pl. V in print edn).⁹

Croyland was dissolved in 1539 and the site passed to Edward, Lord Clinton. In 1643 the town was garrisoned for the king but taken by the Parliamentarians. Contemporary accounts, and a plan compiled by Stukeley, show that the Civil War emplacement enclosed the site of the monastic church and cloister, the eastern rampart cut across the choir and its aisles, and the wooden ceiling of the choir, or nave, was damaged. The nave ceiling fell c. 1688.¹⁰ Further destruction was witnessed by both Stukeley and Gough and the site was raided for building materials.¹¹

Two 19th-century restorations were undertaken. Gilbert Scott restored the west front in 1860, correcting its westward lean by cutting through the lower courses of the wall and jacking the south-west corner back into position. The south-west wall was partly dismantled and the foundations were underpinned.¹² Further work was carried out by Pearson between 1887–99. This included securing the crossing piers, the



FIG. 2. Croyland Abbey: north aisle from the west

Jennifer Alexander

'Sadly mangled by the insulting claws of time'

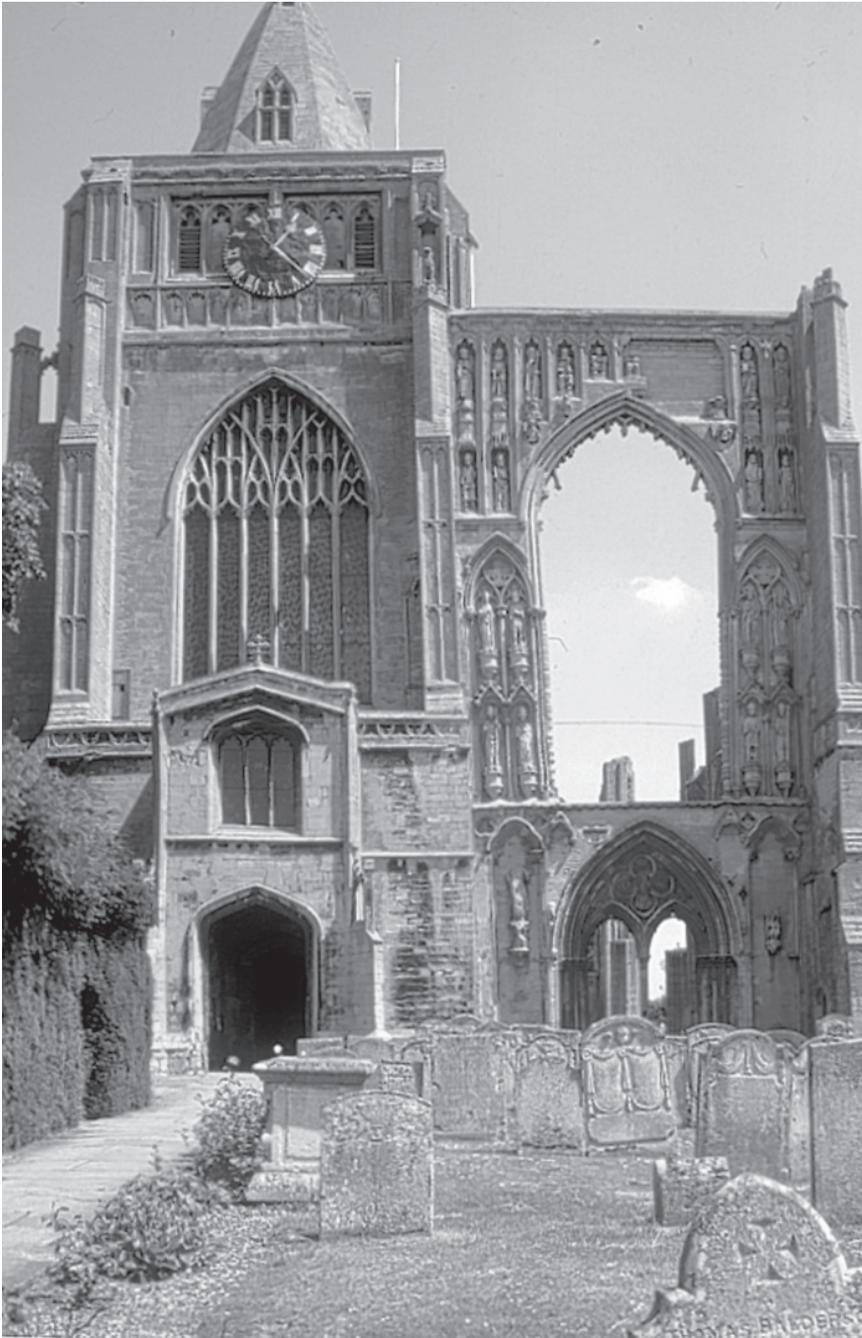


FIG. 3. Croyland Abbey: west front
Jennifer Alexander

removal of the blocking beneath the crossing arch, and further work on the west front, during which the west buttresses were underpinned. He also added the chancel to the parish church created in the north aisle.¹³

The shrines

CROWLAND had at least two shrines. St Waltheof may only have been of local importance, significant to the monks as a benefactor later canonized (and it can be assumed that this point was not lost on later donors), but St Guthlac was of greater importance and his shrine will have attracted pilgrims throughout the medieval period.¹⁴ The west portal of the church, with its Guthlac imagery, prepares visitors for the presence of the shrine close to the high altar of the church. A second site on the south side of the west front covers the position believed to be that of the saint's original oratory. The heavy buttress there has two openings through it that are claimed by Stukeley to have provided access to a lower and upper chamber of the saint's cell, though this seems unlikely (Fig. 4). The openings are clearly late medieval in date and more probably belonged to Abbot Richard Upton's sumptuous new hall, rebuilt before his death in 1427.¹⁵ Excavations here in 1908 to establish the site of Guthlac's cell found a tile floor that the excavator described as 'Roman or Early British' which lay beneath layers of peat and stone dust, the latter dated to the 11th century. The absence of burials around this site, when the rest of the ground was well used, did



FIG. 4. Croyland Abbey: south-west buttress of the west front

Jennifer Alexander

'Sadly mangled by the insulting claws of time'

suggest that this may have been the site believed in the middle ages to be Guthlac's cell.¹⁶ The abbey also held relics of St Bartholomew which will have been a further attraction for the faithful, and it is probable that the large number of knives recovered from around the precinct, and inspected by Stukeley, were intended to be pilgrim souvenirs.

THE EAST END

THE church from the crossing eastwards and all the monastic buildings have been lost, but a great deal of worked stone has been recovered in the course of grave-digging (Fig. 5).¹⁷ There was a more systematic investigation of the lost buildings in the early 18th century and James Essex described the discovery of massive timbers that formed part of the foundation of the east end.¹⁸ Stukeley reported discussions with the sexton in 1745 when the rubble core of the choir north aisle wall was still standing. The sexton had 'dug up all the foundations of the buttresses, and the . . . pillars and walls of the quire' and had found sleeper walls between the arcade piers in both the nave and choir, as well as a number of 'blue' stones with brass inscriptions.¹⁹

Despite this there is no consensus about the form of the east end and there are at least three different plans of it. Stukeley's 1747 plan shows an apse without an ambulatory emerging from a seven-bay straight choir arcade, and square-ended aisles.

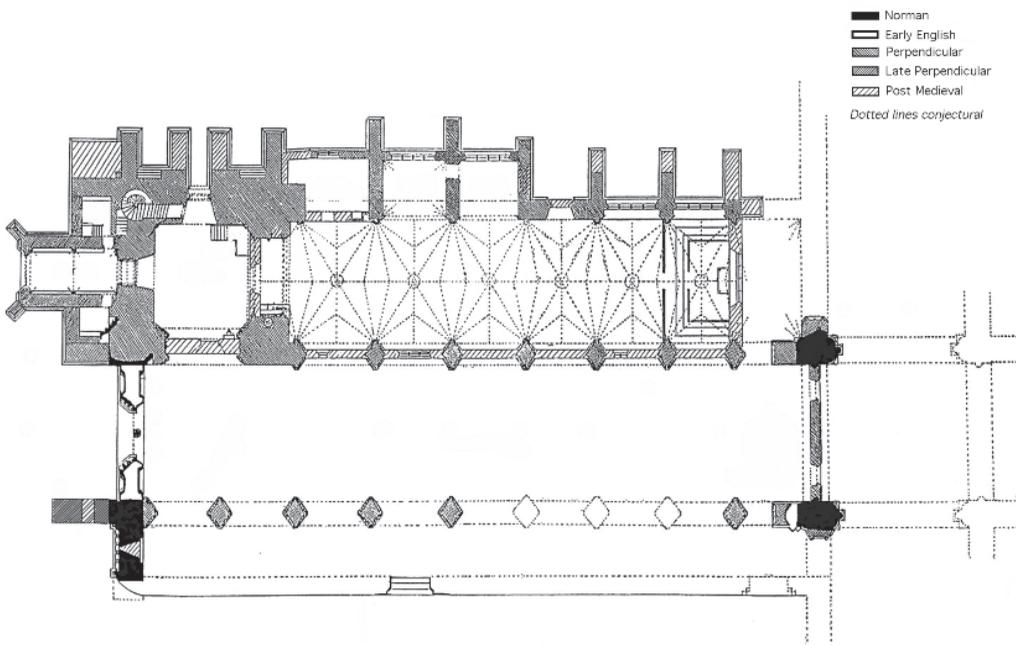


FIG. 5. Croyland Abbey: plan of surviving sections of the church in the late 19th century, after Roland Paul 1894 (modified)

There is a rectangular crossing, transepts with eastern aisles which project as two narrow bays beyond the aisles, and an eleven-bay nave. Stukeley also shows the cloister to the south, with a massive apsed chapter-house and complex west range with an outer court. However, the lack of correspondence between Stukeley's plan and the surviving masonry, in particular the change from the nine bays of the current nave to the eleven of his plan, raises doubts about its reliability.²⁰ Essex's plan shows an apsed east end with an ambulatory and transepts with an eastern aisle divided into three chapels. The plan was published in simplified form in 1821.²¹ Finally, a variation on Essex's plan appeared in the 1860s, with an ambulatory outside a six-pier hemicycle, four choir bays and two chapels to the transepts which are shown to be aisled on the west also.²² None of these plans is phased and it is possible that they may depict different archaeological levels and show changes that were made to the east end during the period between the 12th to 16th centuries, but it is impossible to determine anything further without archaeological investigation of the site.

THE NAVE

THE nave presents a late-Gothic appearance, with a two-storied elevation carried on continuously moulded piers, whose inward-facing wall shafts rise from pavement level to springers that originally supported a timber high vault at a level slightly beneath the mid-point of the clerestory (Fig. 1).²³ This clerestory was massive, with a wall passage set beneath a continuously moulded rear arch. The north-west tower sits over the aisle, occupying very nearly two bays, its south arch into the nave raised into the clerestory zone and given a panelled soffit. The extra width of this arch means that the two bays of high vault that cover the arch, and the blank wall next to it, have to spring from a corbel on its spandrel.

The two aisles were vaulted differently. The wider north aisle survives as the parish church, and retains a stone rib vault with a transverse rib sited, not at the end of the bay, but in its centre and jointed into the wall rib (Fig. 5). The vault over the south aisle seems to have omitted the transverse rib. Although the exact width of the south aisle cannot be determined accurately since it has lost its south-west corner, it clearly was not widened when the nave and north aisle were rebuilt, presumably because this would have affected the claustral buildings. The transept elevation follows that of the nave, but with panelled soffits to the arches.

The surviving Romanesque fabric in the crossing area

THE nave incorporates remains from the Romanesque building. The later builders retained the entire western side of the 12th-century crossing and the east end of the Perpendicular arcade is secured by a huge buttress against its massive crossing piers (Fig. 6). The east face of the crossing piers was left exposed and, as Bridget Cherry has noted, the piers are of an unusual type, unparalleled in the region. The east side consists of a thin central shaft flanked by two broader recessed shafts. The nave side has only a single shaft although the arch soffit suggests that more supporting shafts were anticipated.²⁴

The arches of the arcade and gallery remain embedded in the later blocking and conform to the East Anglian model, having similar-sized arches at both levels. Both arches are moulded but the gallery arch is more ornate with a type of scallop

'Sadly mangled by the insulting claws of time'

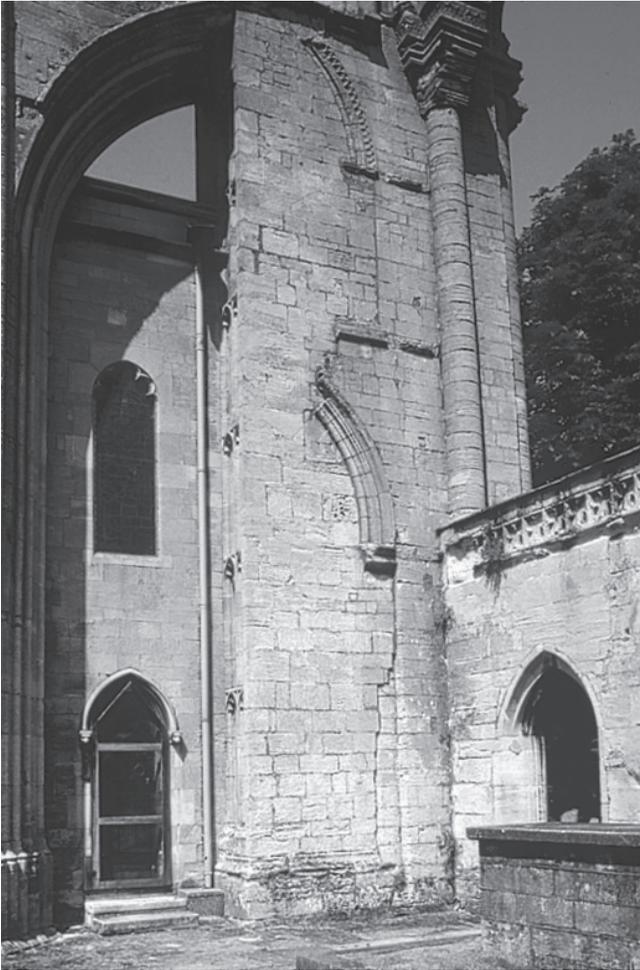


FIG. 6. Croyland Abbey: east end of the north nave arcade
Jennifer Alexander

design to the outer order and what appears to be a scallop capital. No trace remains of the interior face of the clerestory, as it was removed to accommodate the larger Perpendicular one. Proof of its existence survives in tiny capitals on the exterior, flanking the crossing tower.

13th-century modification of the nave

THE south elevation of the Romanesque nave was modified in the 13th century, and a hybrid bay formed. The string-courses and half the gallery arch remain, as on the north, but the stonework beneath has been modified and a moulded arch supported on a giant respond was inserted into the Romanesque fabric (Fig. 7). The lower courses of this respond are still Romanesque, but five courses of replaced stone show where the arcade capital and its arch were removed, and the drums above this level



FIG. 7. Croyland Abbey: east end of south nave arcade, showing inserted 13th-century respond

Jennifer Alexander

are no longer bonded into the wall behind. The modification is also visible on the aisle side, with a heavy shaft emerging from the blocking, flanked by a slender shaft later employed to support the stone vault, under a combined moulded capital (Fig. 8). It is clear that the pier so formed had a multi-lobed, clustered design, of which fragments survive in the stone collection and are incorporated into the foundations of the south arcade.²⁵

The Perpendicular arcades also employ giant orders and therefore follow the design of the 13th-century work. It is no longer possible to determine whether the elevation of the north side was also modified in the 13th century, the east bay was clearly not changed from its Romanesque form, and the remaining bays were totally rebuilt in the Perpendicular period.²⁶ Equally it must remain uncertain how much of the south side was modified.



FIG. 8. Croyland Abbey: nave south-east respond from the south aisle

Jennifer Alexander

THE WEST FRONT

THE centre of the west front contains much 13th-century fabric, added to in the 15th century when it was raised (Fig. 3). The west window, dated to 1427–70, retains the jambs of its 13th-century predecessor extended upwards, flanked by the blind arcading of the earlier period. The Romanesque aisle façades were also allowed to remain; both the south aisle façade with characteristic rows of arcading supported by a mix of scalloped and waterleaf capitals above *en délit* shafts, and a small part of the north aisle façade, which had an ornamented portal, now covered by one of the chambers beside the porch.

The west buttresses belong to three different periods. Romanesque angle shafts with capitals define the extent of the shallow early buttresses (Fig. 4). These were raised in the 13th century and given further angle shafts, but anxieties about the stability of the west façade caused the 15th-century masons to add much deeper and taller buttresses in front of the earlier ones.

By retaining the earlier side aisles the 13th-century designer had to work within a space defined by the two main buttresses and his design, which places blind tracery next to the west window, limits the span of the window. It lacks the harmony of a façade such as Tintern, or Newstead, where the west window extends across the whole space and the portal is flanked by blind arcading (Fig. 9).²⁷ Croyland's portal zone is an uneasy mix of blind arcading, randomly sited foiled motifs, canopies and sculpture, but this may be the result of later reworking.



FIG. 9. Newstead Priory: west front
Jennifer Alexander

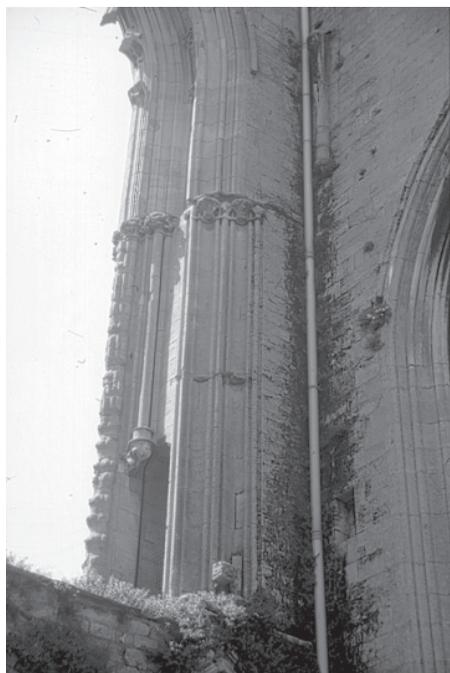


FIG. 10. Croyland Abbey: west front interior,
north jamb of 13th-century west window
Jennifer Alexander

The 13th-century west window

THE springing of the head of the 13th-century window was at the same level as that of the arches of the blind arcade, resulting in a window which was broad, but not very tall. The window jambs were moulded but the shafts that framed the blind arcading were *en délit* and have fallen out. The rear-arch facing the nave was richly moulded with slender shafts and capitals between the heavier *en délit* shafts (Fig. 10). This combination of moulded jambs with *en délit* shafts can be seen at a number of buildings from the 1230s onwards. It is present in both the nave west window and Angel Choir windows at Lincoln (from the 1230s and c. 1260 respectively), and in buildings under Lincoln's influence, such as the west window at Newstead, or the north aisle windows at St Wulfram, Grantham. The moulded shafts at Croyland are all freestone but it is possible that the *en délit* shafts were of Purbeck marble (or equivalent) since some of the portal shafts are Purbeck.

The form of the blind tracery of the upper level is clearly Lincoln-derived, with the lower section of the east window of the Angel Choir the likely source; similar shafts and bushy foliage capitals also occur in the jambs there (Fig. 11). The relative proportions of the 13th-century window, however, suggest Grantham's north-west window was the model (Fig. 12).²⁸ Grantham's north aisle was under construction

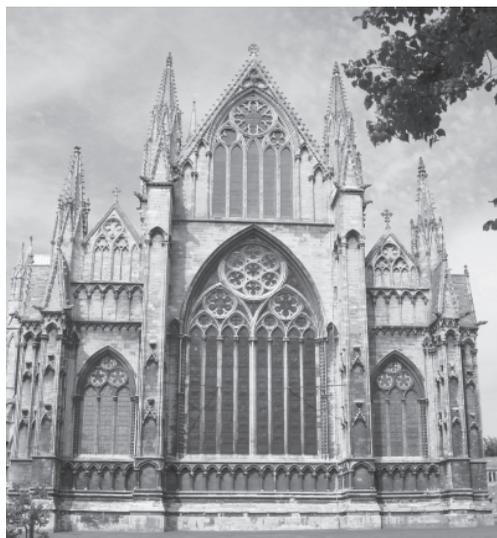


FIG. 11. Lincoln Cathedral: Angel Choir east wall

Jennifer Alexander

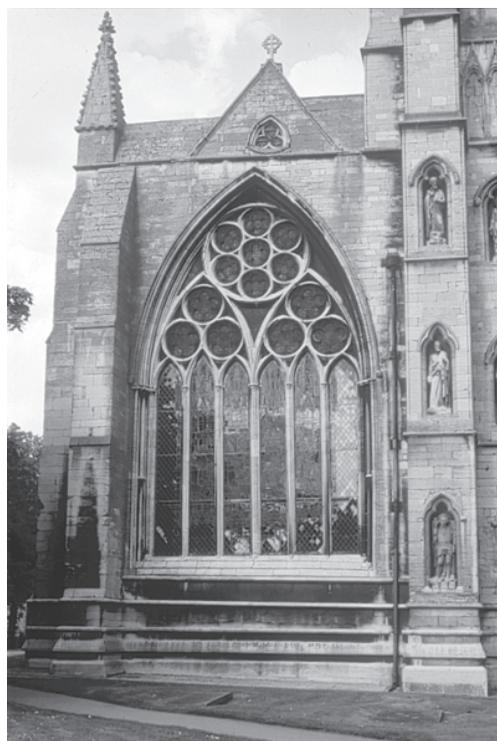


FIG. 12. St Wulfram, Grantham: north aisle west window

Jennifer Alexander



FIG. 13. Croyland Abbey: west portal
Jennifer Alexander

towards the end of the 13th century, and was strongly influenced by the contemporary work at Lincoln.²⁹

The portal

THE Croyland designer, like his counterpart at Newstead, looked to Lincoln for the design of his portal (Fig. 13) but neither mason sought to emulate the sculptural complexity and scale of the Judgement Portal (Fig. 14), whose iconographic scheme extended into the archivolt, although the cinquefoil-cusping at Croyland is a quote from the larger portal (Fig. 13). Both based their designs on the north portal of the Angel Choir instead (Fig. 15).³⁰ Newstead's tympanum (Fig. 16) is very similar to Croyland's and both have the stiff-leaf foliage tendrils that are present at Lincoln above the inner face of the aisle windows but are not used for its portals. At Croyland Purbeck marble has been used for the shafts of the doorway, and also for the abaci above the portal capitals, and for the string-course that connects the abaci to the shaft-rings on the arcade.

The sculpture of the portal zone

THE iconography of the tympanum has been related to literary texts by George Henderson and contains scenes from the life of Guthlac.³¹ There is no other figure sculpture on the portal and it is surrounded by large and small canopies that do not seem to be related to it or anything else. Two trefoil headed arches flank the portal and these contain socles, of which one supports a figure of Synagogue (Fig. 17). This sadly damaged figure has been attributed to the Lincoln Judgement Portal workshop since the 19th century.³² The figure proportions and drapery styles are very close to a

'Sadly mangled by the insulting claws of time'



FIG. 14. Lincoln Cathedral: Judgement Portal
Jennifer Alexander



FIG. 15. Lincoln Cathedral: Angel Choir north portal
Jennifer Alexander



FIG. 16. Newstead Priory: west portal (detail)
Jennifer Alexander



FIG. 17. Croylund Abbey: west front figure of Synagogue
Jennifer Alexander



FIG. 18. Lincoln Cathedral: Judgement Portal figure of Synagogue
Jennifer Alexander

figure on Lincoln's Judgement Portal (Fig. 18), in particular the way that the fabric falls about the figure's feet, and the type of knotted belt at the figure's waist that was still visible in the 1970s. Synagogue is quite a small figure and stands on a tall socle, carved with scenes of the Expulsion, and, as at Lincoln, an atlas figure supports the polygonal base.

Synagogue, representing the Old Law, is usually depicted as a female figure in a full-length robe, her eyes bound, and head bowed. At Strasbourg the tablets of the Law fall from her hand (Fig. 19) (the other hand holds a broken spear and banner), at Reims the figure has a crown falling from her head. In the chapter-house vault painting at York, of *c.* 1285, the figure follows the Strasbourg example, with the addition of the crown shown slipping past her shoulder.³³ Ecclesia represents the New Law and the victory over the Old Law that came about through the Crucifixion. The figure of Ecclesia is therefore usually shown holding the chalice in which the blood from Christ's wounds was caught, as is the case at Strasbourg (Fig. 20), York, Reims, and in other 13th-century examples. In all these cases Ecclesia stands to the left of Synagogue, placing her beneath the saved, in portals showing Judgement, with Synagogue beneath the damned.³⁴

Lincoln's figure of Synagogue

THE identification of the Croylund figure as Synagogue comes from its resemblance to the figure at Lincoln, and shares its anomalous siting on the north of the portal, but

'Sadly mangled by the insulting claws of time'



FIG. 19 (left). Strasbourg Cathedral: figure of Synagogue

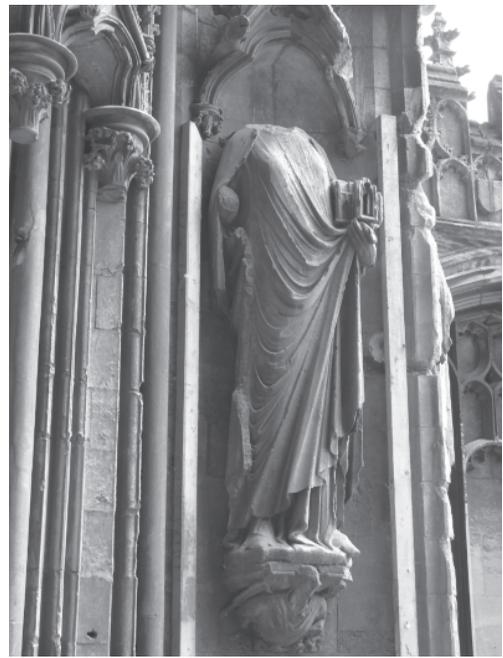
Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art

FIG. 20 (below left). Strasbourg Cathedral: figure of Ecclesia

Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art

FIG. 21 (below right). Lincoln Cathedral: Judgement Portal figure of Ecclesia

Jennifer Alexander



in its damaged state the Lincoln figure may have been misread. W. R. Lethaby was the first to claim it as Synagogue, on the basis of the identification of a second figure as Ecclesia, although the latter is holding a church, not a chalice (Fig. 21). Lethaby was aware that this was a departure from the usual iconography but cited parallels at Rochester, on the basis of a drawing, and in the glass at Bourges.³⁵ His identification of Synagogue further hinged on the position of the figure's left hand, which has been damaged, but which he reconstructed with the palm downwards, in the act of pushing away the tablets of the Law, rather than dropping them, while grasping folds of drapery. Close examination of the hand reveals that it is in fact the other way up, with the fingers closed over the palm, and the drapery was clasped between the third and fourth fingers. The thumb, which was in front has been broken off — and was not, as Lethaby's drawing shows it, at the rear. The figure also has an upright pose, unlike the slumped figure of Synagogue seen in all other examples. When the Lincoln and Croyland figures are compared with the Strasbourg figure of Ecclesia (Figs 18, 17 and 20), not Synagogue, the resemblance is striking, not just for the pose but because the left hand at Strasbourg is shown palm-upwards to hold a chalice. Lincoln's figure's left arm is less acutely angled, but the position of the fingers strongly suggests that it, too, supported a chalice. Its right arm is broken off at the shoulder but it was raised and most probably held a similar staff to that of the Strasbourg figure, with the edge of the figure's cloak providing part of its support.

For Lincoln's, and therefore Croyland's, figure to be read as Ecclesia we have to explain the presence of the figure carrying the model church that now occupies the site on the other side of the Lincoln Judgement Portal. None of the other figures in the area of the portal has been positively identified; Lethaby was at a loss to relate to it three figures, two of them headless and one a female figure with a replacement head, that are still sited around, or close to, the portal. He did tentatively identify two more figures installed on the south-east corner buttress. These he read as St Aethelbert, king of East Anglia, and his queen Althryda, although he was uncertain about the authenticity of their restored heads. The female on the next buttress, he suggested, might be Aetheldreda, to complete the East Anglian family.³⁶ The two headless figures next to Synagogue and Ecclesia he was only able to identify as probable apostles, but the posture of the western figure has a marked sway and, as Paul Williamson notes, it is a female figure.³⁷ Both figures have been displaced by the 15th-century chapels; the female figure, 'Aetheldreda' has also been affected at the other end of the eastern chapel.

The Judgement Portal (Fig. 14), when first built, projected out from the Angel Choir and its sides were ornamented with pairs of niches, making a total of eight possible spaces in which figure sculpture could have been placed. Seven mid-13th-century figures survive, of which only two have been identified, and three restored with dubious heads. None of these figures needs be in its original position. 'Synagogue' may be in situ, although she has a clearly disturbed mortar-joint on the top of her base, but the three royal figures on the buttresses have no bases to stand on, and the two 'apostles' are known to have been moved.³⁸ All seven may well have originally been associated with the portal and resited when the chapels were built. It is therefore not possible to suggest an iconographic scheme with any degree of certainty, but the figure holding the church is more likely to be a donor, and we still need to find a figure of Synagogue.³⁹

CROYLAND'S FIGURE SCULPTURE

IF we accept that the Croyland figure is also Ecclesia, then the sculpture on the socle, which depicts the Fall and Expulsion, not the 'Temptation in Eden' as Lethaby had it, represents its anti-type (Fig. 17).⁴⁰ The socle to the south of the portal is quite different and has a single seated angel above the atlas-figure corbel (Fig. 22). The figure is damaged but the angel's left hand rests on its knee and its right arm was raised. There is no obvious iconographic connection between this figure and that of Synagogue, needed to balance Ecclesia, and it is possible that this socle did not originate in this position. It is not certain whether the Croyland figures were meant to be placed here in the 13th century, it is difficult to relate Ecclesia and Synagogue to a portal with Guthlac iconography, and it is possible that the figures were moved during the changes to the façade in the 15th century. New socles for figures were added to the corbels in the 13th-century blind arcading at this time, and it is noticeable that only the lower figures have canopies, the upper ones are squeezed in under the cusps of the tracery in an awkward manner which suggests that they have been added later (Fig. 3). The 15th-century upper stage of the façade is a series of niches with figure sculpture and it seems likely that figures were added to the lower part to be consistent, and that the figure here identified as Ecclesia, together with the much smaller figures attached to the edge of the portal, was brought from elsewhere in the building, perhaps from a pulpitum to be placed here at the same time. Antiquarian drawings and a 19th-century photograph show the façade in a different state. Buck's 1726 view of the west front shows the portal flanked by two figures in a symmetrical



FIG. 22. Croyland Abbey: west front figure of an angel

Jennifer Alexander



FIG. 23. Croyland Abbey: west front. Photograph published in 1864

© The British Library Board. All rights reserved C44d.7

arrangement of identical canopies and motifs that bears little resemblance to its current state. A photograph published in 1864 (Fig. 23) shows the façade before the south-west corner had been restored and there is no sign of either the figure or its socle.⁴¹ The current siting of ‘Synagogue’ may not therefore indicate its medieval position.

CONCLUSION

CROYLAND’S long history is only partly reflected in the remains of its abbey church, although the saint’s relics remained the focus of the building until the Reformation. The documented history provides evidence of periods of intense building activity of which only parts remain. It is clear that the 13th-century building owed much to the

new work at Lincoln, in progress from c. 1256–90 and that sculptors from Lincoln provided figures for the building. The figure that flanks the portal may now be seen as Ecclesia and, as at Lincoln, the fate of Synagogue remains unknown.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to thank Jackie Hall for discussing her work on the loose stone collection with me and the Works Manager of Lincoln Cathedral, Carol Heidschuster, and her team for continuing assistance at Lincoln. John McNeill deserves my particular thanks for his thoughtful editing of this paper.

NOTES

1. William Stukeley, whose writings on Crowland have provided the quotation in the title, was born in Holbeach, in the Fens, in 1687 and lived there until he moved to London in 1717. He returned to the county in 1726, took orders and had a living at Stamford from 1729, and visited Crowland regularly until his death in 1765. See John M. Gresley, *Some Account of Croyland Abbey, Lincolnshire from the MSS and drawings of the Rev. William Stukeley* (Ashby-de-la-Zouche 1856). Richard Gough's detailed account of the documents relating to the abbey dates from after 1759, Richard Gough, *The History and Antiquities of Croyland-Abbey in the County of Lincolnshire, Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica No. XI* (London 1783).

2. A series of boundary stones recorded around the area of the monastery are dated no earlier than the 12th century, although they may replace similar markers from the pre-Conquest period. Paul Everson and David Stocker, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture 5, Lincolnshire* (Oxford 1999), 295, 323–25.

3. David Roffe, 'The Historia Croylandensis: a plea for reassessment', *English Historical Review*, 110 (1995), 93–108, Marjorie Chibnall ed., *The Ecclesiastical History of Oderic Vitalis*, 5 vols (Oxford 1969–80), vol. II, xxv–xxvii.

4. *Historiae Croylandensis Continuatio*. Thomas Gale's transcription of 1684 was published in *Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores*, I, 494–546. Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 208. See Charles L. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature of the Fifteenth century* (Oxford 1913), 179–83. The document is a history of the abbey written in two parts, in c. 1470 and in 1486. It describes the events at the abbey from the reign of Stephen to the latter date, but has a number of gaps during the 13th and 14th centuries. See also VCH, *Lincolnshire*, II (London 1906), 105–18, which draws heavily on it.

5. D. H. Farmer, *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints*, 5th edn (Oxford 2003), 530.

6. Gough, *History*, 55–57. There is no reference to a new shrine for Guthlac at this time. The burial scene depicted in the Guthlac Roll from c. 1210 (British Library MS Harley Roll Y. 6, roundel 16), shows the saint's body being placed in a raised shrine behind the altar, and this probably represents the arrangement that existed after the last recorded translation, in 1196. The image can be seen on the British Library's website, at www.imagesonline.bl.uk/britishlibrary/controller/textsearch?text=Guthlac20%roll

7. *Cal. Close Rolls* (1234–37), 138; (1268–72), 165.

8. Gough, *History*, 62.

9. William Dugdale, *Monasticon*, II (1846), 102. Gough states that the south side of the cloister was completed, not the west, Gough, *History*, 61–69, in neither case is it clear whether the writer is referring to the cloister walk, or the range.

10. Gresley, *Stukeley's Croyland*, p. 2. Gresley's account is drawn from Stukeley's notes, which are dated, although somewhat unedited, and he quotes them verbatim. In his 1708 note there is an account of a soldier falling through a ceiling in the church in 1643, and of a beam carved with an angel, but neither is precisely sited, nor is the carved and gilded roof from the church that was seen reused in a house in Crowland in 1661. See also Gough, *History*, 80–81. Both of the latter may have been from the east end since a timber rib-vault was most probably raised over the nave, supported by stone springers with very slender wall ribs.

11. Stukeley witnessed, or interviewed witnesses to, a number of events; in 1743 he watched the destruction of the nave south aisle wall, and the construction of a buttress to support the west front with the stone; in 1746 he reported that the clerestory windows on the north side were to be removed and in 1757 that parts of

the south-west corner of the west front had been pulled down together with the top of the west window and that some of the statues had been damaged.

12. E. M. Sanderson ed., *Croyland. The Abbey, Bridge, and Saint Guthlac, from papers read by the Rev. Canon Moore* (Spalding c. 1861), 23.

13. Anthony Quiney, *John Loughborough Pearson* (London 1979), 248.

14. Waltheof's removal to a more prominent site in the church in 1092 will have encouraged his veneration by the laity and promoted his cult. I owe this suggestion to John McNeill.

15. Gough, *History*, 65. The openings were blocked during the 19th century but were drawn open by Stukeley in 1757.

16. Or alternatively that covered by the abbot's hall. *The Times*, 24 October 1908.

17. Architectural fragments are built into the wall to the south of the church, used as foundations for several of the south arcade piers, or stored outside. Included amongst these are small paired capitals that must have come from the Romanesque cloister arcade. A study of the fragments by Dr Jackie Hall is underway.

18. London, BL, Add. MS 6772, fol. 100.

19. Gresley, *Stukeley's Croyland*, 11, n.

20. The plan was drawn from Stukeley's original for publication in the 1850s by Gresley. The east end is more detailed, however, with the responds carefully lined up with the choir piers, the chord of the apse is indicated and bases shown in the eastern corners of the side aisles.

21. T. Kerrich, 'Observations on the use of mysterious figures, called Vesica Piscis, in the architecture of the middle ages, and in Gothic architecture', *Archaeologia*, 19 (1821), 353-68, pl. xxi, fig. 7.

22. Sanderson, *Moore's Croyland*, facing p. 3.

23. See above, n. 10.

24. Bridget Cherry, 'Romanesque architecture in eastern England', *JBAA*, 131 (1978), 17-18.

25. There are also sections of a respond in the stone collection that consist of a central filleted shaft flanked by two keeled shafts of similar size, but separated from them by an order of rectangular nailhead decoration.

26. The west respond of an earlier, probably Romanesque, arcade has been exposed next to the inner face of the west front by the removal of single masonry blocks.

27. For Newstead, see Jennifer S. Alexander, 'The west front of Newstead Priory Church', *Trans. Thoroton Soc.*, 100 (1996), 55-60.

28. I am grateful to Hugh Williams for this suggestion and for discussion of the Croyland window.

29. N. Pevsner and J. Harris, rev. by N. Antram, *Lincolnshire B/E*, 2nd edn (Harmondsworth 1989), 316-20, also Mary Dean, 'The Angel Choir and its local influence', in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Lincoln Cathedral*, ed. T. A. Heslop and V. A. Sekules, *BAA Trans.*, vii (Leeds 1986), 90-101. Dean's observations on Croyland are not supported by further examination of the fabric.

30. Lincoln's north portal has had its bases and trumeau replaced with late-Gothic ones sometime after 1406 since the trumeau shows the royal arms adopted at that date. There is also a strange wooden order in the arch that has been added to the moulding.

31. George Henderson, 'The Imagery of St Guthlac at Crowland', in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge 1985), 76-94.

32. See Paul Williamson, *Gothic Sculpture 1140-1300* (New Haven 1995), 209.

33. Christopher Norton, 'The medieval paintings in the chapter house', *Friends of York Minster Annual Report*, 67 (1996), 34-51.

34. In early depictions the figure is seen attendant upon the Crucifixion, catching the blood of Christ in the chalice. See É. Mâle, *The Gothic Image* (London 1961), 188-90.

35. W. R. Lethaby, 'Notes on sculptures in Lincoln Minster: the Judgment Portal and the Angel Choir', *Archaeologia*, 60 (1907), 379-90. Lethaby's identification of the figure has found support in Sandy Heslop's more recent examination of the iconography of the Angel Choir and the Judgement Portal, although he acknowledges that there are inconsistencies in the placing of other figures on the portal. T. A. Heslop, 'The iconography of the Angel Choir at Lincoln Cathedral', in *Medieval Architecture and its Intellectual Context*, ed. E. Fernie and P. Crossley (London 1990), 151-58.

36. These were restored in 1858, together with the second female figure further west, by Thomas Earp at a cost of £10, 'from the designs of C. A. Buckler' (*sic*). A few weeks later 1s. 6d. carriage was paid to bring a 'small case containing the top and bottom of the sceptre' from Earp's workshop to Lincoln. Lincolnshire Archives Office, D & C CIV 64, audit vouchers 1857-60.

37. Williamson, *Gothic Sculpture*, 286, n. 45.

38. Henderson followed Lethaby's reading of the figure as Synagogue, and was convinced of its identification by the presence of the corbel figure beneath its feet which he identified as 'the Jewish High Priest' since there are two small representations of the tablets of the law on the figure's breast. Its siting beneath the feet

'Sadly mangled by the insulting claws of time'

of Ecclesia is more logical however. Henderson's comment that the anomalous siting of the figure of Synagogue is 'difficult to understand in thirteenth-century Lincoln' is pertinent. Henderson, 'Imagery of Guthlac', 93.

39. The female 'apostle' figure has been taken into storage, and 'Ecclesia' and the other figure are now on display again after a period of some thirty years in which they were boxed in to protect them. The figure that has been removed is in a decayed state, but it would warrant further study to see whether it might be the missing figure of Synagogue.

40. Lethaby, 'Sculpture at Lincoln', 386 n.

41. The photograph, by W. Russell Sedgfield, was published in W. Howitt, *Ruined Abbeys and Castles of Great Britain and Ireland* (London 1864).

Snettisham Church

RICHARD FAWCETT

It is argued here, on the evidence of its architectural details, that Snettisham Church was built in the second quarter of the 14th century by a master mason who was also working on the choir and Lady Chapel at Ely Cathedral, and who was possibly a member of the Ramsey family. It is suggested that the patron could have been the Dowager Queen Isabella, who held the lordship of Snettisham and Rising between c. 1327 and 1358 and who spent much time at her castle of Rising. A number of parts of other buildings considered to be attributable to the same mason are also discussed, including the upper belfry storey of the south-west tower of King's Lynn St Margaret, the nave clerestory of Terrington St John, the west window of Heacham and the choir of Grantchester.

INTRODUCTION

ST MARY AT SNETTISHAM is the most elegant of Norfolk's parish churches to have come down to us from the first half of the 14th century (Fig. 1).¹ Little is known of the earlier history of the parish, other than that it had been granted to Wymondham Priory in the early 12th century by that priory's founder, William de Albini, who was lord of the manor of Rising and Snettisham, and there was a vicarage settlement in 1251.² Similarly, there are no known dates for the building of the existing church, the only documentary references being a bequest of 5 marks towards paving of the chancel in 1375,³ and a bequest of £10 in 1519 for re-leading the north aisle, where the altar of St James was apparently located.⁴ The first of those could have coincided with the fitting out of the now-lost chancel, following the rebuilding of the whole church; alternatively, it may have been that reconstruction of the chancel was an entirely distinct operation, undertaken presumably under the aegis of Wymondham Priory. The second bequest is certainly too late to be associated with the main building campaign on the existing parts of the church, and was presumably simply a contribution to remedial operations.

In its present form, the church is of flint rubble masonry with ample ashlar dressings cut with great precision. It has an aisled nave of five bays with a unique three-arched open porch at the west end of the central vessel, and an aisleless chancel (Fig. 2). At the junction of nave and chancel is a central tower surmounted by a slender ashlar spire, and to each side of that tower was a low transeptal chapel which projected well beyond the nave aisles, though only that on the south side survives.

After the Reformation the church was evidently allowed to fall into a poor condition. The north transeptal chapel was truncated to the line of the adjacent nave aisle outer wall in 1595,⁵ and at a visitation of 1597 the church was said to be in poor repair.⁶ The returns of a further visitation of 1602 specified that it was the chancel which was then in decay,⁷ and the eastern limb was later demolished except for a



FIG. 1. Snettisham: west front
John McNeill

fragment of its north-east angle. Such repairs as were carried out before the 19th century appear to have been essentially utilitarian in character, as in 1785 when the nave roof pitch was lowered. The tide began to turn in the mid-19th century, and there was a restoration in 1846 which included unblocking and rebuilding the west window,⁸ with another restoration ten years later. The spire blew down in 1895, but was rebuilt soon after, and there was a further restoration in 1899.⁹

SNETTISHAM AND ELY

IT is hoped to show here that the architecture of Snettisham is best understood within a geographical context localized in eastern Norfolk and Cambridgeshire (Fig. 3), though one with links to architecture in the capital. It should also be said that the surviving parts of the church appear to be essentially homogeneous, although it is possible that the extraordinary west porch was finished a little later than the main campaign, since its outer face is not coursed in with the flanking buttresses.¹⁰

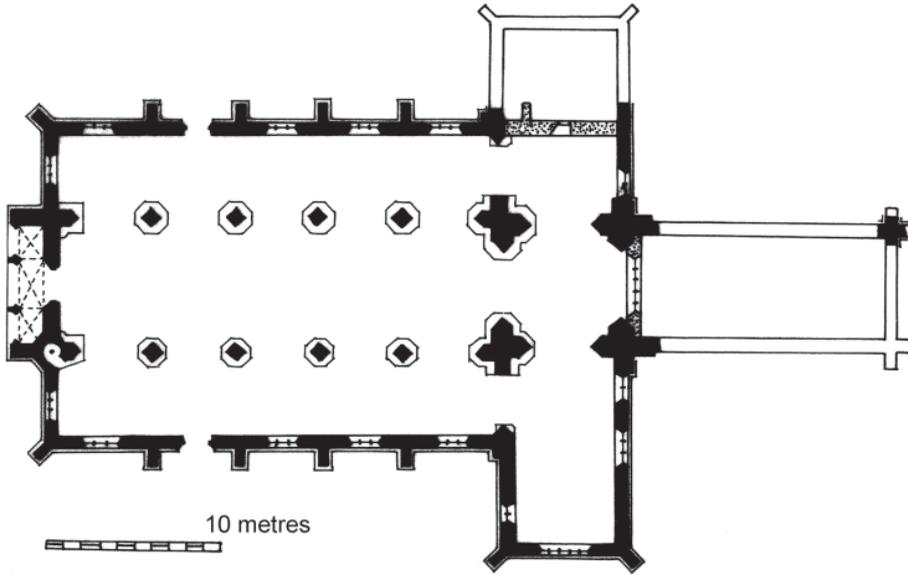


FIG. 2. Snettisham: plan
Richard Fawcett



FIG. 3. Map of churches with work related to Snettisham and Ely
Richard Fawcett

Perhaps the most immediately striking characteristic of the church is the window tracery, as demonstrated especially in its uniquely inventive six-light west window. The predominant features of the tracery are complex multi-curved containing elements and subordinate forms, and minuscule loop-like elements in some of the interstices. Not all the windows have both of these features — and it was clearly the intention that windows of luxuriant richness should be balanced by more restrained designs — but all have one of those features, and the majority have both. The complex curvature of some of the containing figures had perhaps been partly foreshadowed in the windows of Michael of Canterbury's crypt at St Stephen's Chapel in Westminster Palace of 1292–98, as seen in the central quatrefoil and the subordinate light heads there (Fig. 4a).¹¹ These ideas were further developed in the vicinity of London, where complex containing figures were combined with diminutive forms in a way that parallels even more closely what we find at Snettisham, as in the heavily restored west window of the south chapel at Waltham Abbey (Fig. 4c), or in the hall windows at Penshurst Place (Fig. 4b), for which a licence to crenellate was granted in 1341.¹²

However, the way these details are handled at Snettisham takes such ideas very much further, and in doing so has its closest parallels in the early-14th-century work at Ely Cathedral, some 50 km to its south. At Ely, the use of complex curves in the tracery underwent a highly idiosyncratic development. Whereas at St Stephen's Chapel, Waltham Abbey and Penshurst Place the curves had been contained within arcs of simple curvature, and their impact was thus isolated, in a number of the windows at Ely they were allowed to extend across the tracery field as a whole. This is precisely what we find in the majority of windows at Snettisham, and what is seen in these two buildings appears to represent the emergence of an approach to design which is so individualized that it must either be the work of one mason, or be common to a small group of masons who worked closely together.

There is now a general consensus that the earliest phase of 14th-century work at Ely was carried out under the lead of a member of the Ramsey family called John, while the later operations were by one of the William Ramseys.¹³ While this is not the place to attempt to disentangle the work of the various Ramseys, it is worth remembering

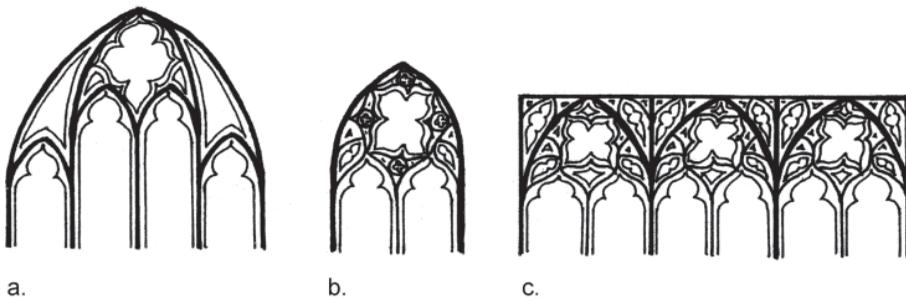


FIG. 4. Diagrammatic sketches of window tracery (not to scale): a. Westminster Palace St Stephen's Chapel, crypt; b. Penshurst Place, hall; c. Waltham Abbey, west window of south chapel

Richard Fawcett

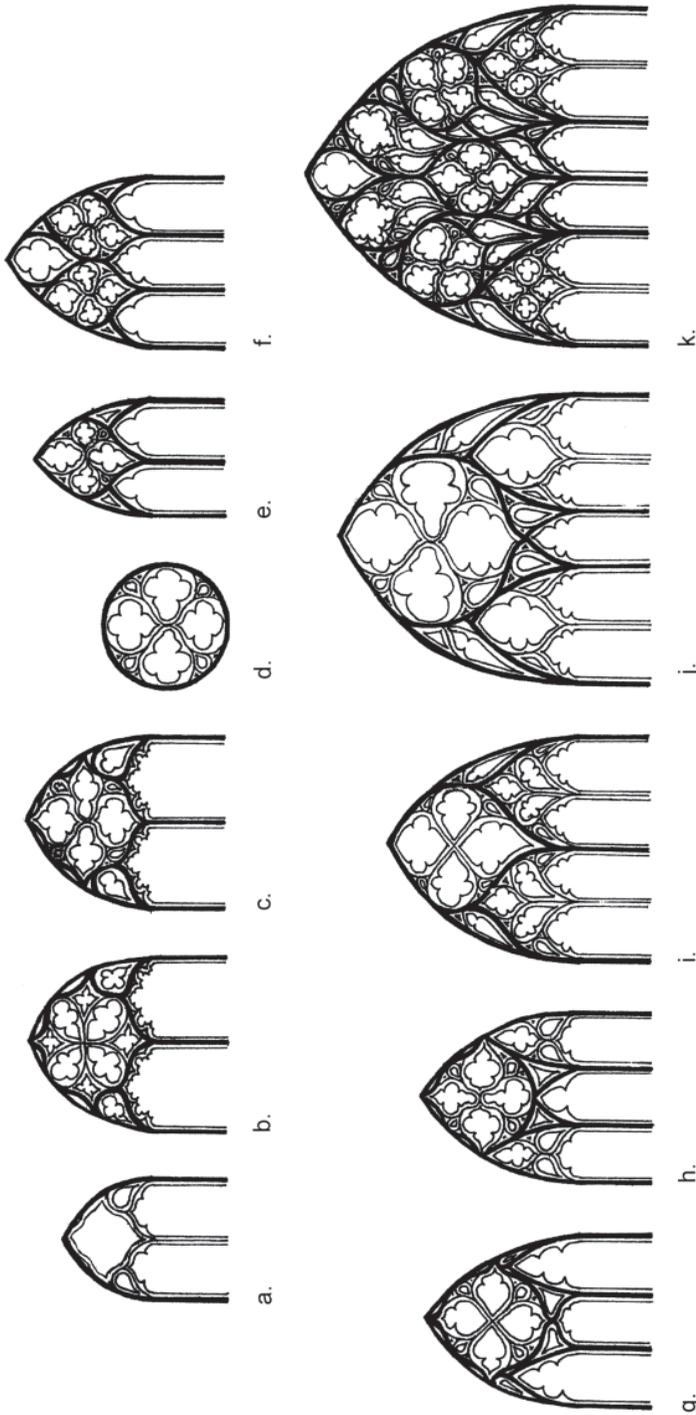


FIG. 5. Diagrammatic sketches of window tracery (not to scale): a. King's Lynn St Margaret, upper belfry stage of south-west tower; b. Ely Cathedral, choir gallery except in south-west bay; c. Ely Cathedral, choir gallery in south-west bay; d. Terrington St John, nave clerestory; e. Snettisham, nave; f. Snettisham, south transept; g. Snettisham, nave; h. Grantchester, south side of choir; i. Ely Cathedral, choir clerestory in south-west bay; j. Heacham, west window; k. Snettisham, west window

Richard Fawcett

that one of the William Ramseys had been a mason at St Stephen's Chapel in 1294, and both a William and a John Ramsey are variously documented at St Stephen's in the 1320s, 1330s and 1340s.¹⁴ That family connection might well explain how a taste for complex containing figures in the tracery is to be found at both Westminster and Ely.

The approach to tracery design that was to be reflected at Snettisham is present in the earliest stages of work on Bishop Hotham's choir at Ely, in the gallery and clerestory of the south-western bay, where both openings have four complex interlocking quatrefoils set on horizontal and vertical axes (Fig. 5c and i). In the other gallery bays, however, the four quatrefoils are instead set on diagonal axes, and in these bays there is a rather more restrained curvilinearity than is the case in the south-west bay (Fig. 5b).¹⁵

It would be tempting to suggest that the more complex approach to tracery design is identifiable with John Ramsey, and the more restrained approach with William since, apart from the insertion of minuscule loops in the interstices, there is little at first sight to suggest that both parts share the same authorship. But in fact a similar contrast of types may also be seen at Snettisham, where we find an apparently carefully contrived balance between richly curvilinear tracery and more austere forms, the only obvious link between the two being again the presence of minuscule loops. Thus, along the nave aisles, the three-light windows alternate between those with two pairs of vertically and horizontally arranged groupings of complex quatrefoils, and those with a single grouping of three dagger-shaped quatrefoils (Figs 5f and 6c). Similarly, while on the east face of the south transept there are a two-light and a three-light window, each with vertically and horizontally arranged groupings of quatrefoils (Fig. 5e and g), the five-light window of the transept south face has relatively simple arrangements of daggers grouped within a pair of sub-arches and at the window head (Fig. 6d). The fact that these two approaches might be regarded as complementary is perhaps illustrated most clearly in the north and south elevation windows of the Ely Lady Chapel, where vertical and horizontal groupings of complex quatrefoils and minuscule loops are set within two sub-arches, while there are more conventional arrangements of daggers at the window head (Fig. 6b). Once again we are made conscious of a striking commonality of approach at Ely and Snettisham.

Supplementing the close similarities between the two churches in the tracery designs, there is a clear similarity in the design of the arcade piers, even allowing for differences of scale. At Snettisham the piers are basically of quatrefoil section, with triple-filletted rolls on the diagonal axes between the lobes, which are then separated from those lobes by hollows (Figs 7 and 8f). The triple-filletted rolls run continuously around pier and arch, whereas the main pier lobes have caps supporting arches of different section, thus creating an attractive balance between continuous and discontinuous orders. A closely comparable combination of elements is found in the choir arcades at Ely (Figs 8d and 9). However, it seems to have taken time to finalize the choir pier design at Ely. Their starting point was a type of pier in the octagon, in which the diagonally-set filletted rolls are separated from the main lobes by curved spur-like elements (Fig. 8e), while some of the lobes of the south choir arcade are keeled. There are also changes in the detailing of the bases and capitals at Ely and, whereas the south arcade capitals are rounded and have foliage decoration, the north arcade capitals have polygonal abaci. Significantly, perhaps, the Snettisham arcade capitals are most closely related to those in the north choir arcade at Ely in the sequence of mouldings (Figs 8a and b and 9). The progressive working out of

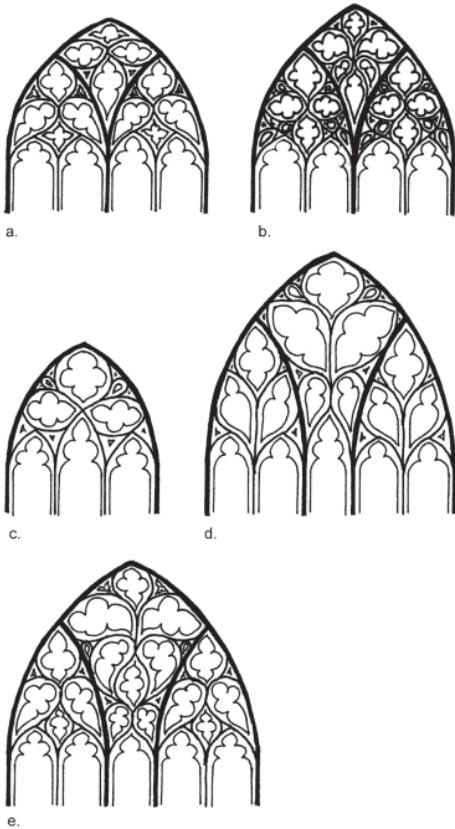


FIG. 6. Diagrammatic sketches of window tracery (not to scale): a. Ely Cathedral, choir clerestory; b. Ely Cathedral, Lady Chapel flanks; c. Snettisham nave; d. Snettisham, south transept south window and Grantchester, east window; e. Fakenham, east window

Richard Fawcett

solutions at Ely, and the fact that it is not the earliest types that are reflected at Snettisham, strongly suggests that the earliest work at Ely predates Snettisham.

In addition to the similarities between their arcades, the Snettisham west doorway shares yet another sequence of elements with Ely. It has a continuous filleted roll symmetrically flanked by arch orders which, while like those in the Ely arcades, are unlike those in Snettisham's own nave arcades (Fig. 8c). This evidence for the interchangeability of ideas between the two buildings is particularly significant, and on this basis it is difficult not to conclude that Snettisham was designed by a mason intimately involved in the design process at Ely. Moreover, the quality of the work at Snettisham is so high that the case is enhanced for believing that the designer was one of the successive members of the Ramsey dynasty with overall responsibility for Ely.

On the basis of such close architectural analogies, we should also be able to assess the approximate date range of the nave and transepts of Snettisham. The dating of the early-14th-century work at Ely is well established. The Lady Chapel was started in 1321, only for work to be interrupted when the central tower fell in 1322; the octagon stonework was built from 1322 to 1328; and the three bays of the choir nearest the

crossing were rebuilt between about 1322 and 1337, albeit with the main thrust of this operation coming once masonry work on the octagon was well advanced. The Lady Chapel was only eventually completed in 1352–53, though, with the exception of the east and west windows and the vaulting, much of it must have been designed at an early stage.¹⁶ All these building campaigns at Ely are generally recognized as being very closely interrelated,¹⁷ and, as has been indicated, Snettisham relates to several phases, from the earliest portion of the choir at its south-west corner, to the continuing work on the Lady Chapel.

As the details of the Snettisham nave arcade are closer to those of Ely's choir than of the octagon, it is unlikely that work on Snettisham's nave was started before the later 1320s, with a date into the 1330s more probable. A further factor that should be taken into account in discussing the date is that it must have required a patron of



FIG. 7. Snettisham: nave arcade pier and arch
Richard Fawcett

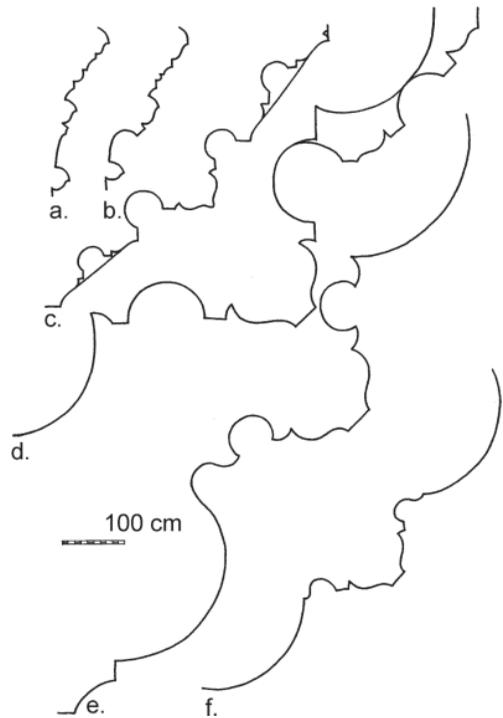


FIG. 8. Moulding sections: a. Snettisham, nave arcade cap; b. Ely Cathedral, north choir arcade cap; c. Snettisham, west doorway; d. Ely Cathedral, north choir arcade pier and arch; e. Ely Cathedral, octagon respond; f. Snettisham, arcade pier
Richard Fawcett



FIG. 9. Ely Cathedral: north choir arcade pier

Richard Fawcett

great standing and wealth to attract to Snettisham master masons of the calibre of those responsible for Ely. It must therefore be significant that the conjoined lordship of Rising and Snettisham was in the possession of the Queen Dowager Isabella, the widow of Edward II, from at least 1331 (and perhaps from as early as 1327) until her death in 1358, and that she is known to have been frequently in residence at Castle Rising.¹⁸ Although there can be no certainty on the matter, there is a distinct possibility that the high quality of Snettisham could owe something to her patronage of the project.

THE WIDER CONTEXT

LIKE their modern architect counterparts, the leading mason-architects of the later Middle Ages were able to work on more than one project simultaneously, sometimes operating on the basis of providing designs, but leaving much of the day-to-day supervision to assistants.¹⁹ This is a possible model for Snettisham, and it may be that the same mason also went on to provide designs for parts of other churches in the area, since the approach to design that we have seen at Ely and Snettisham is evident in a small number of other building projects.

One of the many highly attractive features of Snettisham is the detailing of the central tower, in which the two-light openings in each face of the belfry stage are flanked by blind cusped arches (Fig. 10). The closest parallel for this design, apart from the panelling below the windows of three faces where the abutting roofs are at a lower level, is in the upper belfry stage added to the 12th- and 13th-century lower storeys of the south-west tower of St Margaret's Priory Church in King's Lynn (Fig. 11). Located some 16 km to its south, like Snettisham this tower originally

carried a tall spire, albeit in this case of timber and lead, which fell during a storm in 1741. The similarities with Snettisham are reinforced by the complex curvature of the figure at the head of the two-light windows at Lynn, where it is also combined with the minuscule loops in the interstices that are so characteristic of this mason's work. Indeed, it might almost be thought that the King's Lynn tracery would better suit the Snettisham tower than the quatrefoils we now see there. King's Lynn further supports the proposition that Snettisham and Ely enjoyed a close inter-linkage of ideas in that the upper storey of the King's Lynn south-west tower was a sibling of the Snettisham tower, while the lead-sheathed timber octagonal lantern which used to rise above the King's Lynn crossing was very closely based on that of Ely.²⁰ Assuming, as must surely be likely, that both elements are broadly contemporary, it must also be thought probable that they were each the work of craftsmen drawn from Ely.

Another noteworthy feature of Snettisham is its nave clerestory, which has alternating two light and circular windows (Fig. 12). Such alternation is certainly not unique to Snettisham, but is sufficiently unusual to be worthy of comment. Another well known example of a Norfolk church with just such a clerestory is Cley and, since it has been suggested here that one of the Ramseys may have been involved in the design of Snettisham, it is worth noting that John Harvey attributed the nave of Cley to John Ramsey on stylistic grounds.²¹ While this attribution cannot be ruled out, however,



FIG. 10. Snettisham: tower
Richard Fawcett

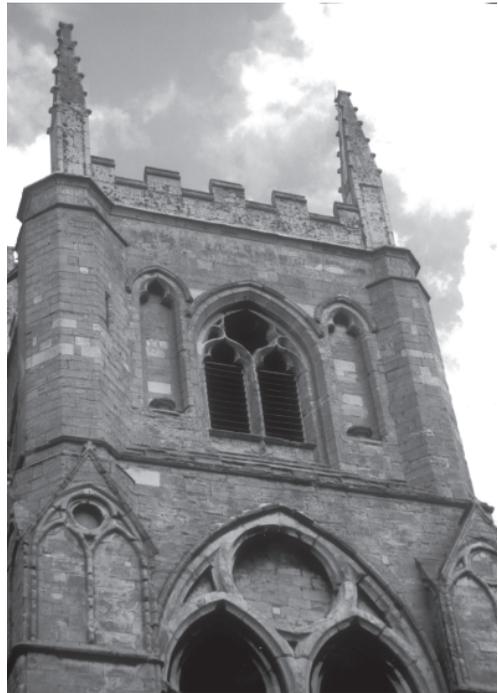


FIG. 11. King's Lynn St Margaret: upper
belfry stage of south-west tower
Richard Fawcett

there is another building with an added clerestory of this kind which shows considerably closer relationships with Snettisham than does Cley, and that is the church of Terrington St John, 22 km to its south-west (Fig. 13). Indeed, as with the upper belfry stage of St Margaret's King's Lynn, the Terrington clerestory might almost be thought to outdo Snettisham in the convoluted curves of the cruciform arrangement of quatrefoils and miniature loops in the circular windows, and there are certainly good grounds for considering that we are seeing the work of the same designer as at Snettisham.²²

On a larger scale, one other fine window that must be brought into consideration as a candidate for being by the same mason is that in the west nave wall at Heacham, just 3 km north of Snettisham (Fig. 5j). It has to be said that this five-light window is clearly an insertion, and it now appears rather over-large for its present position; but that is presumably because the pitch of the gable above it has been lowered at some stage, with the result that the wall-head is now excessively close to the window arch head. Nevertheless, despite the modifications to its context, the window is a fine composition, with a grouping of four quatrefoils arranged horizontally and vertically and with small loops in the interstices. The overall forms and complex curvature



FIG. 12. Snettisham:
nave clerestory
Richard Fawcett



FIG. 13. Terrington
St John: nave
clerestory
Richard Fawcett

of this window find their closest counterparts in the south-west clerestory bay at Ely and, on a smaller scale, in the east windows of the Snettisham south transept (Fig. 5i, e and g).

The last building to be considered is the chancel of Grantchester, in Cambridgeshire, 27 km south-west of Ely. Again, there is no known documentation for this part of the building, since an archiepiscopal injunction of 1384 requiring Corpus Christi College Cambridge to carry out repair and rebuilding is almost certainly too late to refer to the chancel.²³ The links between Grantchester and Ely are particularly evident internally, where there can be little doubt that the decorative arcading between the windows, with pairs of arches embraced by nodding ogees, is directly inspired by the far more lavish treatment within the Ely Lady Chapel. When we move on to look at the window tracery, however, the most specific parallels are with Snettisham. Grantchester's five-light east window, for example, is an almost precise replica of that in the south transept gable wall at Snettisham (Fig. 6), while the three-light window to the south of Grantchester's high altar is perhaps best understood as a modified conflation of the ideas found in the two- and three-light windows on the east side of the Snettisham transept (Fig. 5h, e and g).

On the basis of these parallels, Grantchester, like King's Lynn, assumes an added significance. Its highly specific links with both Ely and Snettisham provide yet further corroboration for the interrelationship of those two buildings. In view of this, it is tempting to suggest that at Grantchester we are seeing what the missing chancel of Snettisham could have looked like had it been part of the same building operation as the nave. Sadly such speculation is unsupported by the slight evidence we have for Snettisham's chancel, and it must be conceded that the latter is more likely to have been rebuilt in a separate operation from that of the nave, and presumably under the auspices of Wymondham Priory as the appropriator, rather than by the holder of the lordship.

Finally, it should be mentioned that a number of other churches in western Norfolk have windows that show slight similarities in their approach to tracery design with some of the examples discussed above, having relatively standardized curvilinear combinations of dagger forms, but with minuscule loops in the interstices. Amongst these may be included the east window at Fakenham (Fig. 6e), the east window at Syderstone, windows at the aisle ends of South Creake and Mileham, and the nave windows of West Walton. Apart from the last, which is near Terrington St John, these are all some distance to the east of Snettisham. However, in none of these other cases is there anything else to make us suspect that we are seeing the hand of the mason who worked at Snettisham and Ely. What we are probably seeing in those churches is no more than the dissemination of ideas through the processes of emulation of an admired model. If the designer of Snettisham was indeed a leading mason from Ely, and possibly a member of the Ramsey family, it is only to be expected that some of the salient details of the work of such a prestigious mason would be copied to varying extents in other buildings.

By contrast, what we are presumably seeing at Snettisham, and to a more limited extent at King's Lynn, Terrington St John, Heacham and Grantchester, is the beginnings of a shift in the working patterns of leading masons that was to become even more pronounced in the 15th century. Despite differences of scale, parish churches — and particularly those with patrons of high standing — were increasingly providing leading masons with opportunities for developing their ideas that carried almost as great artistic potential as those provided by the cathedral and monastic lodges.²⁴

NOTES

1. This paper is offered with considerable diffidence, since it is based on research carried out some years ago, and first presented in preliminary form in R. Fawcett, 'Late Gothic architecture in Norfolk, an examination of the work of some individual architects in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of East Anglia, 1975), 121–56.
2. The joint lordship of Snettisham and Rising was given to William de Albin by William Rufus; on the failure of the Albin line in 1243 the manor passed to Roger de Montalt, husband of the youngest co-heiress. Blomefield, *History of Norfolk*, X, 370–81; R. A. Brown, *Castle Rising* (London 1978), 11–21.
3. Nicholas de Stow, Norwich Consistory Court Wills, Heydon 135. See P. Cattermole and S. Cotton, 'Medieval church building in Norfolk', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 38 (1983), 264.
4. The bequest was made by William Green. Blomefield, *History of Norfolk*, X, 380.
5. Recorded on an inscription.
6. J. F. Williams ed., 'Bishop Redman's visitation, 1597', *Norfolk Record Society*, XVIII (1946), 86.
7. 'Bishop Redman's visitation of 1602', *The East Anglian*, 1 (1864), 340 and 370; 2 (1866), 75, 89, 223 and 231.
8. *Archaeol. J.*, 89 (1933), 344.
9. J. C. Cox, *County Churches, Norfolk*, I (London 1911), 121–22.
10. The only parallel in Norfolk for an arched, open-fronted and vaulted western porch between buttresses is at North Elmham Church, where there is one at the base of the tower. That, however, is single-arched and is clearly considerably later in date than the Snettisham porch. At a purely visual level, there are parallels with a number of porches in central Europe which have triplets of equal-height arches treated with a comparable attenuated delicacy of touch. These include those attached to the south transept of Prague Cathedral, of before 1368; the west front of Ulm Minster, of around 1392; and the south tower at Vienna Cathedral, started perhaps around 1380. See P. Frankl, revised by P. Crossley, *Gothic Architecture* (New Haven and London 2000), pls 215, 238 and 226–27. However, in view of the likely date of Snettisham, there can be no question of inspiration having been drawn from those. Perhaps all that can be said is that, however unexpected in a parochial context, it was not unknown to give prominence to important entrances by a fastigium-like triplet of equal-height open arches, as had previously been seen on a much larger scale in the early-13th-century west front of Peterborough Cathedral. Parallels can also be drawn with a number of chancel screens of the 13th and 14th centuries which have groupings of three equal-height arches, such as those at Bramford in Suffolk and Bottisham in Cambridgeshire. It might also be pointed out (as I was reminded by Dr Richard Morris after delivering this paper at the conference) that there is something of the same spirit of the porch in the way that Snettisham's tower openings are flanked by blind recesses, resulting in a triplet of arches.
11. E. W. Brayley and J. Britton, *The History of the Ancient Palace and Late Houses of Parliament at Westminster* (London 1836), pl. vi; John Harvey, *English Medieval Architects*, rev. edn (Gloucester 1984), 45.
12. C. Coulson, *Castles in Medieval Society* (Oxford 2003), 108.
13. The case for the specific contributions of the members of the Ramsey family at Ely has been most cogently argued by C. Wilson in 'The origins of the Perpendicular style and its development to c. 1360' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1980). See also J. Maddison, 'The Gothic cathedral: new building in a historic context', in *A History of Ely Cathedral*, ed. P. Meadows and N. Ramsay (Woodbridge 2003), 113–41.
14. The documentation associated with the Ramsey family of master masons is summarized in Harvey, *Medieval Architects*, 239–45, though there is scope for further discussion of the division of labour between the various Johns and Williams of the dynasty.
15. Although this is not the place to go into the complex interrelationships of both architecture and personnel that linked the cathedrals of Ely and Norwich, it should at least be pointed out that members of the Ramsey family working at Norwich designed tracery with diagonal configurations of quatrefoils in the south walk of the cloister, and with vertical and horizontal combinations in the west walk. The former probably date to the earlier 1320s, while the latter were built in the 1340s, albeit possibly to designs provided earlier. See E. C. Fernie and A. B. Whittingham ed., *The Early Communal and Pitancer Rolls of Norwich Cathedral Priory*, Norfolk Record Society XLI (1972), 34–35 and 37–39; F. Woodman, 'The Gothic campaigns', in *Norwich Cathedral, Church, City and Diocese 1096–1996*, ed. I. Atherton, E. Fernie, C. Harper-Bill and H. Smith (London and Rio Grande 1996), 165–78.
16. The 14th-century building history of Ely Cathedral is helpfully summarized in N. Coldstream, 'Ely Cathedral: the fourteenth-century work', in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Ely Cathedral*, ed. N. Coldstream and P. Draper, *BAA Trans.* (Leeds 1979), 28–46, and in J. Maddison, *Ely Cathedral, Design and Meaning* (Ely 2000), 61–82.

17. The chapel built by Prior John Crauden between 1324 and 1325 is also part of this group of works, though there is not space to bring it into the discussion here.

18. Robert, the last of the Montalt line to hold the manor of Rising and Snettisham, who was to die childless, in 1327 conveyed the manor to the crown. In 1331 his widow resigned her residual rights to the Queen Dowager Isabella in return for an annuity. Blomefield, *History of Norfolk*, X, 372; R. A. Brown, *Castle Rising* (London 1978), 11–21.

19. This is what William and John Ramsey were evidently doing at Norwich in 1336 when designs were procured from them for the cloister by John de Worstead, the Pitancer. Fernie and Whittingham, *Communar and Pitancer Rolls*, 36.

20. An engraving of the church by the architect Henry Bell (1647–1711) made before the loss of the octagon is reproduced in *Archaeol. J.*, 89 (1953), opposite 335. This engraving shows a spire over the north-west tower, though it is clear from the details that the two western towers have been transposed and that it should be the south-west tower that had the spire.

21. Harvey, *Medieval Architects*, 240.

22. At the risk of simply playing with names, it may be worth pointing out that two of the masons who worked at St Stephen's Chapel in 1325, at a time when one of the William Ramseys was working on the cloister there (see Harvey, *Medieval Architects*, 242) had the surname of Tyrington (Harvey, *Medieval Architects*, 304). If the group of churches being discussed here can indeed be attributed to one or other of the Ramseys, it cannot be ruled out that masons who took their name from Terrington had a continuing professional connection with the Ramsey dynasty, joining with them in their travels between East Anglia and the capital.

23. RCHME, *An Inventory of Historical Monuments in the County of Cambridge, I, West Cambridgeshire* (London 1968), 114. This injunction has been associated with the chancel, but is perhaps more likely to have led to work at the western end of the church, since the lower west window is associated with the arms of Bishop John Fordham (1388–1425).

24. This shift in working patterns was particularly eloquently described in 1900 by Edward Prior when he said '... in the parish-church art, which gave the soul, as it made up the bulk of Perpendicular Gothic, it was no longer the diocese or monastery that in its district set a building-manner of its own, but in every county, batches of churches separate themselves as distinctive'. E. Prior, *A History of Gothic Art in England* (London 1900), 446.

The Tomb of Sir Humphrey de Littlebury at All Saints, Holbeach

JULIAN M. LUXFORD

All Saints church at Holbeach in the Lincolnshire fens contains one of the most impressive and formally unusual of all mid-14th-century English funerary monuments. It was made c. 1340–60 to commemorate Sir Humphrey de Littlebury, an active if relatively minor royal servant whose greatest honour was appointment to joint-captaincy and admiralship of the royal fleet in 1315. While often cited as a comparator in studies of English sculpture, the Littlebury tomb has never been analysed in detail. Its constructional complexity and historical significance have thus been overlooked, and it has been consistently misdated. This paper argues that the chest was made in two parts by different but contemporaneous hands, and that the effigy was added approximately twenty years later. In order to do this, formal sources for its general design and diaper ornament are suggested. Key events in Humphrey's hitherto unstudied career are then outlined, and the year of his death is fixed at 1339. The tomb's chronology, and the careers of Humphrey, his son Robert, and grandson John, invite speculation that the monument commemorates a later Littlebury, a proposition which is rejected in the light of heraldic evidence.

ON 13 February 1869 the secretary to the First Commissioner of Her Majesty's Works wrote to the Society of Antiquaries of London requesting 'a list of such regal and other Historical Tombs or Monuments existing in cathedrals, churches, and other public places and buildings . . . [which] it would be desirable to place under the protection and supervision of the Government, with a view to their proper custody and preservation'.¹ A catalogue was dutifully prepared, and published among the sessional papers of the Houses of Parliament for 1872. Discounting Catherine of Aragon's tomb at Peterborough, it included only seven medieval fenland monuments, six of which were in Ely Cathedral. The seventh was the tomb of Sir Humphrey de Littlebury at the parish church of All Saints at Holbeach (Figs 1, 2), which possessed the additional distinction of being one of only three Lincolnshire tombs outside Lincoln Cathedral represented in the list.²

The Society stated that in compiling its catalogue it 'had regard not to the value of the monuments as mere works of art, but to the importance of the persons commemorated as actors in the great drama of our national history'.³ Nevertheless, the interest of the Littlebury tomb is as much artistic as otherwise, and what scholarly attention it has attracted hitherto has been primarily art historical. This has not, it must be said, amounted to much. Despite being among the most impressive and formally unusual tombs of its date, Littlebury's monument has never been studied in detail. It richly deserves individual analysis, however, both for its inherent interest and because received opinion, in itself rather muddled, is in need of revision. Until now the

The Tomb of Sir Humphrey de Littlebury



FIG. 1. Littlebury tomb from the south-east
Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art



FIG. 2. Littlebury tomb from the north-west
Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art

complexity of its structure, comprising a chest made in two sections by different hands and an effigy added considerably later, has not been recognized. Neither has the tomb been studied in the light of Sir Humphrey's career and actual chronology. Moreover, it is possible to argue that it commemorates a Littlebury later than Humphrey; a notion which, while ultimately rejected here, nevertheless deserves consideration.

HISTORICAL AND SCHOLARLY CONTEXT

CURRENTLY, the Littlebury tomb stands in the centre of the westernmost bay of the north nave aisle at Holbeach. Originally it was situated at the east end of this aisle, probably under the arcade. It is described as 'juxta cancellis' (*sic*) in a set of church notes dated 1604–05, and over a century later it was still there, 'in ye North Isle . . . near to ye chancell', as Thomas Jephson, incumbent from 1730, recorded in the parish register.⁴ By 1833 it had migrated to its current site.⁵ Before the Reformation the tomb is certain to have been associated with a chapel. During the later middle ages Holbeach church contained one independent guild chapel (location unknown), four fraternities and at least six subsidiary altars, one of which must have stood at the east end of the north aisle.⁶ In such position the Littlebury tomb formed a splendid, no doubt colourful component of a richly embellished interior. The surviving sedilia, font and brasses, the eight images of saints, empty tabernacles, and props for liturgical plays sold off in 1547, and the kneeling figures and armorials in stained glass recorded by the early antiquaries, will have represented only part of its complex and ornate artistic context.⁷

In the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae* compiled for Pope Nicholas IV (1291), Holbeach was assessed at a hefty £120 per annum, making it the second-wealthiest parish in the prosperous fenland deanery of Holland.⁸ This affluence is reflected in the sumptuous and total rebuilding of the church during the middle third of the 14th century.⁹ As will be shown, the Littlebury tomb also belongs to this period, and although not a product of the masons who built the church, its design is at home in this architectural setting. It has been speculated that the Littleburys, as lords of the manor of Holbeach, helped to finance the reconstruction along with the bishop of Lincoln, Henry Burghersh, who in 1332 purchased the advowson of the church for £500, and undertook to rebuild the chancel.¹⁰ Whatever the case, the tomb was given a place of honour in the new nave, and must have made a clear statement about Littlebury seignory and influence to all who saw it. There is no evidence for other Littlebury monuments in the church, and it seems likely that, along with the manor house that stood a mile or so east of Holbeach, this tomb effectively functioned as the major local declaration of Littlebury status and piety. Sir Humphrey's illustrious career, outlined below, made him a worthy and enduring focus of familial pride.

This artistic and historical context has not interested modern writers on the tomb, who have referred to the monument simply as a curiosity or comparator. The prolific Lincolnshire antiquary Gervase Holles (d. 1675) noted it only briefly, although he would certainly have paid it more attention had his projected county history ever been written.¹¹ William Stukeley, who was born in Holbeach in 1694 and attended a free school conducted in the chancel of the church, was similarly perfunctory; the second edition of his *Itinerarium Curiosum* (1774) does, however, carry the first illustration of the tomb (Fig. 3).¹² From the early 19th century it received wider notice, due chiefly to the reproduction and description of its effigy in Charles Stothard's *Monumental Effigies of Great Britain* (1817).¹³ Thereafter, it was referenced by many county

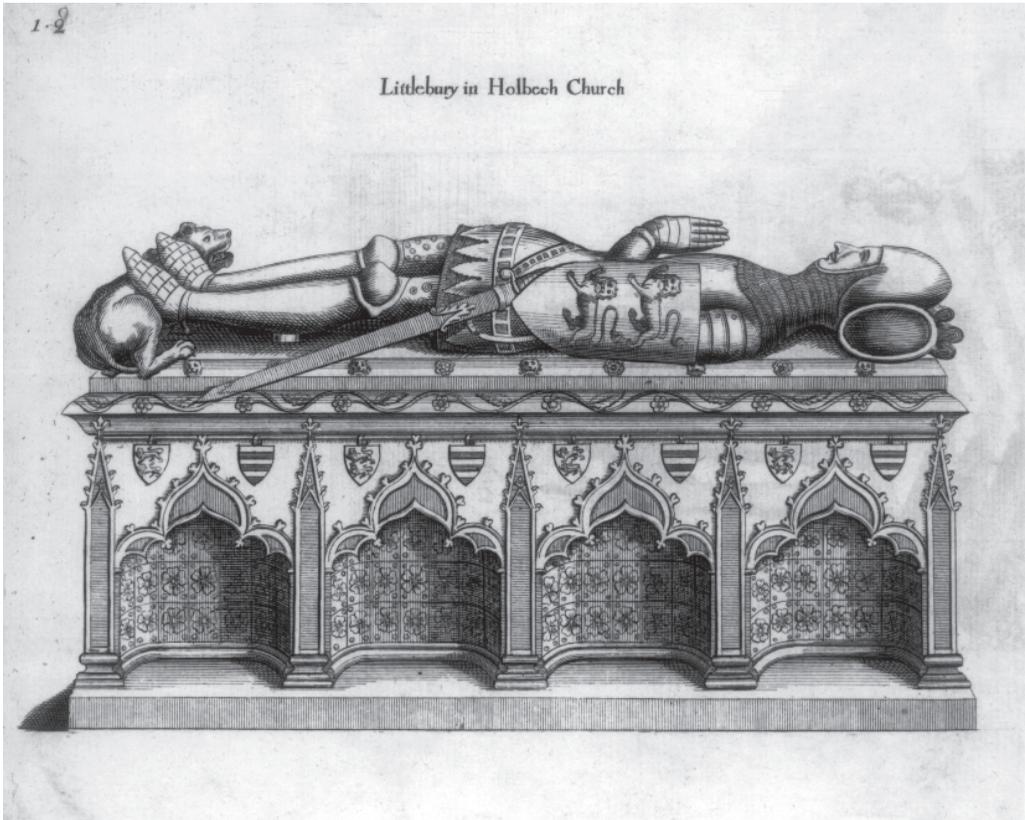


FIG. 3. The earliest published illustration of the Littlebury tomb, from William Stukeley, *Itinerarium Curiosum* (London 1776)

antiquaries, and in numerous surveys of English monumental sculpture down to the present day (those of Prior and Gardner and Stone being exceptions). However, the dates ascribed to it vary greatly, only the Society of Antiquaries' report, which dates it to 1340, being accurate. At the root of this confusion lies a failure to engage with the tomb-chest as well as the effigy, coupled with uncertainty over Humphrey's chronology. The muddle over Humphrey is largely due to a mid-16th-century Lincolnshire visitation, conducted by Robert Cooke, Clarenceux king of arms, and published twice, in 1881 and 1903. It includes a Littlebury pedigree which assigns no date to Humphrey, but mistakenly attaches the year 1346 (without indicating its significance) to his father, Sir Ralph Littlebury.¹⁴ For some reason, 1346 then became widely associated with Humphrey: he is often stated either to have died or been living then. Other dates connected with him, and by extension his tomb, are 1360, 'c. 1388', 'late 14th century', 'c. 1400', and '15th century' (several writers even claim that he died in the Wars of the Roses).¹⁵ Underlying the latter suggestion is conflation of Sir Humphrey with one of his descendants, also Humphrey, who is named and shamed for anti-monastic behaviour in the Crowland chronicle.¹⁶ The most recent scholars to

assign dates to Sir Humphrey, Anne Morganstern and Lawrence Butler, propose 1346 and 1360 respectively.¹⁷ As will presently be shown, none of these dates are correct.

Errors of dating have been compounded by errors of judgement. For example, Judith Hurtig classified the tomb's effigy with a group of late-14th and early-15th-century alabaster *gisants*, overlooking the fact that it is made of freestone.¹⁸ Alfred Fryer, who is followed by Pevsner, assumed the effigy a product of Bristol manufacture or influence — a view no longer acceptable.¹⁹ Indeed, a recent corrective comes from Claude Blair, who suggests that along with eleven other 14th-century military effigies, the Littlebury example was produced by a Lincolnshire, possibly Lincoln-based, workshop.²⁰ This makes good sense, particularly given that Sir Humphrey's effigy, like the chest on which it rests, appears to be of an Ancaster series limestone.

ANALYSIS OF THE TOMB

TO provide a fresh assessment detailed analysis of the tomb is necessary, beginning with the plinth. About this there is little to say. It is slightly higher at the west end (10.3 in. or 265 mm) than the east (9 in. or 228 mm), and composed of at least seven different pieces of stone, two of which have rough tooling marks on the upper surfaces, while the rest are smooth. The edge is not chamfered, and there is no evidence of fittings such as sconces or a grille having been attached. In view of the tomb's relocation, the plinth may well be a post-medieval composition.

The chest is 7 ft 6 in. (2.28 m) long, 3 ft (0.915 m) wide and 3 ft 4 in. (1.005 m) high. It is wholly Decorated in style, and treated differently on all four sides. The east end is carved with thin vertical shafts (Fig. 4), while the west end has a niche embellished with diaper. This was originally surmounted by an ogee arch with shields in the spandrels, but all protruding ornament has been cut off flush, marring what is otherwise a well preserved monument (Fig. 2). The long sides each have four semi-hexagonal niches, 21 in. high, 18 in. wide and 13 in. deep. The depth of the niches leaves a longitudinal core of solid stone only 10 in. wide, and gives the chest an elaborate cross-section (Fig. 5). There does not appear to be room for bones, let alone a corpse, within; yet the historian Henry Peet, writing in 1890, was emphatic that 'Sir Humphrey Littlebury was not buried beneath the floor of the church, but within this tomb, and his bones still repose under his effigy. Some years ago, when the upper slab was removed, the bones were exposed'.²¹ In view of the tomb's protracted construction, it may be that Humphrey's remains were removed from a temporary grave and placed in a hollow beneath the effigial slab a generation or so after his death.

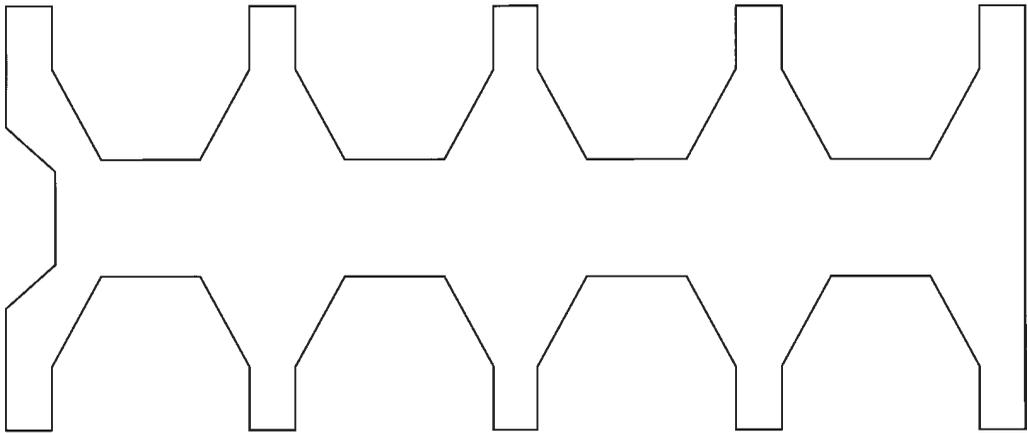
Each of the niches has a broad, trefoil ogee arch over it, and a miniature 'vault' with carved ribs and a boss within (Figs 6, 7). The bosses are sculpted as foliage or grotesque faces. While the arches project approximately 4 in. from their springing-points, they do not 'nod' properly speaking, in that there is no protrusion beyond the lateral planes of the chest. They are moulded in two orders and sub-cusped, and their principal foils are carved with characterful grotesque heads. Several of these have short, upturned noses, heavy brows, and deeply drilled eyes, characteristics also found in some of the niche vault bosses and the shields in the spandrels. The arches are embellished with lush crocket ornament and foliate finials fusing into a sculpted cornice, which is carved differently on all four angles. There is a straggling line of seaweedy foliage on the south, alternate lion masks and fleurons on the north, roses to the east, and fixings for illusionistic 'hanging' stone shields at the west.

The Tomb of Sir Humphrey de Littlebury

FIG. 4. Littlebury tomb from the east
Julian Luxford



FIG. 5. Littlebury tomb in cross-section
Julian Luxford



Between each arch is a shaft of square section, moulded in three orders. Two separate continuous horizontal mouldings run around the base of the chest, wrapping around these shafts and following the angles of the niches. The upper moulding is semicircular in section and carved with a thin bead. Crowning each shaft is a small crocketed and finialled pinnacle, emphasizing the chest's bay divisions. The tomb's spandrels, which are considerably recessed, contain shields displaying the arms of Littlebury (two lions passant guardant) and Kirton (three bars ermine) in alternation: these 'hang' from illusionistic straps and pegs. On the south side, the eastern bay has no Kirton shield but two of Littlebury, an irregularity probably deliberate but now inexplicable.²² The effaced shields of the chest's west end were in all likelihood also those of Littlebury and Kirton.

Sculpted diaper ornament in the form of rosettes embellishes the niches and shafts of the south side of the chest and the niche at the west end. On the north side the niches and shafts are plain.²³ The design of the rosettes is uniform: a square flower with four undulating petals growing from a button-like centre. Each is carved on a separate plaque, the sizes of which vary. The niches have plaques of 5, 4 and 2½ in. (128, 102, and 64 mm) square and the shafts of 2½ and 1½ in. (64 and 38 mm) square. In two niches diaper plaques have been cut in half vertically, but the arrangement is carefully worked out and the fit neat, suggesting contemporary rather than post-medieval manipulation (Fig. 8). While the diaper is likely to have been coloured or gilded, no visible trace of polychromy remains here or anywhere else on the tomb. Similarly, there is no physical evidence of sculpted or painted figures in any of the niches. The original plinth (if the current one is not it) may conceivably have had



FIG. 6. Littlebury tomb: detail of north side
Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art

FIG. 7. Diaper and 'vault' of a niche on the south side
Julian Luxford



The Tomb of Sir Humphrey de Littlebury

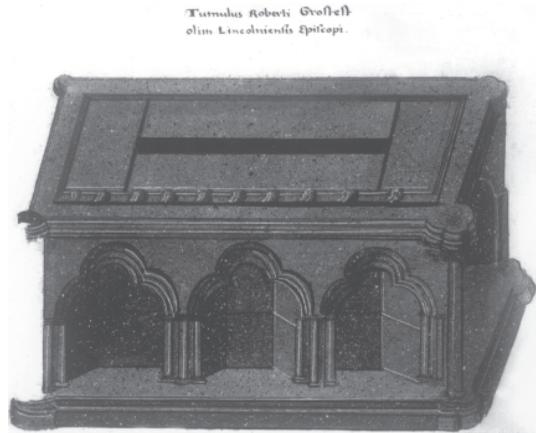


FIG. 8. Niches on the south side showing truncated diaper plaques

Julian Luxford

FIG. 9. Tomb of Robert Grosseteste (d. 1253): London, British Library, Add. MS 71474, fol. 105v

© The British Library board. All rights reserved



*Tumulus Roberti Grossetest
olim Lincolnensis Episcopi.*

holes for fixing figures in place from beneath; but there are no dowel holes in the horizontal sides of the niches, which is where they would ordinarily occur. In any case, it seems most unlikely that the finely carved diaper of the south side would have been permanently obscured. It is theoretically possible that the niches were intended to hold either removable sculpted figures or low-burning memorial lights of the sort occasionally placed on or near two-dimensional medieval tombs.²⁴

The parallels for a tomb-chest with deep lateral niches are few but significant. Probably the best known is Henry III's Cosmati-work monument in Westminster Abbey (c. 1279–80), which has three *fenestellae* on the south side. A somewhat earlier but formally closer example is the monument of Robert Grosseteste in Lincoln Cathedral, dated by David Stocker to the mid-13th century (Fig. 9).²⁵ This is lost, but its appearance is partially preserved in Dugdale's *Book of Monuments*.²⁶ Three deep niches separated by colonettes are shown on the long side, each of semi-hexagonal plan and carrying a trefoil-headed arch. The visible short side had a niche with a round head. More similar still to Littlebury's tomb, and nearer in date, is the early 14th-century monument ascribed to Robert de Vere, 5th earl of Oxford, originally from Earl's Colne priory in Essex (Fig. 10).²⁷ This has three semi-hexagonal niches along its length and one at its end, divided by sculpted figures contained in smaller, gabled arches. The niches have broad ogee arches, and their spandrels contain 'hanging' shields. Among existing niched examples this offers the closest formal



FIG. 10. Tomb of Robert de Vere, 5th earl of Oxford (d. 1296), at Bures, Essex, from the south-east

Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art

parallel for the Littlebury tomb, although the carving is less robust. The chest of Edward II's tomb (1327–31) at Gloucester also has deep lateral niches, but is closer to the de Vere monument than that at Holbeach (Fig. 11). From a later period are Archbishop Simon of Sudbury's Perpendicular tomb at Canterbury Cathedral, constructed in the 1380s, which has five articulated niches on the south side of the chest (Fig. 12), and a late medieval monument traditionally identified with St Endelient at St Endellion in Cornwall, which has deep niches in both long and short sides (Fig. 13).²⁸ Of a formally different order is the monument associated with Sir Geoffrey Luttrell (d. 1345) at St Andrew, Irnham (Lincolnshire), which looks more like an Easter sepulchre than a tomb, and may have functioned as one.²⁹ While these monuments do not (and some cannot) offer direct formal influences, they do illustrate a convention which was familiar to the designers of Littlebury's tomb.

Of more immediate relevance to a mid-14th-century monument at Holbeach are the chests of the tombs of Sir Robert and Bishop Henry Burghersh (d. 1306 and 1340 respectively) in Lincoln Cathedral, and the shrine base, probably of St Hugh's head, which adjoins them to the west (Figs 14, 15). All are datable to the early 1340s.³⁰ The tomb-chests are of higher artistic quality, and their long sides have panels with figure

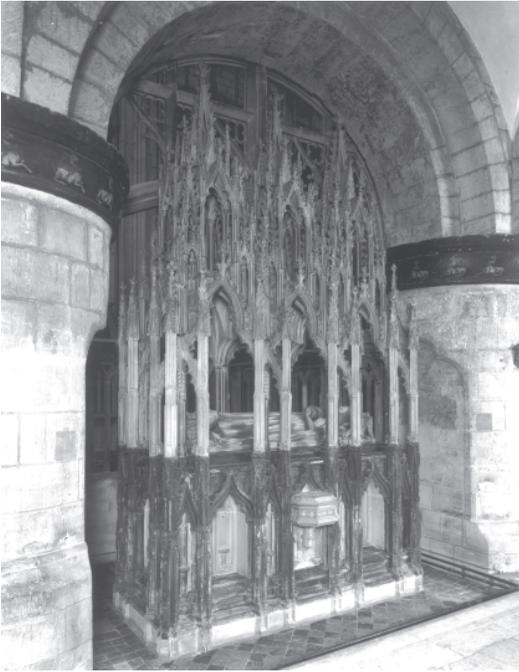


FIG. 11. Tomb of Edward II (d. 1327) at Gloucester Cathedral, from the north-east
Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art



FIG. 12. Tomb of Simon of Sudbury (d. 1381) at Canterbury Cathedral, from the south-west
Christopher Wilson



FIG. 13. Monument associated with St Endellion at St Endellion, Cornwall, from the west
Paul Jeffery. Reproduced by permission from P. Jeffery, Collegiate Churches of England and Wales (London, 2004)

sculpture rather than deep niches, but in both general conception and formal vocabulary they are close relations of the Littlebury monument. Their broad, trefoil-headed ogee arches, moulded in two orders with sub-cusping beneath and lush crockets above, shafts with foliate pinnacles dividing the arches, and shields placed in deeply set spandrels, are clear points of correspondence. The shrine base has a similar combination of crocketed ogee arches and shields in recessed spandrels. Its kneeling niches recall those of the Littlebury tomb, which, though considerably taller, and five inches deeper, are no wider.³¹ Certainly there is no barrier to understanding them, and the genre to which they belong, as a potential source of influence. It is clear that in a general, allusive sense the placement of deep niches on tomb-chests was intended to suggest shrine architecture. The point is best illustrated by the niched monuments of Robert Grossteste, Edward II and Simon of Sudbury, all of whom were considered saintly.³² It is also apparent in certain representations of the tomb of Christ, such as that in Lincoln Cathedral MS 218, fol. 61v (15th-century: Fig. 16).³³ Given their proximity to Holbeach (about 25 miles distant), and assuming that they do not actually post-date it, the Lincoln Cathedral monuments recommend themselves as the most likely existing sources for the Littlebury tomb-chest.

While none of the above employs rosette diaper, such decoration had been applied to ambitious tombs and furnishings from the late 13th century onward. Familiar examples occur in the gable of Edmund Crouchback's tomb at Westminster Abbey (c. 1297) and the canopy of the prior's throne in Canterbury Cathedral chapter-house (1304). During the first half of the 14th century, diaper in a range of forms was common in English micro-architecture, although the decision to vary the size of the individual units on the Littlebury tomb is uncommon in a monumental context. None of the diverse and abundant diaper ornament in Lincoln Cathedral provides a match, but rosettes similar to those at Holbeach can be seen on the alb apparels of Richard de Potesgrave's (d. 1349) effigy at St Andrew, Heckington (Fig. 17), the tomb-chest of John, 2nd baron Willoughby d'Eresby (d. 1349), at St James, Spilsby, and elsewhere in Lincolnshire. Further examples survive in Yorkshire, notably in work associated with the so-called 'Reredos Master' of Beverley Minster. At Beverley Minster, rosette diaper is found on the reredos, the tomb-chest of provost Nicholas of Huggate (d. 1338), and an ornamental shield on the canopy of the Percy monument,³⁴ while spandrel-fragments from the tomb of St William at York, on which the Reredos Master worked, also have them.³⁵ These examples are datable to the 1330s or early 1340s, and their near-identical form suggests a degree of correspondence with the Holbeach tomb. Although it is impossible to be more precise than this, it is worth noting that the Reredos Master worked at other sites in both Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, and may have originated in the latter county.³⁶

One final observation concerning the tomb-chest is that it was clearly made in two sections by different sculptors. The lower extends from the plinth to the level of the springing of the arches, while the upper constitutes everything between the springing of the arches and the table on which the effigy rests. The evidence for this is fourfold. First, the vocabulary of forms on the lower section of the chest is completely different to that of the upper. Only at the east end has a convincing sense of continuity been attempted, in the thin shafts which rise continuously from the base to the cornice, though the existence of a horizontal break in the stonework remains obvious (Fig. 4). Second, the quality of carving in the lower section is higher than in that of the arches, spandrels and cornice. The crisply carved diaper contrasts markedly with the cruder



FIG. 14. Tomb of Bishop Henry Burghersh (d. 1340) at Lincoln Cathedral, from the north

Julian Luxford



FIG. 15. Shrine base at Lincoln Cathedral, from the north

Julian Luxford



FIG. 16. Pen-and-ink drawing of the Man of Sorrows in Lincoln Cathedral MS 218, fol. 61v (15th-century)

Reproduced by permission of Lincoln Cathedral Library



FIG. 17. Detail of effigy of Richard de Potesgrave (d. c. 1345) at Heckington

Julian Luxford

grotesques, shields, crocket, and cornice ornament. Third, the niches seem too low for the width of arch imposed upon them, making the niche-and-arch units appear squat. It may be that the niches were originally intended to be slightly taller, although the overall height of the tomb is in line with contemporary monuments. Fourth, the jointing of the upper and lower parts of the chest demonstrates clear disjuncture all the way around (Figs 1, 2, 6). This can be seen in general lateral views, and is particularly clear on the south side, in the incongruous transition from the diapered surfaces to the much lower quality niche 'vaults' (Figs 7, 8). The evidence of non-uniform manufacture need not suggest substantially different dates for the two sections. On the basis of the comparisons made above, both the overall design of the chest and the diaper work in particular sit happily c. 1340-45.

The effigy, however, is another matter (Fig. 18). It cannot date to much before 1360, and the best comparisons for its style and armour are from the ensuing decade. Despite retaining a slightly 'hip-shot' pose when viewed from above, it manifests the stiffening which characterizes English effigies generally after the middle of the 14th century. It is a high-quality piece, the work of an accomplished individual or workshop. This is best appreciated in such details as the lions of the shield and footrest, the leonine masks with lolling tongues spaced around the effigial slab (Fig. 19), the finer accoutrements of the armour, and the iconographically unique helm, whose crest represents a head in a net, its features cast in an anguished grimace (Figs 20, 21). The iconography of this crest has attracted more curiosity than any other aspect of the tomb, but has



FIG. 18. Littlebury effigy from the north
Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art



FIG. 19. Littlebury tomb: detail of lion footrest and effigial slab
Julian Luxford

never been convincingly explained. Despite the presence of a moustache, it has more than once been identified as a woman's head.³⁷ The exposure of the face suggests a coif, but in terms of either fashion or armour a rope coif is impossible. It is clearly not

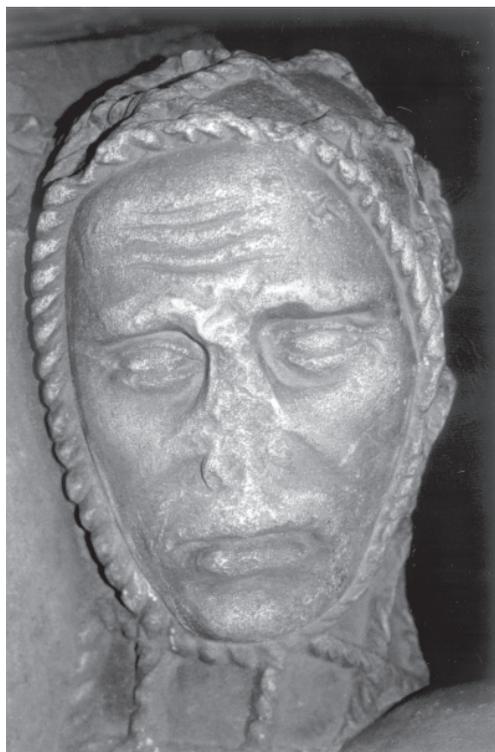


FIG. 20. Littlebury tomb: detail of crest of the helm

Julian Luxford

FIG. 21. Littlebury tomb: detail of crest of the helm

Julian Luxford



the head of a gryllus, whittal or Saracen, the latter a distinctive crest adopted by numerous armigerous families, and found contemporaneously on the effigial helm of Reginald, 1st Lord Cobham (d. 1361), at Lingfield in West Sussex.³⁸ Rather, it is more likely to represent the head of a pirate or Scotsman, with the face exposed for dramatic effect. In 1315 Humphrey de Littlebury was put in charge of seven ships, and subsequently created joint captain and admiral of the royal fleet, with a mandate to 'bridle the malice of the Scots' and to protect English merchant vessels from piracy, 'with power to punish offending mariners'.³⁹ The uniqueness of the crest's imagery invites an historical explanation, and it may well be that the honour of admiralship is registered here.

Neither armour nor physiognomy can supply a more precise date for the effigy than that suggested above. That it is straight legged and the hands are held in prayer on the breast are general indications of a post-Black Death date, but both characteristics occur in English effigies before mid-century as well. The same is true of the rowel spurs.⁴⁰ However, the basinet and aventail, together with the standardized moustachioed face, plate spaulders and gauntlets, short, tight-fitting jupon (here ornamented with an acanthus-leaf border), bawdric, and hinged greaves is a combination not encountered in the 1340s, when the chest was probably built, and unlikely before the mid- to late 1350s. While similar in certain details, the armour as an ensemble represents a clear stylistic advance on the effigy of John, 2nd baron Willoughby



FIG. 22. Littlebury effigy: detail of studded cuisses

Julian Luxford

d'Eresby at Spilsby (c. 1345–50), which retains a mail hauberk hanging to the knees, a waist-belt, and lion-mask besagews.⁴¹ In fact it is closer to that represented on the abovementioned effigy of Reginald, 1st Lord Cobham, and those of Maurice, 9th Lord Berkeley (d. 1368) at Bristol, Thomas, 8th Lord Berkeley (d. 1361) at Berkeley in Gloucestershire, and John de Wingfield (d. 1361) at Wingfield in Suffolk. A point of difference exists in the pouncing of Humphrey's cuisses with studs in the form of five-petaled flowers (Fig. 22). Studded cuisses are seen in numerous three-dimensional effigies and brasses of the 1340s. However, they remained current at least as late as 1370, appearing on two brasses at Cobham (Kent) datable to c. 1367, one of c. 1368 at Drayton Beauchamp (Buckinghamshire), and elsewhere.⁴² Taken as a whole, the evidence suggests a date of manufacture for the Littlebury effigy in the 1360s, although the mid- to late 1350s is possible, and receives at least some support from the representation of a double-clasped sword-belt and a shield with guige.⁴³

Finally, it should be noted that although the effigy postdates the chest, it was obviously made for it. For one thing, the fit is perfect. For another, the Littlebury arms of two lions passant guardant occur on the effigial shield and in the spandrels of the chest. Further, the lions and fleurons on the effigial slab are clearly designed to alternate with those on the north side of the chest's cornice. This alternation highlights once again the relatively crude nature of the carving of the upper stratum of the chest. While later in date, the effigy reflects the high quality of the lower section.

SIR HUMPHREY DE LITTLEBURY AND THE QUESTION OF PATRONAGE

IT remains to outline the chronology and career of Humphrey de Littlebury, in the process signalling the historical importance of his monument. The main sources for this are the Close, Fine and Patent Rolls, Parliamentary Writs, and registers of Bishop Henry Burghersh.⁴⁴ Sir Humphrey boasted a distinguished pedigree. His great grandfather, Sir Martin de Littlebury (d. 1274 x 1275), was a justice under Henry III, and his great uncle Sir Robert de Littlebury (d. 1285 x 1290) served the same king as Master of the Rolls.⁴⁵ Humphrey's father, Sir Ralph Littlebury, was a knight of the shire who served Edward I in numerous capacities.⁴⁶ But the family star reached its zenith during Humphrey's lifetime. His career in royal service began under Edward I, his fortunes increased greatly under Edward II, and he was also employed by Edward III.⁴⁷ Around 1325 he married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Ralph de Kirton, sister and heir to Sir John de Kirton I. Thus he added the manor of Kirton to those of Holbeach and Whaplode which he had acquired from his father.⁴⁸ Humphrey first surfaces in the Patent Rolls in 1310, when he was granted the forestership of Sherwood, a position he still occupied in 1328.⁴⁹ Thereafter, he assisted Piers Gaveston in his affairs (1312), is mentioned as one of twelve knights of the royal household in 1313, travelled with Queen Isabella to France in 1314, and was summoned to the Great Council of Westminster as a knight of Lincolnshire in 1324.⁵⁰ It was during this period that he was made joint captain and admiral of the English fleet. In 1312, Humphrey was granted 400 marks for loyal service by Edward II, and he acted against Thomas of Lancaster's Lincolnshire supporters a decade later.⁵¹ A chancery warrant of 1326 stated that 'because of [Humphrey's] good service, the king has [his] business much at heart' — an indication of ongoing positive relations with the hapless monarch.⁵² He was also charged by the Crown with administering property confiscated from Roger Mortimer and Hugh Despenser.⁵³ A number of times he was made a commissioner of array for his county; in 1324 the king commanded him to lead 100 local men to Portsmouth for service in Gascony.⁵⁴ Possession of numerous fenland properties involved him in sporadic litigation, and he prosecuted those who wronged him vigorously.⁵⁵ Such matters of county business as overseeing maintenance of dykes and sea-walls on the Wash were constant and inevitable obligations,⁵⁶ and in 1335 Humphrey was exempted for life under the privy seal from service on juries, assizes and recognizances generally, as well as appointment as mayor, sheriff, coroner, or other bailiff or minister of the king against his will.⁵⁷ By the reign of Edward III his activities were mostly local. In 1338 he is noted as holding 165 acres in Fleet, one mile east of Holbeach.⁵⁸ A commission issued in December 1339 and recorded among the testamentary business of Bishop Burghersh's register invests Richard de Littlebury in 'the goods of the former knight of this diocese Sir Humphrey de Littlebury, who has recently died intestate' (Fig. 23).⁵⁹ On 10 July 1339 Humphrey was still being charged with official business,⁶⁰ and the commission, even if expedited, must have taken some weeks at least to arrange. His death is thus likely to have fallen between mid-July and late autumn, and the fact he died intestate suggests that it was sudden and unexpected.

Humphrey de Littlebury had no son called Richard, and the name given in the commission of December 1339 is likely to be a mistake for Robert, his eldest son and heir. This Sir Robert de Littlebury is included in the armorial roll of the second Dunstable tournament of 1334.⁶¹ Unlike his father, however, he never occurs as a royal servant in the Patent, Close or Fine Rolls. From a petition in the calendar of Papal Registers it appears that in 1343 he was granted use of a portable altar when going to fight against the Saracens, 'where there are not many churches', and also a

general indulgence at the hour of his death.⁶² He was dead by 1351, when a hospital was founded at Holbeach for the repose of his and others' souls.⁶³ Humphrey's grandson, Sir John Littlebury, is mentioned several times in the king's service, always in a local capacity. In 1357 and 1386 he was involved in land transactions in and around Holbeach.⁶⁴ By this stage the family flame was waning.

The chronology presented here suggests that the tomb-chest was made at Robert de Littlebury's behest, and that the effigy was commissioned by John. This can be explained by supposing that a task left unfinished when Robert departed and perhaps died on crusade was completed by John, who, because not immediately responsible, felt less obligation to complete the project with dispatch. It may also be thought, with less conviction perhaps, that the chest was begun but not finished by Humphrey himself, and that this accounts for its having been made in two sections. Both suppositions are purely speculative, but do offer explanations for the qualitative and stylistic differences in the monument's construction.

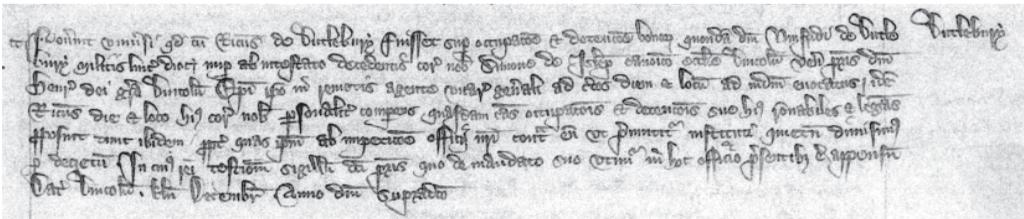


FIG. 23. Lincolnshire Archives, Lincoln Cathedral Register V, fol. 60r: commission of 1339 mentioning Humphrey de Littlebury's death, intestate status, and the transferal of his goods

Reproduced by permission of the Lincolnshire Archives

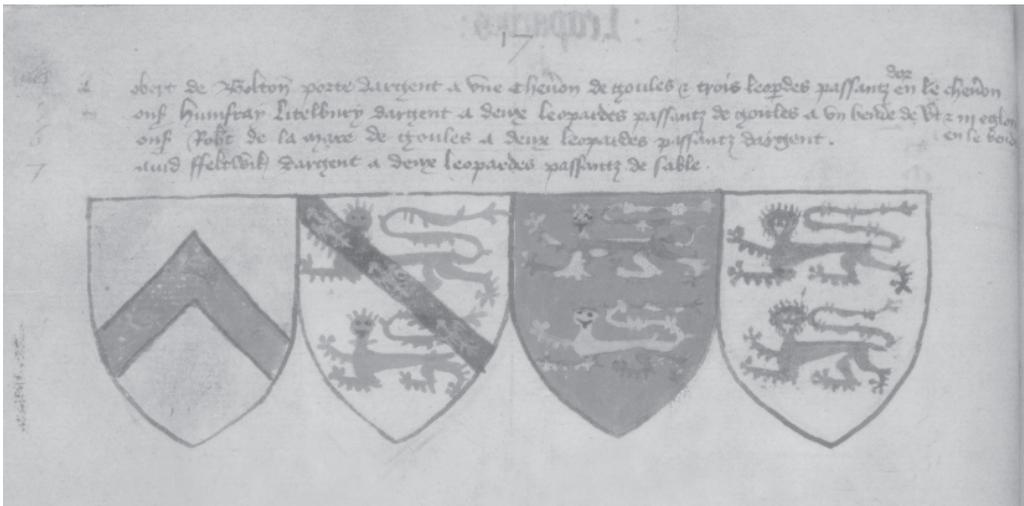


FIG. 24. British Library, Add. MS 40851, Thomas Jenyns's ordinary (c. 1410). Shields 194–97, with Humphrey de Littlebury's (195) second from the left

© The British Library board. All rights reserved

Given the tomb's chronology it may also be asked if the effigy, and by extension the entire monument, actually commemorates Robert or John. Superficially at least, the heraldry supports this attribution, for it corresponds to that of Robert and John as given in medieval rolls of arms, and does not match that of Humphrey.⁶⁵ Humphrey's arms appear in at least six medieval rolls, three of which are early: the Ashmolean roll of *c.* 1334, the so-called Becket's Murderers' roll of *c.* 1350, and Thomas Jenyns's ordinary, whose nucleus is datable to *c.* 1340 (Fig. 24).⁶⁶ In each case he is ascribed two red lions passant guardant with a green bend charged with three gold spread eagles on a silver shield. (Argent, two lions passant guardant gules, on a bend vert three eaglets displayed or.) Robert bore two red lions passant guardant with a blue bend on a silver shield at Dunstable in 1334, and is ascribed the same in the Powell Roll of *c.* 1350.⁶⁷ In Jenyns's ordinary, however, he bears simply two red lions passant guardant on a silver shield. John is ascribed two red lions passant guardant on a silver shield in the late-14th-century Willemt Roll. The field of the effigial shield is large enough to have received a bend charged with three eagles, and its sculptor was certainly equal to including one. This lack could be seen to attribute the effigy to Humphrey's son or grandson. Attribution to the crusading Robert would also sanction local conjecture that the crest of the helm represents a Saracen's head.⁶⁸

While an attribution to the younger Littleburys has to be considered, this author frankly doubts it. Despite continuing and close relations between the Littleburys and Kirtons (John, for example, was an heir of Sir John de Kirton II, d. 1368), the combination of the families' arms on the chest is most likely to signify Humphrey's marriage to Elizabeth around 1325.⁶⁹ Furthermore, appropriation of a recent and important monument by an heir seems most unlikely, particularly given the illustrious reputation of the man in question. As noted previously, the crest of the helm also seems to refer to an aspect of Humphrey's career. Moreover, the lack of differencing on the effigial shield can be explained in two ways. First, a green bend may simply have been painted over the two lions of Littlebury. Second, it seems probable that Humphrey did at some stage bear two red lions passant guardant on a silver shield undifferenced, notwithstanding the lack of external heraldic evidence. Robert differenced his arms with a blue bend at the second Dunstable tournament, held when his father was still alive. In so doing he did not distinguish them from two lions passant guardant and a bend charged with three spread eagles, but simply from two lions passant guardant. This seems to demonstrate that his father bore the simple, 'ancient' version of the Littlebury arms formerly displayed in a number of local churches,⁷⁰ but that alternative evidence for this has not survived. In any case, the simple version was appropriate for a monument which symbolized the status of the family as a whole as well as an individual.

By way of conclusion, it is worth summarizing the essential points. The Littlebury monument constitutes an unusual example of a deeply niched table tomb, made rarer by the application of diaper to the niches of one side. Its chest was carved by different but contemporaneous sculptors, probably working *c.* 1340–45; that is, soon after Sir Humphrey de Littlebury's death in the second half of 1339. During the later 1350s or the 1360s the chest received a high-quality effigy, in all likelihood the product of a Lincolnshire workshop. Why the effigy's manufacture was delayed is obscure, but theoretically explicable with reference to the crusading career and early death of Humphrey's son Robert. At all events, it was not uncommon for a delay to occur between the manufacture of a tomb-chest and its effigy in 13th- and 14th-century England.⁷¹ Whatever the reason, the provision of such a high-quality effigy comes out of a combination of familial duty and dynastic pride. Humphrey got his effigy in the end, and despite its lack of paint and some damage to its stonework, he would surely

be convinced of his tomb's efficacy could he see it today, standing in the church for which it was always intended.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Warm thanks are due to those who commented on the version of this paper delivered at the King's Lynn conference: Nicola Coldstream, Richard Fawcett, Philip Lankester, Richard Marks, and Charles Tracy. These extend further, to the Rev. Gavin John Wickstead for generous access to the tomb, Christopher Wilson and Paul Jeffery for supplying me with images, and John McNeill for patient editing.

NOTES

1. *Sessional Papers of the Houses of Parliament (Volume 46): Charities; Ecclesiastical; Education; Science and Art. Session, 6 February-10 August 1872* (London 1872), 895.
2. *Ibid.*, 866 (no. 353).
3. *Ibid.*, 838.
4. British Library, Add. MS 36295, fol. 31r (tomb ascribed to 'Litolbury ut dicitur'). Gervase Holles, in copying this note, omitted the qualification: G. Holles, *Lincolnshire Church Notes made by Gervase Holles, A.D. 1634 to A.D. 1642*, ed. R. E. G. Cole, Lincoln Record Society 1 (Lincoln 1911), 178. For the Jephson quote, see J. M. (full name not supplied), 'Church inscriptions in the hundred of Elloe, VI: Holbeach', *Lincolnshire Notes and Queries*, 7 (1909), 373.
5. W. J. Monson, *Lincolnshire Church Notes made by William John Monson, 1828-1840*, ed. J. Monson, Lincoln Record Society 31 (Lincoln 1936), 195-96.
6. G. W. McDonald, *Historical Notices of the Parish of Holbeach in the County of Lincoln* (King's Lynn 1890), 86-90, 121-22; C. W. Foster ed., *Lincoln Wills, Vol. I: A.D. 1271 to 1526*, Lincoln Record Society 5 (Lincoln 1914), 123, 168. H. Peet, *Architectural and Ecclesiastical Notes on Holbeach Church* (Holbeach 1890), 23, writes of 'the Littlebury chapel, at the east end of the north aisle', though on no greater than personal authority.
7. G. E. Jeans, 'A list of the existing sepulchral brasses in Lincolnshire', *Lincolnshire Notes and Queries*, 2 (1890-91), appendix, 34; W. Stukeley, *Itinerarium Curiosum*, 2nd edn, 2 vols in 1 (London 1776), 20-21; McDonald, *Historical Notices*, 117-19, 144-45; BL Add. MS 36925, fol. 31r; Holles, *Church Notes*, 178.
8. McDonald, *Historical Notices*, 44-46.
9. 'Proceedings at Meetings: Holbeach Church', *Archaeol. J.*, 89 (1932), 355; N. Pevsner, J. Harris and N. Antram, *Lincolnshire B/E*, 2nd edn (Harmondsworth 1989), 383; McDonald, *Historical Notices*, 158.
10. McDonald, *Historical Notices*, 61; Peet, *Notes on Holbeach*, 23; *B/E Lincolnshire*, 383.
11. Holles's wife Dorothea was distantly related to John de Littlebury, grandson of Humphrey: G. Holles, *Memorials of the Holles Family 1493-1656*, ed. A. C. Wood, Camden Society, 3rd series, 55 (London 1937), 231-32.
12. Stukeley, *Itinerarium*, 20 and pl. 1:2.
13. C. A. Stothard, *The Monumental Effigies of Great Britain* (London 1817), 58.
14. W. C. Metcalfe ed., *The Visitation of the County of Lincoln in 1562-4* (London 1881), 75-77; A. R. Maddison ed., *Lincolnshire Pedigrees, Vol. II: G-O*, Harleian Society Publications, 51 (London 1903), 598.
15. More than thirty examples across this date-range could be cited, many simply in gazetteers and county guides. Particularly egregious is P. B. G. Binnal, 'Pre-Reformation stone effigies in Lincolnshire', *Lincolnshire Old Churches Trust: Annual Report*, 6 (1958), 9, in stating simply '15th century'.
16. H. T. Riley ed. and trans., *Ingulph's Chronicle of the Abbey of Croyland* (London 1854), 400 (an edition much used by 19th-century Lincolnshire historians); A. Rogers, 'Parliamentary electors in Lincolnshire in the fifteenth century', *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*, 3 (1968), 78.
17. A. Morganstern, *Gothic Tombs of Kinship* (University Park, Pennsylvania 2000), 219 n. 28 ('d. after 1346'), following G. Probert, 'The riddles of Bures unravelled', *Essex Archaeology and History*, 16 (1986), 60 ('d. 1346?'); L. A. S. Butler, 'The tomb attributed to Bartholomew Lord Burghersh in Lincoln cathedral', *Archaeol. J.*, 159 (2002), 123 ('died 1360'), following F. H. Crossley, *English Church Monuments* (London 1921), 15, 71 ('1360', attributed to the tomb).
18. J. Hurtig, *The Armored Gisant before 1400* (New York 1979), 164-65.

19. A. Fryer, 'Monumental effigies made by Bristol craftsmen', *Archaeologia*, 74 (1923–24), 6; cf. B/E *Lincolnshire*, 384. For a recent, and justifiably sceptical, review of Fryer's conclusions about so-called 'Bristol' effigies, see B. and M. Gittos, 'Alfred Fryer's "Monumental effigies of Bristol craftsmen": a reassessment', in *'Almost the Richest City': Bristol in the Middle Ages*, ed. L. Keen, *BAA Trans.*, xix (Leeds 1997), 88–96.
20. C. Blair and J. Goodall, 'An effigy at Wiltshorpe: a correction to Pevsner's *Lincolnshire*', *Church Monuments*, 17 (2002), 42.
21. Peet, *Notes on Holbeach*, 24. This exposure probably occurred *c.* 1870; see n. 23 below.
22. The Stukeley engraving errs in not showing this.
23. This may suggest that the south was the 'show' side, and always faced the nave, although the unornamented niches to the north may once have been painted with figures, as with the 14th-century knightly tombs from Earl's Colne (one of which is discussed below) and at Goldsborough in Yorkshire, on which see articles by Brian and Moira Gittos in *Church Monuments*, 9 (1994), 3–32, and 12 (1997), 5–13. If so, then what is now the north side could equally have been the show side. The Stukeley engraving shows the diaper side with the effigy reversed from its current orientation. If the preliminary drawing for this was made before the tomb's relocation, this would suggest that the diaper ornament originally faced north, but such is not known to have been the case. The waters are further muddied by another move which occurred around 1870, when the incumbent of Holbeach 'paid for [the tomb] being properly orientated': W. E. Foster, 'North porch of Holbeach church', *Lincolnshire Notes and Queries*, 2 (1890–91), 178. While this very probably involved the effigy alone, the matter is again uncertain.
24. For an example, see E. K. Bennet, 'The college of S. John the Evangelist of Rushworth, co. Norfolk', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 10 (1888), 369.
25. D. A. Stocker, 'The tomb and shrine of Bishop Grosseteste in Lincoln cathedral', in *England in the Thirteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Grantham 1985), 147.
26. BL, Add. MS 71474, fol. 105v.
27. J. E. Powell, 'The riddles of Bures', *Essex Archaeology and History*, 6 (1974), 90–98; cf. Probert, 'Riddles of Bures unravell'd', *passim*; Morganstern, *Gothic Tombs*, 87–90.
28. C. Wilson, 'The medieval monuments', in *A History of Canterbury Cathedral*, ed. P. Collinson et al. (Oxford 1995), 471–72. Nicholas Roscarrock (d. 1633 or 1634) referred to the 'tomb' of St Endelient at St Endellion: N. Orme ed., *Nicholas Roscarrock's Lives of the Saints: Devon and Cornwall*, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, ns, 35 (Exeter 1992), 73. While this monument may also be considered a shrine base, the niches are too low to accommodate kneelers.
29. Cf. V. Sekules, 'The tomb of Christ at Lincoln and the development of the sacrament shrine: Easter sepulchres reconsidered', in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Lincoln Cathedral*, ed. T. A. Heslop and V. Sekules, *BAA Trans.*, viii (Leeds 1986), 126 n. 3; R. Marks, 'Sir Geoffrey Luttrell and some companions: images of chivalry *c.* 1320–50', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 46 (1993), 348 n. 24. The remains of draped figures, sitting or crouching, low down on the short ends of this monument, do not seem to have attracted comment. These were surely not 'weepers', but rather suggest sleeping soldiers or angels, albeit their orientation is unorthodox. A further example of this form of monument is probably represented by a sculpted fragment excavated at the London Charterhouse, connected with the tomb of the founder, Sir Walter Marny (d. 1372). See G. S. Davies, *Charterhouse in London* (London 1922), 19 and pl. (photograph); J. H. Harvey, *Henry Yevele*, 2nd edn. (London 1946), 31, 33.
30. Morganstern, *Gothic Tombs*, 110–11.
31. 68 x 17½ x 17 in. (1730 x 445 x 432 mm).
32. See, for example, J. J. G. Alexander and P. Binski ed., *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England 1200–1400* (London 1987), 416; N. Coldstream, *The Decorated Style: Architecture and Ornament 1240–1360* (London 1994), 78; Stocker, 'Bishop Grosseteste', 146–48.
33. Medieval provenance unknown. The manuscript dates *c.* 1400, but the drawing may be adventitious.
34. N. Dawton, 'The medieval monuments', in *Beverley Minster: An Illustrated History*, ed. R. Horrox (Beverley 2000), 130–44; Crossley, *English Church Monuments*, 156.
35. S. Brown, 'Our Magnificent Fabrick'. *York Minster: An Architectural History c1220–1500* (London 2003), 123; N. Dawton, 'Gothic sculpture', in Horrox, *Beverley Minster*, 125–26.
36. Dawton, 'Gothic sculpture', 126.
37. Anon., 'Littlebury effigy at Holbeach', *Fenland Notes and Queries*, 6 (1906), 380; McDonald, *Historical Notices*, 83; Peet, *Notes on Holbeach*, 23.
38. N. Saul, *Death, Art and Memory in Medieval England: The Cobham Family and their Monuments, 1300–1500* (Oxford 2001), 149–50.
39. His fellow-commander was Sir John Sturmy. T. Rymer ed., *Foedera*, re-ed. J. Clark, II:i (London 1816–21), 277 (full French text); *Cal. Patent Rolls (1313–1317)*, 334; cf. *Cal. of Chancery Warrants (1244–1326)*, 422, 432.

The Tomb of Sir Humphrey de Littlebury

40. See, for example, H. Tummers, *Early Secular Effigies in England* (Leiden 1980), 68, 99, 101.
41. On the Spilsby effigy, see L. Southwick, 'The armoured effigy of Prince John of Eltham in Westminster Abbey and some closely related military monuments', *Church Monuments*, 2 (1987), 9–21.
42. Saul, *Cobham Family*, 89–91; M. Clayton ed., *Victoria and Albert Museum: Catalogue of Rubbings of Brasses and Incised Slabs* (London 1929), pl. 6; Crossley, *English Church Monuments*, 242 n. 1 (various examples).
43. M. Downing, 'Lions in the middle ages: a preliminary survey of lions on medieval military effigies', *Church Monuments*, 13 (1998), 25, dates the effigy '1350/60', though apparently on historical evidence (cf. 34 n. 52). Mr Downing is currently producing a catalogue of Lincolnshire military effigies which will include a fuller and more authoritative account than that offered here.
44. At least forty-four printed entries in the rolls refer to Sir Humphrey. More Littlebury information probably exists in the cartularies of local monastic houses, particularly Crowland and Spalding, with whom the family had dealings.
45. C. Moor ed., *Knights of Edward I, Vol. III: L-O*, Harleian Society Publications, 82 (London 1930), 52–53 (Martin); *Cal. Patent Rolls (1271–1281)*, 406; (1281–1292), 148, 196, 421 etc.; (1292–1301), 494, 495, 503; (1301–1307), 27 (Robert).
46. Moor, *Knights*, 53. Date of death unknown. The last relevant entry in the rolls is *sub* 1306: *Cal. Patent Rolls (1301–1307)*, 456.
47. Moor, *Knights*, 52.
48. McDonald, *Historical Notices*, 83–84; Maddison, *Lincolnshire Pedigrees*, 598.
49. *Cal. Patent Rolls (1307–1313)*, 219; (1327–1330), 202.
50. Moor, *Knights*, 52 (Gaveston; Great Council); *Cal. Patent Rolls (1307–1313)*, 555 (knight of the royal household); (1313–1317), 85 (reginal train).
51. *Cal. Fine Rolls (1307–1319)*, 137, 154; *Cal. Patent Rolls (1307–1313)*, 496; (1321–1324), 81.
52. *Cal. Chancery Warrants (1244–1326)*, 579: the 'business' was a lawsuit.
53. *Cal. Close Rolls (1318–1323)*, 419; *Cal. Patent Rolls (1321–1324)*, 266 (Mortimer); *Cal. Fine Rolls (1327–1337)*, 126 (Despenser).
54. *Cal. Patent Rolls (1324–1327)*, 79 (Gascony expedition), 216, 220; *Cal. Close Rolls (1333–1337)*, 470; *Cal. Patent Rolls (1334–1338)*, 138 (commissioner for array).
55. *Cal. Patent Rolls (1313–1317)*, 138; *Cal. Chancery Warrants (1244–1326)*, 579 (re. Upwell, Norfolk); *Cal. Patent Rolls (1313–1317)*, 580 (re. Fleet, Lincolnshire); (1321–1324), 452 (re. Holbeach); cf. Moor, *Knights*, 52.
56. *Cal. Patent Rolls (1317–1321)*, 607; (1330–1334), 204; (1334–1338), 284; (1338–1340), 354 (commissions *De wallis et fossatis* in Holland).
57. *Cal. Patent Rolls (1334–1338)*, 75.
58. *Cal. Close Rolls (1337–1339)*, 482.
59. Lincolnshire Archives, Lincoln Cathedral Register V, fol. 60r: '*Nouerint uniuersi quod cum Richardus de Littlebury fuisset super occupacione et detencione bonorum quondam domini Umfridi de Littlebury militis hunc diocesis nuper ab intestato decedencis.*'
60. *Cal. Patent Rolls (1338–1340)*, 354. This is the last entry personally concerning him in any of the rolls.
61. J. Foster ed., *The Dictionary of Heraldry* (London 1994), 129.
62. *Calendar of Papal Registers, Vol. I (1342–1419)*, 14; H. T. (full name not supplied), 'Papal petitions', *Lincolnshire Notes and Queries*, 23 (1934–35), 3.
63. J. C. Cox, *Lincolnshire*, 2nd edn, rev. A. H. Thompson (London 1924), 166; cf. McDonald, *Historical Notices*, 67, who gives 1352.
64. *Cal. Close Rolls (1354–1360)*, 388; (1385–1389), 114, 131–32; *Cal. Fine Rolls (1347–56)*, 196, 375.
65. The heraldic evidence produced here relies substantially on the heraldic card index of the Society of Antiquaries of London. See further H. Chesshyre et al. ed., *Dictionary of British Arms: Medieval Ordinary*, 2 vols (London 1992–96), I, 263, 271 and II, 68; Foster, *Dictionary of Heraldry*, 129.
66. On Jenyns's ordinary, made *c.* 1410, see A. R. Wagner, *A Catalogue of English Mediaeval Rolls of Arms, Aspilogia*, 1 (Oxford 1950), 73–75.
67. Chesshyre, *Dictionary of British Arms*, I, 270. Elsewhere (e.g. Foster, *Dictionary of Heraldry*, 129) the differencing is given as a blue label of three.
68. Anon., *All Saints Church Holbeach* (Holbeach undated) (church guide), 2; also an information board displayed in the church at the time of writing.
69. See *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Vol. XII: Edward III* (London 1938), 127–28 (no. 150) for John de Littlebury's Kirton inheritance. That the Littlebury arms on the chest lack differencing suggests nothing either way, because the shields are too small and crudely executed to have permitted its inclusion.
70. See e.g. Holles, *Church Notes*, 128, 130, 152, 169, 176.
71. Tummers, *Early Secular Effigies*, 8–9.

The Fourteenth-Century Wall-Paintings at Castle Acre Priory and Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth

JANE SPOONER

This article focuses on two fragmentary medieval wall painting schemes of great interest at the Prior's Chapel, Castle Acre Priory, and Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth. English Heritage had identified a need for greater understanding of the original painting materials in both cases,¹ as a result of which they were taken up as the subject of a final year dissertation on the conservation of wall-paintings postgraduate diploma at the Courtauld Institute of Art in 2000.²

The research began with an evaluation of the art historical context of the paintings and in situ visual examinations. Sampling was then undertaken to answer questions thereby raised. The samples were examined microscopically and chemically. In some cases instrumental analysis was also employed, in order to gain an understanding of how the paint had been applied, as well as its pigments and media. The primary aims of the research were to identify original, altered and added materials, and put this into a technical and historical context. The art historical implications of the original materials' analysis are discussed here.

ART HISTORICAL CONTEXT

EARLY-14th-century East Anglia is famous for the outstanding quality of its manuscript illumination. The Ormesby, Gorleston and Peterborough Psalters are three well known examples, and the Thornham Parva retable, also associated with East Anglia, is a recently examined example of the very best of 14th-century English panel painting.³ Wall-paintings of the period are less well known, however, but are sometimes equally fine. A number of important examples occur in East Anglia, including outstanding survivals in the Ante-Reliquary Chapel at Norwich Cathedral, Prior Crauden's Chapel at Ely and in the parish church of Little Wenham, in Suffolk (Figs 1 and 2).⁴ Two other ensembles of East Anglian wall painting and sculptural polychromy of the same period are hardly known at all, at the Prior's Chapel at Castle Acre Priory and at Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth. Although these paintings are very fragmentary, in both cases it has become evident that in certain respects they once surpassed even those of Norwich Cathedral in splendour.

The Prior's Chapel, Castle Acre Priory

THE Castle Acre paintings are in the chapel of the Prior's Lodgings, a complex of buildings belonging to the priory's west range. The lodgings were begun in the 12th century but



FIG. 1. Wall-painting in the Ante-Reliquary Chapel, Norwich Cathedral

© English Heritage, National Monuments Record

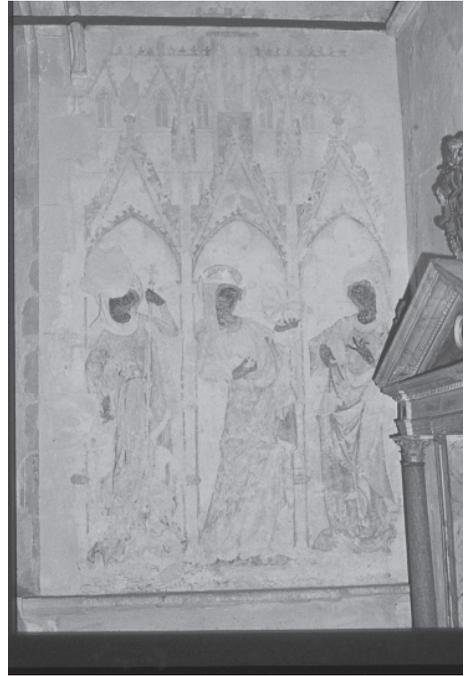


FIG. 2. Wall-painting in the parish church of Little Wenham, Suffolk

© English Heritage, National Monuments Record

remodelled in the later Middle Ages to form one of the most spectacular of such groups in the country. The original chapel, dedication unknown, occupies the north-east angle of the prior's lodging, at first-floor level (Fig. 3). Much of the fabric remains from the 12th-century build, but the chapel has been subject to a number of remodellings, of which the most obvious are the insertion of a new east window in the 13th century, and an early-14th-century campaign which provided the chapel with a new sedilia, tiles and painting scheme (Fig. 4).⁵ What survives of the painting at the east end of the chapel was thought by Professor Tristram in the 1950s to be of an early-14th-century date.⁶ However, investigations carried out by the Courtauld Institute of Art and English Heritage in 1998 showed that, as well as the early-14th-century scheme, there are two other phases.⁷ The first phase is Romanesque, coeval with the mid-12th-century construction of the chapel.

This original 12th-century decoration was executed, possibly in *fresco* technique, on a smooth, undulating pinkish plaster. The main survivals are the lozenge pattern, imitative of a textile hanging in the dado area, a kneeling figure on the north wall, and a black-haired figure at the right-hand end on the south side. The lozenge pattern is similar to some of the carving on the west front of the church at Castle Acre (Fig. 5).

The other phase of decoration is 15th century, and is most evident in a thick red border and a monogram on the east wall. The 15th-century wall painting is likely to be

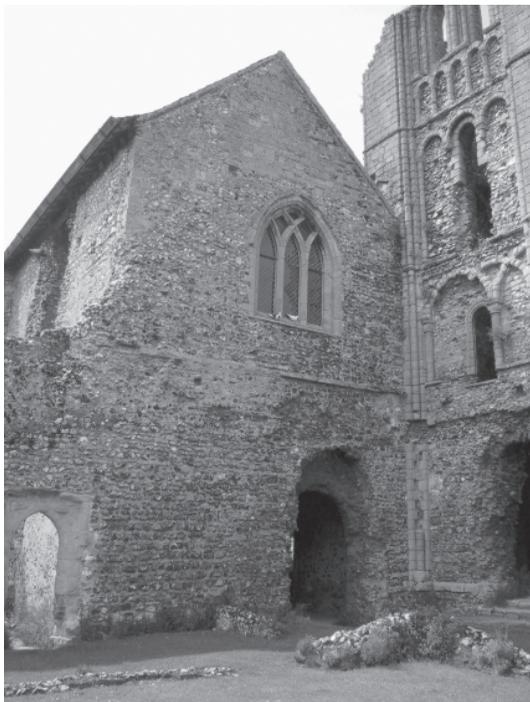


FIG. 3. The exterior of the Prior's Chapel, Castle Acre Priory, from the east
Jane Spooner

FIG. 4. The chancel of the Prior's Chapel, Castle Acre Priory
© Courtauld Institute, Conservation of Wall Painting Department



contemporary with the scheme of red and white roses on the timber ceiling. The principal concern of this paper, however, is the early-14th-century work. This phase consists of the remains of bishops depicted on the east window splays, and some painted fragments on the north, east and south walls.

Certain features peculiar to episcopal attire can still be seen on the south window splay, whilst the figure on the north is now almost impossible to discern. Tristram confidently identified two ecclesiastical figures in the splays. The bishop occupies a painted niche, which Tristram described as decorated with a red border of 'lions leopardy'.⁸ Recent examination failed to distinguish the lions, and the shapes more closely resemble traces of painted crockets. The most substantial survival, however, is on the south wall (Fig. 6). The figurative remains here include fragments of the upper half of an elegant, crowned, female figure. There is little doubt that she is the Virgin, since there are remains of a crossed nimbus below, in a position to suggest that its owner (the Christ Child) is being held. Other surviving fragments above dado level on this wall include indications of a painted canopy to the left of the Virgin, similar to those on the western arch of the Ante-Reliquary Chapel at Norwich, and at Greyfriars in Great Yarmouth. There are also two black linear gables flanking the east window at Castle Acre. Two gilded stars are visible, that to the right on a red background, and the left one on a green. The red background, now altered to dark purple, is also behind the Virgin. There are tantalizing details of drapery to her left. The remains are too fragmentary to say how many figures were



FIG. 5. The 12th-century wall-paintings in the Prior's Chapel, Castle Acre Priory
Jane Spooner



FIG. 6. Fragments of 14th-century wall-paintings on the south wall of the Prior's Chapel, Castle Acre Priory

© Courtauld Institute, Conservation of Wall Painting Department

involved here. An assumption can be made that the lozenge pattern below the dado string-course must have been covered over in order to have survived so well. In 1937, Tancred Borenius published an article on decorated panels illustrating the legend of St Eustace, discovered reused in another room in the prior's lodgings. He proposed that these could have been deployed as wainscoting in the Prior's Chapel.⁹ However, remains of 14th-century ground and paint below dado level on the south wall would indicate that this area was indeed covered, not by wainscoting, but by early-14th-century repainting.

The fragmentary Virgin and Child on the south wall was seen by Tristram as implying an *Adoration of the Magi*, partly under the mistaken belief that the figure to the right belongs to the same phase of decoration.¹⁰ This figure is now recognized as 12th century. Nevertheless, it does seem likely that Tristram's identification is correct. The star above the Virgin's head is a typical element of the *Adoration of the Magi* and a parallel image exists in the Peterborough Psalter of c. 1318.¹¹ The swaying position of the Virgin in this miniature corresponds to the Virgin in the wall-painting. The paintings on the south wall at Castle Acre have green and red backgrounds. This suggests that two scenes were represented, a possibility strengthened by the presence of two gilded stars and fragmentary drapery. The *Adoration* could be the culmination of an *Infancy of Christ* cycle, occupying the main wall space at the east end of the chapel. If so, the scene to the left of the *Adoration* may have been the *Journey of the Magi*.¹² The alternation of background colours was a popular pictorial device of the period, and is exemplified in the Peterborough Psalter.

As relatively little of the Romanesque scheme in the chapel now survives, it is impossible to determine conclusively whether the 14th-century scheme followed its predecessor in subject matter and narrative form. However, it is not uncommon for later schemes to be stylistically updated versions of earlier paintings, such as at the church of Little Tey in Essex which has two Passion cycles dating from the 13th and 14th centuries, one painted over the other.¹³ Finally, it is likely that the paintings were part of a broader refurbishment of the chapel. This included the installation of a sedilia, for which a stylistic date of c. 1325–30 has been suggested.¹⁴ The red and green colouring and the style of the remaining decorative trefoil of the canopy in the wall-paintings are compatible with such a date. The crown (Fig. 9 & Col. Pl. VIA in print edn) and brooch are conservatively formed and are well paralleled by those in the late-13th-century ceiling paintings of the chapter-house of York Minster.¹⁵ The wall-paintings could therefore be similar in date to the c. 1320's painted panels found at Castle Acre Priory, but it is difficult to tell quite how similar, given the fragmentary nature of the murals.

The Tombs at Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth

THE paintings at Greyfriars in Great Yarmouth are on and within splendidly elaborate tomb canopies, which were discovered as a result of building work in the 1960s. The plan of the friary is now very difficult to understand, but the tombs are situated in what was the south wall of the nave.¹⁶ The westernmost tomb gable is partly lost because of the insertion of a later fireplace within the wall, but two limestone canopies survive almost intact, and there are remains of a third (Figs 7 and 8).¹⁷ The tomb slab and fragmentary slender colonettes within the recesses are carved out of Purbeck marble, while the polychroming of the two main canopies consists mostly of turquoise, alternating with red. Excepting the unitary turquoise of the central rosette, the colours alternate tomb to tomb

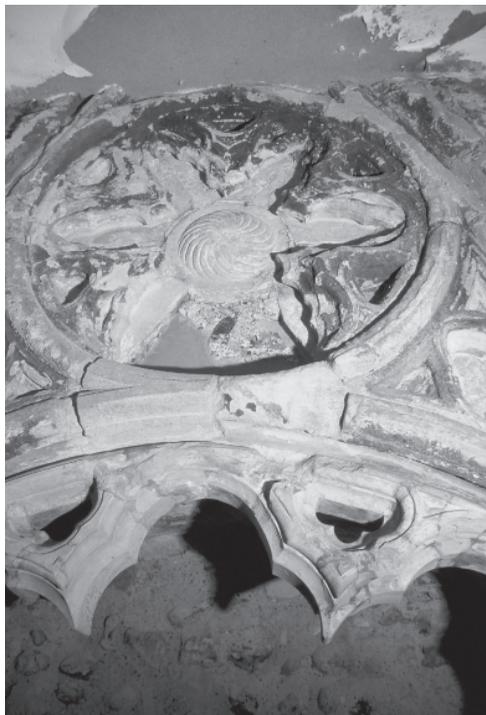


FIG. 7. Rosette and cusping of the eastern tomb at Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth
© Courtauld Institute, Conservation of Wall Painting Department

FIG. 8. Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth; the tombs are now viewed in a very narrow room, from a platform

© Courtauld Institute, Conservation of Wall Painting Department



— so, if the cusped trefoils of the eastern tomb are turquoise, those of the west are red. The decorative scheme also extends to green and red wavy lines on a white background on the exterior arch moulding, and tiny black dots on some of the sculptural polychromy. The canopies' soffits have the remains of a diaper pattern, executed in red and turquoise on a white plaster background.

The majority of surviving paint is on the western tomb recess wall and comprises two elaborate fictive architectural canopies with niches (Fig. 11 & Col. Pl. VIc in print edn). The remains of paint along the ashlar joints show that the interiors of these niches were once red. Little now survives under the left canopy, but there are the remains of the upper half of a female figure on the right. The female figure most commonly featured in tomb paintings of the period was the Virgin. However, the white-veiled female at Greyfriars (Fig. 12 & Col. Pl. VIIa in print edn) wears a widow's headdress, and is more akin to representations of St Anne, such as that of the Musée de Cluny frontal, convincingly demonstrated by Norton, Park and Binski as being of East Anglian origin.¹⁸ The west tomb at Greyfriars clearly featured two subjects. A fictive central colonette divides the two niche areas, and the only coherent remains of painting are to the right. As a result the exact nature and position of the subject matter remains unresolved. It is possible that the female represented is in fact secular. Funerary figures in such a context were not unknown in the Middle Ages. An example recorded then destroyed in the 19th century existed at Starston in Norfolk,¹⁹ and the (c. 1290s) tympanum trefoil on the tomb canopy of Aveline de Forz at Westminster Abbey bore a representation of the deceased's soul being carried aloft to Heaven.²⁰

Dating of the Greyfriars tombs and their associated decoration has never been studied in detail. The arrangement as a continuous row of elaborate canopied tombs can be compared with those of Winchelsea in Sussex, of c. 1310. Survivals of canopied tomb groups are rare in East Anglia, but a pair of elaborate tomb recesses does survive at nearby St Andrew, Wickhampton, albeit of a somewhat earlier date.²¹ The patronage of tomb series in friaries, traditionally urban foundations, is a commonly recorded phenomenon. In the 13th and 14th centuries many members of wealthy East Anglian families were buried in the friaries of Norwich, for example,²² and local records show that the once powerful family of Falstaf were buried at Greyfriars in Great Yarmouth.²³ There is thus a possibility that it is they who were the patrons of the Greyfriars tombs. If so, this might help explain the style adopted at Yarmouth, for the elaborate canopies of the Greyfriars tombs derive from recent royal work, and specifically from work undertaken in the circle of Michael of Canterbury.

The most obvious feature in this context is the adoption of central rosettes in the Greyfriars' tombs, very much in the manner of the tomb of Archbishop John Pecham (d. 1292) at Canterbury Cathedral. But there is also an inherent restraint in Yarmouth tombs, most obvious in the absence of ogees. The canopied Westminster Abbey tomb of Aveline de Forz did not embrace ogees it is true, but tombs which followed, Edmund Crouchback's for instance, did.²⁴ Meanwhile, the ornate sub-cusping of the tomb arches and the gable rosette at Greyfriars (Fig. 7) could be compared with the flushwork on St Ethelbert's Gate at Norwich Cathedral (c. 1310).²⁵ Lacking ogees and sharing details with Norwich work of c. 1310, the Greyfriars tombs therefore seem likely to be of a similar date — that is c. 1310.

PHYSICAL HISTORY OF THE PAINTINGS

CASTLE ACRE PRIORY and Greyfriars in Great Yarmouth have both suffered badly in different ways over the centuries. The Romanesque and 14th-century murals at Castle



FIG. 9. Prior's Chapel, Castle Acre Priory: the Virgin's crown and a gilded star, both applied over a vermillion red background, now altered to dark purple
Jane Spooner

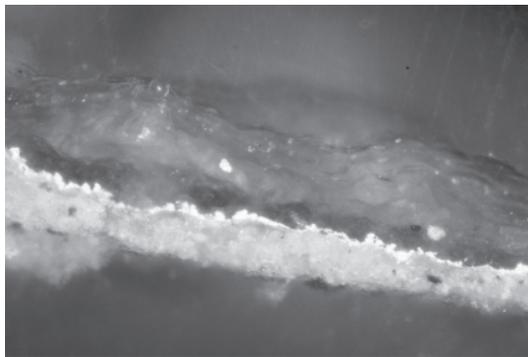


FIG. 10. Prior's Chapel, Castle Acre Priory: Cross-section sample of red-glazed gilding from the 14th-century wall-paintings
© Courtauld Institute, Conservation of Wall Painting Department



FIG. 11. Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth: the wall-painting in the western tomb recess
© Courtauld Institute, Conservation of Wall Painting Department



FIG. 12. Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth: detail of a female figure painted in the western tomb recess

© Courtauld Institute, Conservation of Wall Painting Department

Acre may have been first covered over in the 15th century, when the red and white scheme of decoration was applied, and then all the paintings are likely to have been coated with limewash following the dissolution of the priory. In 1857, the bishop in the south splay was uncovered, and by the late 1950s the paintings had been treated with a 'special wax'. Between the 1960s and 1980 the murals were consolidated with limewater and more uncovering work was undertaken.²⁶ At Greyfriars the tombs were rediscovered during building works in 1966, after having been covered by lime mortar and cement for many years. The exposed paintings were first consolidated with limewater and skimmed milk in 1966, and in the 1980s with 'Primal', an acrylic resin. Water infiltration and poor environmental conditions were reported in 1995.²⁷

THE RESULTS OF THE TECHNICAL EXAMINATION

The Prior's Chapel, Castle Acre Priory

THE 14th-century paintings in the Prior's Chapel chancel are executed over a flint, chalk and limestone wall. This is then covered by a pinkish Romanesque render. The 14th-century paintings were applied over a thick limewash ground. This same ground was used for all three walls of the chancel. The nave of the chapel also has evidence of the same limewash ground carrying traces of paint, suggesting that the whole chapel was redecorated in the 14th century, and not just the chancel area. There is scant evidence of any

other preparatory work in the Prior's Chapel. Only faint traces of direct straight line incisions outlining the south window splay bishop's niche can be seen.

The pigments used on the 14th-century scheme were vermilion, red lead, white lead, burnt umber, red ochre, carbon black, verdigris, and copper resinate or verdigris dissolved in oil. A reddish glaze was used over the top of pure gold gilding. Ultramarine, made from lapis lazuli, was identified from the 12th-century scheme. Gold was used on the Virgin's crown and brooch, the Christ Child's nimbus, and fragmentary remains of two stars.

The palette range suggested an organic medium, most likely to have been oil, although it must be recognized that the identification of binding media in wall painting is often compromised by previous conservation treatments. Added materials included wax, and an extremely tough, clear varnish on the most important areas of fragmentary wall painting on the south wall.

The Tombs at Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth

THE painting supports at Greyfriars are threefold. Paint is laid over limestone ashlar in the recess wall and the recess splays, over a lime and sand render in the tomb soffits, and over the carved limestone of the sculpted canopy. The ashlar wall and the soffit render conceal a flint, rubble and lime mortar core.

By way of preparation, Greyfriars has a red ochre under-drawing applied over the ground. The thick red lines on the canopies also suggest the use of a straight edge for the architectural details, and the precision of the circular features of the design would indicate the use of compasses, although no compass points were found. The female figure has significant remains of a fine, freehand red under-drawing for the details of her face, and the shape of her clothing. The scheme was executed over a lead white ground, combined with some lime. Pigments used at Greyfriars include white lead, verdigris, carbon black, vermilion, red and yellow ochre, and azurite. The palette in general suggests an organic medium such as oil, and a protein such as egg for the binding of copper-based blues.

Most of the fictive architecture was emphasized by the liberal application of gold. Gold was also used for decorative details on the woman's costume — there are faint impressions of a once gilded diaper pattern on her dress and traces of gold on her collar.

DISCUSSION

THE above scientific analysis is best considered within an East Anglian context. Given its geographical proximity, and similar early-14th-century date the Ante-Reliquary Chapel in Norwich Cathedral is the most relevant and important comparison which can be made, though a selective perusal of well known technical manuals from medieval Europe can provide valuable insight into the sorts of artistic techniques, which may have been used at Greyfriars and in the Prior's Chapel. All the treatises mentioned contain instructions for working on different types of support.²⁸

The Technical Results in Context

THERE is nothing unusual or unrepresentative about the support materials used at either site. Both buildings were constructed out of local building materials — flint being in wide use across East Anglia and the south-east of England. It was also common to cover more cheaply constructed buildings with a costly layer of ashlar in order to create a 'finished effect'. At Greyfriars the unevenness of the rubble core was remedied by such an ashlar

dressing. At Castle Acre, the flint and chalk interior of the Prior's Chapel chancel was smoothed over by the addition of the Romanesque render.

Stone supports were commonly sealed in preparation for painting. Such a sealant would be applied in order to reduce absorption of the painting medium into the support, causing a loss of adhesion between ground and paint layers. As the wall-painting at Greyfriars was executed on an ashlar support, it would not be unreasonable to assume that a sealant of some kind would have been used over the stone. A sealant layer was only observed between the ground and a layer of red paint, however, indicating an intention to prevent binding media from leaching into the porous ground. The difficulty of identifying sealant materials is well known. Medieval treatises and some case studies of the period indicate that it was usual to seal the stone prior to painting. Reflecting Italian practice, Cennini exhorts the artist to always size stone prior to working in oils or gilding, and even recommends a system of waterproofing using pounded brick and linseed oil or varnish to prevent moisture damage.²⁹ The North-European *Strasburg Manuscript* suggests applying a coat of size prior to beginning work on a stone surface or a layer of oil if gilding is intended.³⁰ Stone sealants identified under the choir paintings at Angers Cathedral, and beneath the ground of the St William painting in the feretory at St Alban's Abbey are just two surviving examples.³¹

A red ochre under-drawing with ruled lines for architectural details and freehand ones for figurative elements at Greyfriars illustrates a method commonly used in medieval *secco* wall-painting. The wall-paintings at St Mary, Brent Eleigh (Suffolk) of c. 1330–40 have a red under-drawing, for example.³² Under-drawings are often red, and applied over the ground material.³³ The final painting colours were then blocked in over the preparatory drawing, and outlined on the surface with fine black lines. The face of the Greyfriars figure shows that the final design did not always correspond exactly with that of the under-drawing.

The paucity of preparatory techniques at Castle Acre is intriguing. The only example is an incision made in wet plaster. Fresh plaster may have been applied in the splays before the bishops were painted, as there would have been no smooth Romanesque render onto which one could apply a limewash ground. *Secco* painting is not generally done on wet plaster, and the preparatory incisions were most probably a preliminary stage. The painting would then have been done after the plaster and ground was dry.

The use of different grounds at Greyfriars and Castle Acre illustrates the free approach artists took towards *secco* painting in 14th-century England. It also reflects the different circumstances of the two sites. The polychromy at Greyfriars was a new scheme on a new surface, whereas at Castle Acre, the 14th-century paintings were applied above a Romanesque scheme. Lead white in an organic medium, possibly with an oil component, as at Greyfriars, has been discovered in a number of wall-paintings in recent years. It is also recommended in the early-14th-century treatise by Peter of Saint Audemar.³⁴ The pigment was used for its ability to absorb moisture, its density and covering power, and also for its reflective quality.³⁵

Calcium carbonate grounds, as used in the Prior's Chapel over an earlier plaster layer, are no less common, and are known to have been used either in combination with lead white, as at the Ante-Reliquary chapel, or singly as for the St William figure at St Albans.³⁶ Again, the white of the calcium carbonate would be employed for its reflective qualities, which are considerable, although not as brilliant as those of lead white.³⁷ Observation of cross-sections and one thin-section from the Prior's Chapel indicated a thick limewash ground, sometimes applied in two layers. Like the Greyfriars' scheme, this

ground layer also contained quartz particles. The artists employed a robust technique for limewashing the wall, and the thick brushstrokes are still clearly visible. A similar surface has been noted at the Ante-Reliquary Chapel.³⁸ At both Castle Acre and Norwich much of the lime-washing was done to cover an outdated painting scheme. The use of oil-bound pigments over such a surface would have created a sparkling, translucent effect, offset by the gilded details. One final comment on the ground. It might be used itself as a white, and both sites use it in this way. The Greyfriars' figure's head-dress is simply the ground, for example, as is the Virgin's face at Castle Acre.

The blue from the Greyfriars' western tomb canopy was identified as azurite. The red pigment was vermilion, with faint traces of white and green 'wavy line' decoration on the arch moulding. Azurite and vermilion used in combination corresponds with the brilliant colour aesthetic of the Gothic period. Indeed, a 1997 study of an oyster shell palette of c. 1300 discovered at the Greyfriars in Norwich, identified both azurite and vermilion as the blue and red pigments present.³⁹ The c. 1300 wall-paintings of the Ante-Reliquary chapel in Norwich used azurite and vermilion as bright blues and reds, and as pigment mixtures.⁴⁰ The originally bright synthetic copper greens identified on the wall-paintings from Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth, and the Prior's Chapel would have been worthy counterparts to the liberally employed vermilion.

Lead white was identified as a matrix for many of the pigments, particularly the blues, at both sites. The *Strasburg Manuscript* advises the use of lead white as a means of lightening the effects of any other colour.⁴¹ Red ochre appears to have been used as an extender and pigment mixture with vermilion at both Greyfriars and Castle Acre. Other pigment mixtures identified at Castle Acre include carbon black, ochre and haematite mixed so as to make a rich brown colour. The 'black' paint used as an outline at Castle Acre, is in fact a mixture of carbon black and an ochre.

Examples of green and turquoise blue at Greyfriars and Castle Acre were many, and analysis identified them as synthetic copper pigments, some undergoing alteration. Verdigris may have been the starting product for these paint pigments. At Castle Acre, a darker green shade noticed on selected areas appeared to be copper resinate or oleate. Similar materials have been identified on sculptural and mural polychromy of the Gothic period, and its presence in the Prior's Chapel, above a reflective white ground, would be in keeping with the jewel-like aesthetic of the time. Such a material has been identified applied over a layer of verdigris on the c. 1390–95 mural paintings of the Byward Tower, at the Tower of London.⁴² It is actually quite difficult to distinguish between copper resinate (a copper salt dissolved in a resinous solution) and verdigris dissolved in oil — copper oleate — using readily available analytical techniques.⁴³ There are no medieval references for the specific preparation of copper resinate, only for a type of glaze using verdigris, linseed oil and varnish applied over tin leaf gilding.⁴⁴

The red transparent layer applied over the top of the gilding at Castle Acre was observed in a cross-section sample. Medieval sources from both northern and southern Europe advocate the use of glazes over gilding, and similar instances have been observed from elsewhere in England.⁴⁵ Kermes lake, for example, was identified applied over the gilding on the 14th-century wall-paintings of the chapter-house at Westminster Abbey.⁴⁶ On the south wall of the Prior's Chapel these gilded details, along with the bright colours, were delineated with a black line, slightly thicker than that used at Greyfriars.

The likely use of an oil mordant as a preparation for pure gold leaf at Castle Acre and Greyfriars, was a well known medieval technique.⁴⁷ A yellow ochre pigment, used either as a preparatory layer or else as an additive in the mordant, is a common method

employed in both the Middle Ages and the present day.⁴⁸ It imparts a yellowish glow to the thinly applied gold, and indicates to the gilder where the mordant has been placed, as well as helping to hide any areas where the gold has not properly adhered and been lost. The reddish glaze at Castle Acre, applied over the surface of the gold is also a recognized technique used to give translucent richness and ruddy depth to gilding (Fig. 10). The thick black lines painted over the gold create outlines and delineate details within the crown, brooch, nimbus and the stars on the south wall. The finely painted costume details of the female figure in the painted niche at Greyfriars illustrate the delicacy of the gilders' craft and the sumptuous, sparkling quality this painting was intended to have.

Finally, the identification of binding media can be problematic in English medieval wall-paintings because of the deterioration of *secco* media over time. If a medium is water soluble, for example, it may not withstand moisture infiltration or condensation. Another difficulty is the contamination of samples with past conservation treatments. The wax and other 'preservative coatings' at Castle Acre and Greyfriars typify these complications. The palettes at the two sites, which include copper, lead and mercury based pigments, suggest that an organic binder with an oil component was used. Tests for proteins on samples from Greyfriars and Castle Acre showed positive indications. The likelihood of a proteinaceous medium such as egg being used for copper pigments at Greyfriars would exemplify advice given by Cennini and Theophilus.⁴⁹

ART HISTORICAL IMPLICATIONS

The Artists and their Commissions

THERE is no documentary evidence to suggest that the artists working at either site belonged to an identifiable group of painters such as those who had worked at Westminster or possibly St Albans, namely Walter of Durham and Thomas of Westminster, although the latter does seem to have worked at Peterborough in the early 1300s.⁵⁰ The material evidence is also too disparate and fragmentary to form strong conclusions about artistic authorship. Stylistic evidence suggests that the tomb sculpture and decoration at Westminster is the ultimate source of ideas for Greyfriars, with the elegance of East Anglian manuscript illumination of the early 14th century making a contribution at both sites. The materials and techniques used suggest that the artists were creating paintings of very high quality, comparable in standard to the best East Anglian art of the time. Technical similarities between the Thornham Parva Retales of c. 1335, and the Ante-Reliquary chapel murals of c. 1300 have led one authority to conclude that both were executed 'within a well-established workshop tradition that could have had its centre in Norwich'.⁵¹ Against which, a recent survey of East Anglian and southern English panel and wall-paintings concluded that techniques in the region were so diverse, and survivals so arbitrary, that the identification of a particular workshop or East Anglian style was not possible in these media.⁵² The results of the Greyfriars' and Castle Acre analyses show that these two painting schemes, dating from c. 1310 and c. 1325–30 respectively, correspond with a similarly generalized aesthetic — a penchant for translucent and luminous colour observable in most English painting of the Gothic period. In wall-paintings a transition from the opaque and usually primary colours of the Romanesque palette to a luminous and brilliant palette took place during the 13th century, reaching maturity c. 1300 — a development perhaps best seen in the light of the increasing prominence given to stained glass in important Gothic buildings.⁵³

The use of costly azurite at Greyfriars, and gilding and vermilion at both sites shows that the artists were commissioned to create paintings of rich, brilliant and saturated colour, sparkling with the shimmering effects of detailing in pure gold. Azurite was valued according to the intensity of its blue colour, and the highest quality product could be as much as four times as expensive as a similar quantity of gold foils.⁵⁴ Although much cheaper than azurite and gold, vermilion was the most expensive of the mineral reds.⁵⁵ The use of synthetic copper greens and red ochre extenders with vermilion indicates that the artists cannily combined cheaper materials with expensive ones to achieve the desired rich effect. At Castle Acre, for instance, a green copper resinate or oleate was applied over the white limewash ground, and would have been particularly translucent in effect, as the light would have been reflected by the white ground material through the green glaze. Similar modulation was achieved through the application of the transparent red glaze to the gilding, lending a burnished glow to the yellow gold.

The Greyfriars polychromy arguably takes the use of expensive, intensely coloured pigments, the farthest, and the remains of the delicate decoration of the canopies hints at the fabulous impression the patrons and artists wished to create for their tombs. The rich colours and inclusion of decoration on the rear wall may have been intended to offset the rather plainly carved tomb slab. None the less, the slightly metallic, shiny quality of the Purbeck tombs would be in keeping with the jewelled, gilded impression of the painting scheme. The gilded diaper pattern on the female figure's dress enhances the sparkling effect created by the artists, and demonstrates the esteem in which the patrons held the woman represented.

CONCLUSION

THE now damaged and fragmentary painting remains at Greyfriars and in the Prior's Chapel give little clue to the once sumptuous effect their original technique confirms them to have once enjoyed. The paintings would have had a jewel-like appearance, their rich and vibrant colours glowing amid the gold. A similar pigment range at both sites, and comparisons with other high quality paintings of the period, shows that these two forgotten painting schemes were once exceptional examples of English Gothic painting.

Particularly complex pigment mixtures have not been identified at either site, and the visually rich yet materially restricted palette illustrates the inventiveness of the artists who worked with them. It must also be remembered that a great deal of original material has been lost to time and the effects of climate and earlier attempts at conservation. The gilding at both sites is particularly interesting. In this one respect these now dilapidated paintings outshone the best of their splendid East Anglian counterparts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Robert Gowing, and John Ette of English Heritage for facilitating this research project, and Jeremy Ashbee for useful observations on site.

I would also like to thank Dr Helen Howard of the National Gallery, and David Park and Sharon Cather of the Courtauld Institute of Art, for their helpful and encouraging supervision of the research. Dr R. K. Morris generously gave his opinion on the proposed dates of architectural details from both sites, and Mr John Cherry very kindly responded to questions regarding the Virgin's brooch at Castle Acre. All errors of interpretation are my own.

NOTES

1. Wall Painting Section, English Heritage, 'Wall Painting Condition Audit: Greyfriars Cloister, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk' (unpublished report, London, 1996) and 'Wall Paintings Condition Audit: Castle Acre Priory, Prior's Lodgings, Norfolk' (unpublished report, London, 1996).
2. J. Spooner, 'A Comparative Technical Analysis of the Wall and Sculptural Polychromy at Greyfriars, Great Yarmouth, and the Prior's Chapel, Castle Acre Priory in Norfolk' (unpublished Postgraduate Diploma dissertation, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 2000).
3. A. Massing ed., *Painting and Practice; the Thornham Parva Retable: Technique, Conservation and Context of an English Medieval Painting* (Cambridge 2003), and C. Norton, D. Park and P. Binski ed., *Dominican Painting in East Anglia* (Woodbridge 1987).
4. For Norwich, see D. Park and H. Howard, 'The Medieval Polychromy', in *Norwich Cathedral: Church, City and Diocese 1096–1996*, ed. I. Atherton, E. Fernie, C. Harper-Bill and Hassell Smith (London 1996), 379–409. For Ely, see P. Binski and D. Park, 'A Ducciesque Episode at Ely: The Mural Decoration of Prior Crauden's Chapel', in *England in the Fourteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1985 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Stamford 1986), 28–41.
5. G. Coppack and J. Coad, *Castle Acre Castle and Priory* (London 1998), 37.
6. E. W. Tristram, *English Medieval Wall Painting: The Fourteenth Century* (Oxford 1955), 149.
7. C. Kyi, 'Castle Acre Priory, Norfolk: Investigations of the Wall Paintings of the Prior's Chapel' (unpublished report, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 1998), 8; and S. Pesko, 'Castle Acre Priory: Report on the recording of the nature, extent and condition of the wall paintings in the Chapel of the Prior's Lodgings' (unpublished report, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 1998), 9.
8. Tristram, *The Fourteenth Century*, 149.
9. T. Borenius, 'Medieval Paintings from Castle Acre Priory', *The Antiquaries Journal*, XVII (1937), 113–21.
10. Tristram, *The Fourteenth Century*, 63, 149.
11. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, MSS 9961–62, fols 11–12.
12. D. Park, pers. comm., 2000.
13. T. Curteis, 'Uncovering and conservation of the wall paintings: St. James the Less, Little Tey, Essex' (unpublished report, Cambridge, 1996), 11.
14. R. K. Morris, pers. comm., 2000.
15. J. Cherry, pers. comm., 2000.
16. V. Coad, 'Greyfriars Monastery', *Archaeol. J.*, CXXXVII (1980), 308–09.
17. Wall Painting Section, English Heritage, 'Greyfriars Cloister, Great Yarmouth: examination of the painted decoration' (unpublished report, London, 1995).
18. Norton, Park and Binski, *Dominican Painting*, 51–53 and pl. 11 for an illustration of St Anne teaching the Virgin to read.
19. Tristram, *Fourteenth Century*, 92.
20. L. Gee, 'Ciborium tombs in England 1290–1330', *JBAA*, 132 (1979), 29–41.
21. D. Park, pers. comm., 2000.
22. C. Daniel, *Death and Burial in Medieval England: 1066–1550* (London 1997).
23. *VCH Norfolk*, 2 (London 1906), 436.
24. F. Woodman, 'The Gothic Campaigns', in *Norwich Cathedral 1096–1996*, 158–96.
25. I am indebted for this observation to R. K. Morris, pers. comm., 2000.
26. Pesko, 7–8.
27. Wall Paintings Section, EH, 1995, 3–4. It should also be said at this point that examples of pigment alteration and the presence of salts were identified during subsequent analysis, though this aspect of the scientific work is beyond the scope of the present article.
28. M. Merrifield, *Original Treatises on the Arts of Painting*, I (New York 1967). Merrifield translated Jehan le Bègue's 1431 copy of a text originally written by Peter of Saint Audemar in the early 14th century, which is most likely to reflect contemporary and earlier practice. See also the c. 1110–40 Theophilus, *On Divers Arts*, trans. and ed. J. Smith and C. Stanley (New York 1979); the c. 1370 Cennino Cennini, *The Craftsman's Handbook: Il Libro dell'Arte of Cennino Cennini*, trans. and ed. D. Thompson (New York 1960); and the possibly 15th-century *Strasburg Manuscript: a medieval painter's handbook*, trans. V. and R. Borradaile (New York 1966). All works except that by Cennini can be said to reflect northern medieval painting practice. *Il Libro dell'Arte* is more relevant when considering the traditions of Italian Trecento painting, though can still provide some insight into English wall-painting, if used with caution.
29. Cennini, 60, 118, 120–21.
30. *Strasburg Manuscript*, 61, 63.
31. S. Demailly, P. Hugon, M. Stefanaggi and W. Nowik, 'The technique of the mural paintings in the choir of Angers Cathedral', in *Painting Techniques: history, materials and studio practice, Contributions to the*

Wall-Paintings at Castle Acre Priory and Greyfriars

I.I.C. *Dublin Congress*, ed. A. Roy and P. Smith (London 1998), 10–15; and H. Howard, 'Workshop practices and the identification of hands: gothic wall paintings at St Albans', *The Conservator*, 17 (1993), 34–45.

32. M. Kempfski, 'A technical comparison of the Thornham Parva Retable with contemporary paintings, with particular reference to East Anglia', in *Painting and Practice; The Thornham Parva Retable: Technique, Conservation and Context of an English Medieval Painting*, ed. A. Massing (Cambridge 2003), 149.

33. M. Sauerberg, H. Howard and A. Taveres da Silva, 'The Wall Paintings of c.1300 in the Ante-Reliquary chapel, Norwich Cathedral and the Thornham Parva Retable; a technical comparison', *Painting and Practice*, ed. A. Massing, 190–91. Black under-drawing was observed in two samples from the Ante-Reliquary Chapel scheme, and vermilion and carbon black under-drawing was observed on the Thornham Parva Retable, illustrating that the technique extended to other supports.

34. Merrifield, 120.

35. R. Gettens, H. Kuhn and W. Chase, 'Lead White', *Pigments: a handbook of their history and characteristics*, 2, ed. A. Roy (Oxford 1993), 67–79.

36. Howard, 'Workshop Practices', 35.

37. R. Gettens, E. Fitzhugh and R. Feller, 'Calcium carbonate whites', *Pigments: a handbook of their history and characteristics*, 2, ed. A. Roy (Oxford 1993), 208.

38. H. Howard, 'The Ante-Reliquary Chapel, Norwich Cathedral: Scientific examination of the wall paintings' (unpublished report, Courtauld Institute of Art, London, 1995), 4.

39. H. Howard and D. Park, 'A Medieval Oyster Shell Palette from the Greyfriars, Norwich' (unpublished report, Courtauld Institute of Art, London, 1997), 5.

40. Park and Howard, 'The Medieval Polychromy', 396. It was not possible during the analysis to distinguish whether the vermilion used at either Greyfriars or Castle Acre was natural cinnabar or synthetic vermilion.

41. *Strasburg MS*, 55.

42. C. Babington, 'The Byward Tower, Tower of London: Report on the condition of the wall paintings and proposed treatment' (unpublished report, English Heritage, London, 1990), 2–3.

43. The only certain method is to use gas chromatography-mass spectrometry: H. Kühn, 'Verdigris and Copper Resinate', *Pigments: a handbook of their history and characteristics*, 2, ed. A. Roy (Oxford 1993), 151.

44. Cennini, 61.

45. Theophilus, 33–34; Strasburg, 67; Peter of Saint Audemar, cf. Merrifield, 158, 162.

46. H. Howard, *Pigments of English Medieval Wall Painting* (London 2003), 119–21.

47. Cennini, 58, 96–97.

48. P. and A. MacTaggart, *Practical Gilding* (London 1985), 12.

49. Cennini, 36; Theophilus, 23.

50. Kempfski, 156.

51. Sauerberg et al., 197.

52. Kempfski, 146, 156.

53. Howard, *Pigments*, 6.

54. Howard, *Pigments*, 41. Azurite bound in linseed oil can sometimes appear dull, given the similarity of their refractive indexes, although the *Strasburg Manuscript* recommends the combination. R. Gettens and G. Stout, *Painting Materials: A Short Encyclopaedia* (New York 1966), 99–96, *Strasburg MS*, 55.

55. S. Hvluko, 'Red pigments in English medieval wall painting' (unpublished postgraduate diploma dissertation, Courtauld Institute of Art, London, 1991), 35.

The Stained Glass of Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen, Norfolk

DAVID J. KING

The parish church of Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen in West Norfolk was built mainly c. 1420–30. Extensive remains of an unusual series of male saints survive in the tracery lights of the five north windows of the north aisle, while the east window of this aisle retains part of a series of the Nine Orders of Angels. A discussion of the identity of the saints proposes some revisions to the accepted list. With the exception of two figures, the saints all appear in the litanies of the Sarum Breviary, which appears to be their iconographic source. Of the two non-litany saints, Edmund Rich can be linked to the figure of Sir Edmund Ingaldesthorpe, whose arms are over the south door and also featured in the chancel windows, and St Hugh of Cluny reflects the patronage of the church on the part of the Cluniac Priory of Castle Acre. Three different workshops working in different styles made the windows following a common programme. The style and the suggested patronage of Sir Edmund point to a date of c. 1430–40 for the glass. A King's Lynn provenance has been suggested but has yet to be established.

INTRODUCTION

THE church of St Mary Magdalen at Wiggenhall lies on the west bank of the river Ouse about six miles upstream from King's Lynn. It is a large, mainly brick-built Perpendicular building with an earlier tower, a five-bay nave, north and south aisles lit by three-light side and east windows with double crenellated transoms (the aisle west windows are blocked), and a clerestory with triple-light windows placed regularly over each bay of the arcade. The chancel has a blocked window on the north side and three windows to the south. There is a two-storeyed south porch. Pevsner and Wilson date the main build to c. 1430 and cite a bequest of 1432 towards rebuilding as confirmation. Cotton and Tricker have suggested a 1420 date, comparing the work to that at Walpole St Peter, where the chancel windows were glazed in 1423 and 1425.¹

There are a few insignificant remains of 15th-century glass in the three westernmost north clerestory windows, mainly canopy work which appears to be partly *in situ*.² The middle window of the south clerestory, S IV, still had heraldic glass in the 16th century: 1. Berney impaling Gissing quartering Heveningham. 2. Sable a griffin sergeant within a border argent. 3. Moulton. 4. Kerville. 5. Lovell. 6. Per pale azure and or a fleur-de-lis counterchanged.³ The first, impaled, shield may suggest a date for this glass compatible with that of the building. John Berney married Isabel (or Elisabeth), daughter and heir of Sir John Heveningham, who was returned in 1433 as a member of the gentry and died in 1440.⁴ The bulk of the surviving glass is to be found in the tracery lights of the six north aisle windows including the east window. Part of a main-light figure is now in the upper half of the central main light of the central north window, nV.

The first and only extensive published account of the glass was by Charles Keyser in 1907.⁵ He described it as being by then in a deplorable condition and in urgent need of attention, observations borne out by his photographs.⁶ In 1924–25 the glass received a thorough restoration by Samuel Caldwell Junior of Canterbury, which involved some resetting of the glass and the painting of several new pieces including heads. Keyser tried to get the glass restored as soon as his article was published, as is shown by some correspondence kept by the church,⁷ and the pre-restoration illustrations of the glass he included in his article are invaluable in assessing the extent of Caldwell's work. Woodforde included the glass in his 1950 book on the Norwich school of 15th-century glass painting, describing it rather ambiguously as 'local work', and pointing to a link with glass at Blythburgh in Suffolk.⁸ More recently, Nichols has listed the figures and commented on the sequence in her invaluable book on medieval imagery in Norfolk.⁹

THE NORTH AISLE WINDOWS

THE five north-facing windows of the north aisle contain in their tracery lights substantial remains of a remarkable series of mainly ecclesiastical saints, together with a few figures moved from other windows (Figs 1–6 & Col. Pls VIIb, VIIIa–b in print edn). Although many of the figures of popes, bishops, abbots and hermits are labelled with their names on scrolls, there remain problems of identification because of a mismatch noted by Nichols between the names given and the attributes of some of the figures, as well as because of missing or obscured inscriptions.¹⁰ In order to attempt a reconstruction of the



FIG. 1. Wighenhall St Mary Magdalen: Window nVII
David King



FIG. 2. Wighenhall St Mary Magdalen: Window nVI
David King



FIG. 3. Wighenhall St Mary Magdalen: Window nV
David King



FIG. 4. Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen: Window nIV
David King



FIG. 5. Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen: Window nIII
David King



FIG. 6. Wiggshall St Mary Magdalen: Window nII
David King

iconographic scheme of the north aisle tracery lights the glass has been closely examined, and the descriptions of Keyser, Woodforde, Cotton and Tricker, Nichols and two 18th-century antiquarians have been used.¹¹ Some extant but dirty or worn names are problematic, and will probably remain so until the glass can be examined under workshop conditions, but a few doubtful cases have been resolved.

The list of the glass begins with the westernmost north aisle window, using the *Corpus Vitrearum* numbering system. The following conventions are used for the transcription of the names: () for abbreviation expansion. { } for missing or illegible sections [] for reconstructed missing sections.

Window nVII (Fig. 1 & Col. Pl. VIIb in print edn)

- A1 St Brice, bishop and confessor, with mitre and crozier: *S(an)c(tu)s Britius*. Blomefield and Parkin recorded St Bruno in this position, presumably an error for St Brice.¹²
- A2 St Aldhelm, abbot and bishop, with mitre and crozier: *S(an)c(tu)s Aldelm(us)*.
- A3 St Sixtus, bishop and martyr, with mitre and crozier (not St Sixtus, pope and martyr): *S(an)c(tu)s Sixtus*.
- A4 St Samson, bishop and confessor, with mitre, crozier and book: *S(an)c(tu)s Samson(us)*.
- A5 St Germanus, bishop and confessor, with mitre, crozier and book: *S(an)c(tu)s Ge(r)man(us)*. There are two bishop saints of this name, St Germanus of Paris (d. 576) and St Germanus of Auxerre (d. 448). The latter saint famously

visited England and fifteen churches were dedicated to him, including that in the neighbouring village of Wighenhall St Germans.

- A6 St Cuthbert, bishop and confessor, with mitre, crozier and book: *S(an)c(tu)s Cutb(er)tus*.
- B2 St Callixtus, pope and martyr, with tiara, double cross-staff and book: *S(an)c(tu)s Kalixtt(us)*.
- B3 and B4 are missing.
- B5 St Hilary, pope, with tiara, double cross-staff and book: *S(an)c(tu)s Hyllari(us)*. Blomefield recorded St Leo, whom Hilary succeeded as pope. Perhaps he was in one of the blank lights in this row.

Window nVI (Fig. 2 & Col. Pl. VIIIA in print edn)

- A1 St Laudus, bishop, with mitre (not St Leodegarius): *Sanct(us) Laud(us)*.
- A2 St Botulph, abbot, with mitre and crozier: *S(an)c(tu)s Botulp(us)*.
- A3 St Lambert, bishop and martyr, with mitre: *Sanct(us) lambert(us)*.
- A4 St Benedict, abbot, with mitre and crozier: {illegible} *B(e)n(e)dic*. This is a new identification. Much of the figure is by Caldwell and the name is misplaced and cut short. Earlier writers saw an initial 'P', but it should be 'B'. A similar 'B' is seen on St Botulph in the same window.
- A5 St Egidius, abbot, with mitre and crozier: *Sanct(us) egidi(us)*.
- A6 St Romanus, bishop and confessor, with mitre: *S(an)c(tu)s romanus*.
- B2 St Albanus? The name is very faint, but some letters can be made out: *S(an)c(tu)s A[illegible]nus*. The first letter appears to be 'A' and the last three 'nus'. Unfortunately, this does not allow a definite identification, as there are several saints who were bishops or abbots who fit this pattern. St Adrianus, abbot and St Anianus, bishop, for instance, but the closest reading is St Albanus, who occurs in the Sarum litanies. He was neither bishop nor abbot, but may have been chosen as he was the English protomartyr. St Albinus would also be possible, but is already securely identified in nV. The figure has a mitre and crozier.
- B3 St Hugo? [*S(an)c(tu)s {missing}*], abbot. The 'Scs' survives on the left of the head, leaving space on the other side for a short name. The top half of the figure and the head were missing in 1907 and have been supplied by Caldwell with no mitre, but all the other figures in this window are mitred. An antiquarian manuscript records St Hugo at the 'summit' of this window, and the short name of this saint would fit the space available here.¹³
- B4 St Valentinus, bishop and martyr, with mitre and book [*S(an)c(tu)s Vale(n)tin(us)*]. Another new identification. The name is upside down and split either side of the head, but with an inverted digital image, it becomes clear. It is not clear, however, from the pre-restoration photographs where this name came from. It may have been in this panel but obscured by dirt.
- B5 St Hippolytus, bishop and martyr, with mitre and crozier [*S(an)c(tu)s Ipol(i)tus*].

Windows nV, nIV and nIII (Figs 3, 4, 5 and Col. Pl. VIIIB in print edn) are more difficult to elucidate. Windows nVII and nVI are in two different and distinctive styles (compare Figs 1 and 2). The next three windows use a common design characterized by the setting of the figures in an architectural niche, but more than one painter was involved. This

means that it is possible that panels have at some stage been moved from their original locations without this being obvious. Less competent glaziers also worked on this group and appear to have made errors in matching names and ranks. These windows are also less complete overall.

Window nV (Fig. 3 & Col. Pl. VIIIb in print edn)

- A₁ St Medard, bishop [*S(an)c(tu)s medardar(us)*]. The name must be correct, as he is paired with his contemporary St Gildard in A₂; they appear together in litanies. However, the figure carries a sword, presumably to designate a martyr, which Medard was not. One suspects that the figure comes from another light.
- A₂ St Gildard, bishop and confessor, probably with crozier and book [*S(an)c(tu)s gildard(us)*].
- A₃ St Julian, bishop and confessor, probably with crozier [*S(an)c(tu)s Juli[a]nus*].
- A₄ The name has gone. The figure has a mitre and staff.
- A₅ St Swithun? The name ends in -hunus [*{missing}humus*]. St Swithun, bishop, is suggested, but the figure here has a mitre and cross-staff, normally indicating an archbishop.
- A₆ St Albinus, bishop, probably with a crozier [*S(an)c(tu)s albin(us)*].
- B₂ St Bertinus? The name is difficult to read [*S(an)c(tu)s be{missing}us*]. The first two letters are 'be' and the last two 'us', probably preceded by 'n'. The width of the gap between these strongly suggests that St Bertinus was intended here. He has a mitre and crozier.
- B₃ and B₄ are missing.
- B₅ St Nicasius, bishop and martyr [*S(an)c(tu)s nicasius*]. The name is clear and the form of the label is the reverse of that in B₂. The figure, however, is a layman carrying a sword, again, probably a transposed martyr.

Window nIV (Fig. 4)

The bottom row in this window is the most difficult to interpret. The first three figures are labelled St Paul, St Peter and St John and the fourth St T.

- A₁ St Paul is depicted as a bald, bearded man dressed in a robe patterned with leaves, or possibly made of leaves with a mantle and tippet. He carries a stick in his right hand [*S(an)c(tu)s paulus*].
- A₂ St Peter has a mantle, robe and crozier [*S(an)c(tu)s petrus*].
- A₃ St John has a mantle and robe and carries a crozier in his right hand and a book in the left [*S(an)c(tu)s [i]oh(anne)s*].
- A₄ St T. . . wears an ecclesiastical vestment and carries a crozier and book [*S(an)c(tu)s t{missing}*].
- A₅ St Edmund. He wears a vestment and mitre and carries a crozier [*S(an)c(tu)s edmu(n)d(us)*]. This must be St Edmund Rich, archbishop of Canterbury, who should thus carry a cross-staff.
- A₆ A fragment panel, including the head of a female saint and fragments of black-letter text on scrolls: |*regid*| and |*esia*|.
- B₂ St Victor, with crozier or cross staff [*S(an)c(tu)s victor*]. There are many saints of this name. In the Sarum litany, Victor is listed as a martyr, 'et socii', probably one of the many groups of lay martyrs. He is placed immediately before St Silvester, pope, as here.¹⁵ However, at Wiggenhall he is probably intended as one of the bishop St Victors, or as the pope of that name.

- B₃ St Silvester, pope, with mitre and cross staff [*S(an)c(tu)s silvester*]. Earlier popes in the series in nVII had the requisite tiara.
- B₄ A sainted pope whose name ends in –inus [*{missing}inus*]. A perusal of the litany suggests that St Marcellinus is depicted here, with cross-staff, mitre and book.
- B₅ St Isidore, bishop and doctor, with vestment, crozier and mitre [*S(an)c(tu)s isidrus(us)*]. Some have interpreted the name as ‘Desiderius’, but the scroll, although having a repair lead, is complete, and there is definitely no initial ‘D’. The present reading requires the second ‘d’ to be an error for ‘o’, which fits in with what we have seen of this glazier’s capabilities.

The combination of names in tracery lights A₁–A₄ suggests that they are apostles, the fourth one being Thomas. In the Sarum litany, however, Paul, Peter, John and Thomas are listed as martyrs, the apostles having been already mentioned in the opening section.¹⁴ Peter and John are dressed as bishops and Paul looks more like a hermit. St T. . . could be Thomas, but again has a crozier, and there are various other martyr saints beginning with T. In view of the many discrepancies in these three windows, more clarity is probably not possible here.

Window nIII (Fig. 5)

- A₁ Blank
- A₂ St Cornelius, pope and martyr, with mitre and cross-staff [*S(an)c(tu)s Cornelius*]. The name is very dirty and illegible at the time of writing, but a photograph taken 1970–75 shows the name clearly.¹⁶
- A₃ Blank
- A₄ A female saint holding a book with a rosary hanging from her girdle, perhaps St Sitha.
- A₅ A male lay saint holding a book.
- A₆ Blank.
- B₂–B₄ Blank.
- B₅ St Felicianus [*S(an)c(tu)s felicianus*]. The figure is fragmentary but appears to hold a book and is probably a bearded lay figure. In the litany, St Felicianus, martyr, is given, rather than the bishop of that name.

Window nII (Fig. 6)

- A₁ Blank
- A₂ Seraphim [*Sy{missing}*]. Part of the name survives. The angel has eyes on the feathers, sometimes an attribute of cherubim, but also known for this order.²² It holds a book.
- A₃ Thrones [*Troni*]. The name is complete and the crowned angel carries a pair of scales, the usual attribute.²³
- A₄ St Helen. A female saint, crowned, and holding a cross. This is from another window.
- A₅, A₆ Blank.
- B₂ Angels [*Angeli*]. A figure carrying a spear with pennon and with a purse at its belt with IHC.
- B₃, B₄ Blank.

- B5 A female saint carrying a palm and book. This is from another window and the label has the name missing. On the right are a few letters in black-letter script which appear to read [Ga|tty].²⁴

ICONOGRAPHIC PROGRAMME

WE have no indication of the original iconography of the main lights, except perhaps the top part of a bishop now in light b of nV. This was not in this position in 1907 when Keyser's article was published and he does not mention it elsewhere. By contrast, the surviving figures in the tracery lights of windows nIII–nVII constitute an unusual and lengthy series of saints that has puzzled previous writers.¹⁷ Its source would appear to be the litanies of the saints from the Sarum Breviary. Twenty-nine saints from the Sarum Breviary can be identified with certainty in the north five windows of the aisle, another four with the help of the litany, to which can be added St Hugo and St Leo, recorded by antiquarians, giving a total of thirty-five. Of these, thirty-three are in the standard version of the Sarum litanies of the saints as printed by Procter and Wordsworth, with one or two possible cases where the glazier has depicted a saint of a different rank but with the same name as one in the litany.¹⁸ Only two saints are not found in the litanies, and, as we shall see, there are special reasons for their presence. Correspondences between the groupings of some of the saints in the litanies and in the windows support the hypothesis. In window nVII, half of the eight surviving saints, Brice, Germanus, Cuthbert and Hilary, also appear in the same group of twelve bishops in the litany for the *Feria quarta* in Lent, and a similar situation occurs in window nV with Medard, Gildard, Julian and Swithun.¹⁹ The names of Paul, Peter, John, and possibly Thomas at Wiggshall in nIV all occur in the *Feria tertia* litany.²⁰ Finally, Sylvester immediately follows Victor in both glass and text.²¹

Further support for the theory that the north aisle glazing is based on the Sarum litanies is obtained when the glass in the east window of the north aisle is examined. This appears to have been made by the same workshop as did the three easternmost windows on the north side. The tracery lights were not devoted to ecclesiastical saints, but to the Nine Orders of Angels, of which three are extant.

Wills indicate that the altars at the east end of the aisles here were dedicated to the Holy Trinity and the Virgin Mary.²⁵ In medieval iconography, the Trinity is often accompanied by the Nine Orders of Angels, sometimes as part of a depiction of the *Te Deum*. Examples in Norfolk include the east window of Salle church of 1440, the late-15th-century so-called Erpingham Retable wall painting in Norwich Cathedral, and possibly an alabaster altar-piece which may formerly have adorned the Chapel of the Holy Trinity in St Peter Mancroft, Norwich.²⁶ The opening section of the Sarum litanies invokes the Holy Trinity individually and collectively, followed by the Virgin Mary, Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, all the archangels and all the holy orders of blessed spirits, which presumably refers to the Nine Orders. Next are mentioned St John the Baptist, all the prophets and patriarchs and the names of all the Apostles and Evangelists.²⁷ The combination of the Nine Orders in nII with the rest of the litany depicted in windows nIII–nVII points to the possibility that nII had not simply the Nine Orders in the tracery, but carried a representation of the Trinity in the main lights also, and suggests strongly that the altar of the Holy Trinity was placed at the east end of this aisle, with that of the Virgin Mary on the south. If this hypothesis is correct, the whole of the north aisle tracery glazing was conceived in liturgical terms, as was possibly that of the main lights as well.²⁸

PATRONAGE, PROVENANCE AND DATE

THERE is little direct evidence of the donors of these windows. There was a guild of the Holy Trinity in the church, which could have contributed,²⁹ and an unidentified shield of arms of *sable a fess nebuly argent between six billets or* was to be seen in nVI and may also relate to a donor.³⁰ The two non-litany saints in the series were St Hugh and St Edmund Rich, and they may provide more solid clues. The patron of the church was the Cluniac Priory of Castle Acre, itself dependent on Lewes Priory, which may suggest that St Hugh of Cluny, the great reforming abbot, was represented, rather than St Hugh of Lincoln. The main lay figure associated with the rebuilding of the church in the 15th century seems to have been Sir Edmund Ingaldesthorpe (c. 1409–56). His arms together with those of Howard are still to be seen carved over the south door and were formerly represented in north and south chancel side windows.³¹ The figure of St Edmund in the glass could be explained by its status as Sir Edmund's name saint, whose life unquestionably coincides with the period when the glass was made.³² In the east window of the chancel was a figure of St Mary Magdalen, to whom the church is dedicated, and the arms of England and France quarterly, Warren and Albany.³³ The Earl Warren was the founder of Castle Acre Priory. The north window, now blocked, had in addition to the arms of Ingaldesthorpe, those possibly of Castle Acre or its prior, and the name of the prior between 1428 and 1452, Thomas Gatys.³⁴ Part of his surname appears to have been inserted into B5 of window sII. In a south chancel window were the arms of Ingaldesthorpe, Beaufort and Howard.³⁵ The Ingaldesthorpe family had had a long connection with the order of Cluny going back to the time of Richard I, when with the permission of the Abbot of Cluny the manor of the prior of Lewes in Tilney was granted to the Ingaldesthorpes.³⁶

All this would indicate that the glazing of the north aisle and the chancel was a joint venture between a particular lay donor and the monastic patron. The adoption of the litany as the subject of the glazing would have been appropriate to a part of the parish church devoted to the laity, as litanies were an aspect of the liturgy in which it took an active role. They were used outside the church in England for Rogation tide processions, and within the church they were designed for responsive chanting between priest and congregation. The function of much medieval glazing was intercessory and this was clearly the case here. When the litany was sung in the church, the priest would read each of the names of the saints and the congregation would respond with 'ora pro nobis', or 'orate pro nobis'.³⁷ The permanent display of these saints in the glazing would have been seen as a kind of perpetual litany, and those viewing it may have been encouraged to say the response as each saint was looked upon. We do not know if the main lights contained invocations attached to donor figures, but the tracery lights acted as a more generalized form of intercessory tool that worked on behalf of the many as opposed to the few.

The scheme would also have been appropriate for a donor or donors with Cluniac interests at heart. The essence of the Cluniac order was its strong accent on the liturgy. It modified the Benedictine rule by reducing the amount of time the monks devoted to manual labour and greatly increasing that given over to divine offices. The Cluniac life has been characterized as 'perpetual prayer' and monks were enjoined to recite psalms even while carrying out everyday tasks outside the choir.³⁸ Thus the idea of a perpetual litany for the laity would have been in tune both with the Cluniac ideal, as well as with the 15th-century proliferation of what has been called lay monasticism, with many pious men and women becoming lay associates of monastic communities and adopting private devotional practices very similar to those exercised in monasteries.³⁹

It has been said that the Wiggenhall glass was made at King's Lynn, and there is circumstantial evidence in favour of the claim. Lynn is nearby (a mere six miles by river), and is known to have had a tradition of glass painting from the late 13th century.⁴⁰ Moreover, the glass does not look like Norwich work. There is a cluster of churches around King's Lynn, at Harpley, Fincham and Sandringham, for example, whose glass was not made in Norwich, where most of the glass in Norfolk was made, and in some cases the glass resembles that at Wiggenhall.⁴¹ The situation, however, is not straightforward, and it may be significant that all the glaziers who took up the freedom of Lynn in the 15th century did so by purchase rather than apprenticeship — this use of outsiders perhaps implying the lack of an indigenous craft.⁴²

The Wiggenhall glass is not a stylistic unity, and may have come from more than one centre. Certainly, the patron for the glazing or his ecclesiastical adviser laid down an overall programme, but, as we have seen, this was interpreted in various ways and by a number of different glass painters and workshops. Windows nVII and nVI are in very different styles, the former finely painted with rich use of coloured glass and stately figures, the latter with figures entirely painted on white glass in a wiry and expressionist style. The remaining windows all employ a common design for the figures and canopy, but more than one hand is discernible in the heads. The glaziers of this group of windows also cope less competently with the matching of names and rank, and in general terms are less impressive than those of the other two windows. This may suggest that some subcontracting occurred. How many workshops were involved? It is perfectly possible to have windows in very different styles painted by the same workshop. The glass at Norwich, St Peter Mancroft, demonstrates this.⁴³ However, there the workshop connection is indicated by a shared use of cartoons and the appearance of two differing painters within the same window. At Wiggenhall, the four easternmost windows share the same design and canopy type, and are therefore almost certainly made by the same workshop (Figs 3–6 & Col. Pl. VIII B in print edn), despite differences in style, but the two western windows (Figs 1 and 2, Col. Pls VII B and VIII A in print edn) have nothing in common with each other or with the eastern windows other than the iconographical concept, and are probably by two different workshops. It is hard to believe that three workshops were active in King's Lynn simultaneously, unless the windows were made at different periods. This question will not be resolved until much more has been done on the stylistic analysis and dating of west Norfolk 15th-century glass and the provenance of the Wiggenhall glass must for the moment remain open.

Finally, there is the question of the date of the glass. Keyser and Woodforde put it in the 1470s, but the more recent dating of the architecture to the 1420s or 30s is a better guide. The head-types in particular of window nVII have the same sweetness of expression as much glass of the 1420s and 1430s in the International Gothic mode (Fig. 1 & Col. Pl. VII B in print edn). Window nVI is very different, but the fashion for figures painted on white glass is most common in Norfolk in the period *c.* 1400–40 (Fig. 2 & Col. Pl. VIII A in print edn).⁴⁴ Comparisons for the larger group of windows are harder to find, but some of the heads, including that of St Helen, are still in what one might call the soft style of *c.* 1400–30. A combination of style and the mooted patronage of Sir Edmund Ingaldesthorpe suggests that the overall date range is *c.* 1430–40.

NOTES

1. N. Pevsner and B. Wilson, *Norfolk 2: North-West and South B/E*, 2nd edn (Harmondsworth 1999), 778; S. Cotton and R. Tricker, *St Mary Magdalene, Wiggenhall: A Brief Guide* (typescript, no date or place of publication).

The Stained Glass of Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen

2. NIV has canopy fragments in the heads of lights a and b; NV has similar glass in the head of light b and fragments in A3 and A4 including border work, fictive plain quarries, Ty in black letter and a geometric roundel; in A3 of N VI is a relieved M and in A5 a foliage roundel.
3. London, British Library, Harley MS 901, fol. 58v (Collections of Robert Kemp), dated September 1575; BL Lansdowne MS 260, fol. 236v, late-16th-century; see also Norfolk Record Office, Frere MSS, in envelope labelled 'Ex collec T Martin', 18th-century; BL Add. MS 8844, fol. 19r Collections of Charles Parkin, 18th century; F. Blomefield and C. Parkin, *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, IX (London 1805–10), 170.
4. Blomefield and Parkin, *History of Norfolk*, XI, 125–26.
5. C. Keyser, 'Notes on some fifteenth-century glass in the church of Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalene', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 16 (1907), 306–19.
6. Keyser, 'Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalene', 310.
7. The correspondence is to be found in a book which also records that Caldwell was paid £273 15s. 6d. I am grateful to Mr P. J. Gagen for allowing me to see this material. For the work of Caldwell, see M. Caviness, *The Early Glass of Canterbury Cathedral* (Princeton 1977), 19–21.
8. C. Woodforde, *The Norwich School of Glass Painting in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford 1950), 137, 165–66, 181; the Blythburgh link had already been made in C. Woodforde, 'Schools of glass painting in King's Lynn and Norwich in the Middle Ages', *Journal of the British Society of Master Glass Painters*, 5 (1933), 4–18.
9. A. Nichols, *The Early Art of Norfolk. A Subject List of Extant and Lost Art including Items Relevant to Early Drama* (Kalamazoo 2002), 32, 137, 162, 170–72, 182–83, 188, 195, 200, 202, 204, 207–11, 218–19, 223–25, 227–28, 230, 234, 318–20.
10. Nichols, 318.
11. The 18th-century sources are Charles Parkin, and Blomefield and Parkin, as listed in note 3.
12. Blomefield and Parkin, IX, 170.
13. Parkin, fol. 19r. See below for a discussion of which St Hugo was intended.
14. F. Procter and C. Wordsworth ed., *Breviarium ad usum insignis ecclesiae Sarum*, II (Cambridge 1879), 255.
15. *Ibid.*, 251.
16. University of East Anglia, School of World Art History and Museology, neg. no. 34/19/8.
17. Nelson calls the glass a 'remarkable series'. See P. Nelson, *Ancient Painted Glass in England* (London 1913), 155; Woodforde refers to it as a 'strange series'. See Woodforde, 'Schools of glass painting', 90, and Osborne terms it an 'unusual assortment of saints'. See J. Osborne, *Stained Glass in England* (Stroud 1981), 192.
18. Procter and Wordsworth, II, 251–60. Procter and Wordsworth's list is a composite, probably not matched exactly by any one source. Of interest are the saints in the litanies not seen at Wiggenhall. Some would, of course, have been present originally, but are now lost (another sixteen male saints); others were probably omitted because they were very obscure. A third group may have been depicted in the main lights, including perhaps some of the more commonly depicted saints, such as the Twelve Apostles, the Four Doctors of the church, the three deacons, Stephen, Laurence and Vincent, and the common pairing of Christopher and George.
19. Procter and Wordsworth, II, 251, 257.
20. *Ibid.*, 255.
21. *Ibid.*, 251.
22. N. Morgan, 'Texts, contexts and images of the Orders of Angels in late Medieval England', in *Glas. Malerei. Forschung. Internationale Studien zu Ehren von Rüdiger Becksmann* (Berlin 2004), 211–20.
23. *Ibid.*, 220.
24. For the possible significance of this name, see below.
25. In 1461 the will of Roger Oky, vicar, mentions the Chapel of the Virgin Mary, and Helen Michell, widow, asks in her will of 1462 to be buried before the altar of the Holy Trinity (Norfolk Record Office, Norwich Consistory Wills, 119 Bettyns and 289–90 Brosyard).
26. For Salle, see D. J. King, 'Salle Church — the glazing', *Archaeol. J.*, 137 (1980), 333–35; for the Erpingham Retable, see A. B. Whittingham, 'The Erpingham retable or reredos in Norwich Cathedral', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 39 (1985), 202–06; for St Peter Mancroft, see P. Sheingorn, 'The Te Deum altarpiece and the iconography of praise', in *Early Tudor England: Proceedings of the 1987 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. D. Williams (Woodbridge 1989), 171–82.
27. Procter and Wordsworth, II, 250.
28. The siting of the Lady Chapel in the south aisle would accord with the original location in the windows there of the intruded female saints now in the north aisle and the possibility arises that the tracery lights were filled with a corresponding series of female saints from the litany. For the connection between glass and

liturgy, see R. Marks, *Stained Glass in England during the Middle Ages* (London 1993), 84–85; and D. King, *The Medieval Stained Glass of St Peter Mancroft, Norwich*, Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi, Great Britain, V (Oxford 2006), clxxxi–clxxxiv.

29. This is mentioned in the will of Helen Michell in 1462; see n. 25.

30. BL Add. MS 8844, fol. 19; Norfolk Record Office, Frere Collection; Blomefield and Parkin, IX, 170.

31. For the south door, see Keyser, 'Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalene', pl. xiii and 317–18; for the chancel heraldry, see BL MS Harley 901, fol. 58v; BL MS Lansdowne 260, fol. 236v; Norfolk Record Office, Frere MSS; Blomefield and Parkin, 170.

32. For the will of Sir Edmund, see PRO, prob/11/4.

33. BL MS Harley 901, fol. 58v; BL MS Lansdowne 260, fol. 236v; Norfolk Record Office, Frere MSS; Blomefield and Parkin, IX, 170.

34. BL MS Harley 901, fol. 58v; BL MS Lansdowne 260, fol. 236v.; BL Add. MS 8844, fol. 19; Norfolk Record Office, Frere MSS; Blomefield and Parkin, IX, 170. The name of the prior is given in Blomefield and Parkin, VIII, 375 as Thomas Bates and in BL Add. MS 8844, fol. 19 as Thomas Gatu or Tatu; the VCH *Norfolk*, II, 358 has John Sharshulle in 1428, then Thomas Gatys without date, and then Nicholas Benet, 1445.

35. The Beaufort shield, *quarterly France and England within a border gobonny of ermine and azure*, was for Thomas Beaufort, Duke of Essex, who had been granted the lands in west Norfolk forfeited by Thomas, Lord Bardolf. From 1405 until his death in 1426, he had played an increasingly active role in East Anglian political life. See H. Castor, *The King, the Crown, and the Duchy of Lancaster* (Oxford 2000), 68–81. The Howard shield was for Sir John Howard, who died in 1437 and was a landowner in several neighbouring villages, including Wiggenhall St German's. See Blomefield and Parkin, IX, 87, 145, 150, 191–92.

36. Blomefield and Parkin, IX, 78.

37. A. Hughes, *Medieval Manuscripts for Mass and Office: A guide to their organisation and terminology* (Toronto 1982), 25.

38. G. de Valous, *Le monachisme clunisien des origines au xiv^e siècle*, I (Paris 1970), 327–72.

39. For a general study of medieval lay piety, see E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (New Haven 1992); Peter Coss makes the pertinent point that '[t]he later medieval household was itself a religious community, with its own chapel and chaplains'. See P. Coss, *The Lady in Medieval England 1000–1500* (Thrupp 1998), 171.

40. Woodforde, 'Schools of glass painting', 14–15.

41. Woodforde, 'Schools of glass painting', 9–10, links Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen, Harpley and Sandringham; the latter was published by C. Keyser, 'Notes on some ancient stained glass in Sandringham Church', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 19 (1916), 122–32.

42. J. L'Estrange, *A Calendar of the Freeman of Lynn, 1292–1836* (Norwich 1913), 44, 45, 58, 60, 62.

43. King, *St Peter Mancroft, Norwich*, xcvi–xcix, cxxiv–clii.

44. *Ibid.*, cvi.

Romanesque Sculpture in Parish Churches of the Lincolnshire Fens

THOMAS E. RUSSO

Often perceived as a cultural backwater, the flat, agricultural Fenland of south-eastern Lincolnshire possesses a number of noteworthy medieval parish churches. What can be determined of these churches in their earlier, Romanesque, phases however suggests the Fens were far from being culturally disadvantaged. Indeed, a study of their architectural sculpture reveals a story of settlement, productivity, and prosperity, and south-east Lincolnshire possesses some of the largest, most ornate Romanesque churches in the county. A general picture of the 12th-century Fenland parish economy can be formed by examining the extent to which sculpture was used within and without its churches. The iconography of the material is discussed and a framework for understanding its significance is advanced by looking at it from three perspectives: its relation to local Anglo-Saxon sculpture; its points of contact with the larger Romanesque corpus of the county; and, finally, its function and meaning within the localized image-complex of the parish church.

LINCOLNSHIRE is a county of surprising geographical variety: the gently folding wolds in the north-east and south-west; the massive, uplifting ridge of Jurassic limestone commonly referred to as the 'Edge' or the 'Cliff' running the full extent of the county from north to south; the marshland along the southern fringes of the Humber; and the vast, low-lying expanse of the fens in the south-east. More than any other section of the county, it is the Fens that have inspired the perception of Lincolnshire as a 'backwater'. In the Middle Ages, the fens were indeed a 'backwater' in the most literal, geographical sense — and it was this very same aquatic character that made the Fenland the fundamental economic engine of the region.¹ However, since the 17th century, when the Fens started to be systematically drained, the water has slowly given way to the fertile, arable landscape of the present, though the label 'backwater' remains stubbornly fixed to the county.² As recently as 1989, when the revised edition of Pevsner's volume on the buildings of the county was published, it was noted that in terms of research interest 'Lincolnshire remains comparatively uncharted territory', an observation even truer of the county's Fenland churches.³

As things stand, research on the Lincolnshire Fens has tended to focus on the region's natural resources and economy, with meticulous attention given to the significant production of salt in the district from the Iron Age through the Middle Ages.⁴ These studies have clearly demonstrated that the Fens were home to an important industry and trade system that encouraged settlement and development both in and around the Fens proper. This article is intended to contribute to the current reappraisal of our historical understanding of the Fens by concentrating on its parish churches and their Romanesque sculpture. An

analysis of the types of sculpture found in these churches and the extent of their survival offers a general picture of the 12th-century parochial landscape. But by contextualizing this material in relation to local Anglo-Saxon sculpture and to the larger, post-Conquest corpus of the county, the Romanesque sculpture of these parish churches stands out as a significant consequence of the 12th-century Fenland economy. Iconographically, the examples chosen range from the pure geometric to the mythic and the anthropocentric, and by localizing these forms within the image-complex of the parish church, it is hoped that some understanding of their contemporary function and meaning may be gained.

In Lincolnshire as a whole more than 280 individual sites contain Romanesque sculpture (Fig. 1).⁵ While there are some well known domestic structures among these, such as the Jew's House in Lincoln and the manor house at Boothby Pagnell, the vast majority are out-of-the-way parish churches, seldom visited and even less seldom afforded academic attention. In roughly 200 of the parish churches, the Romanesque survivals are extensive: nave arcades, chancel arches, clerestories, and complete portals. However, given the imperatives of later reconstruction it is not uncommon for small-scale sculptural fragments to be reset elsewhere within a church — the 12th-century font fragments reset in the north aisle wall at the church of All Saints in Eagle are a good example — or even to travel to other sites for reuse. However, the substantial nature of the architectural elements which form the core of this study argue for their being *in situ* and thus evidence of an established church at the site even when no written documentation exists.⁶ As a general guide, the 280 sites in the county offer an idea of what the parish church landscape looked like in 12th-century Lincolnshire. Roughly 15% of these churches, 41 to be exact, are found in the Fens. In contrast to Lindsey in the north, and Kesteven in the south-west, the role played by topography in the siting of the Fenland churches is immediately apparent (Fig. 1). The coast to the east and the fen-edge to the west, abutting the south-western wolds and following to some extent the path of the modern A15, are privileged over the watery fen inland, which in turn is characterized by broad intervals between its parish churches.

These Fenland Romanesque churches did not appear overnight. A few had Anglo-Saxon predecessors. The arrival of Christianity here owes much to St Guthlac (d. 714) who first began fighting off demons and attracting followers at Crowland in the early 8th century.⁷ Paul Everson and David Stocker, in their corpus of Anglo-Saxon sculpture in Lincolnshire, list fourteen Fenland sites with Anglo-Saxon sculptural fragments.⁸ The majority of these fragments originally belonged to grave-covers, grave-markers, or cross-shafts. There is one, solitary piece of figure sculpture, perhaps a figure from a rood composition, located at the church of St John the Baptist in Great Hale.⁹ In 1952, Maurice Barley noted the fact that there were no remains of Anglo-Saxon church fabric in the area, because 'the later wealth of the fens was too great to tolerate the survival of tiny Saxon buildings'.¹⁰ This wealth arose in the 11th and 12th centuries, the period of the great Romanesque rebuilding and of the founding of new parishes. A good portion of this wealth must have been derived from the water-world of the Fens in the form of fish, fowl, and salt. *Domesday* notes dozens of fisheries in and around the fen-edge; in Bourne alone there were at least thirty fisheries producing 2,500 eels, the most abundant and popular aquatic species for consumption and bartering.¹¹ A rare link between the fishing trade of the Fens and the quarrying industry comes from Cambridgeshire, where in 1050 Ramsey Abbey agreed to provide Peterborough Abbey with 4,000 eels a year in return for building-stone from Barnack.¹²

Romanesque Sculpture in Lincolnshire Parish Churches

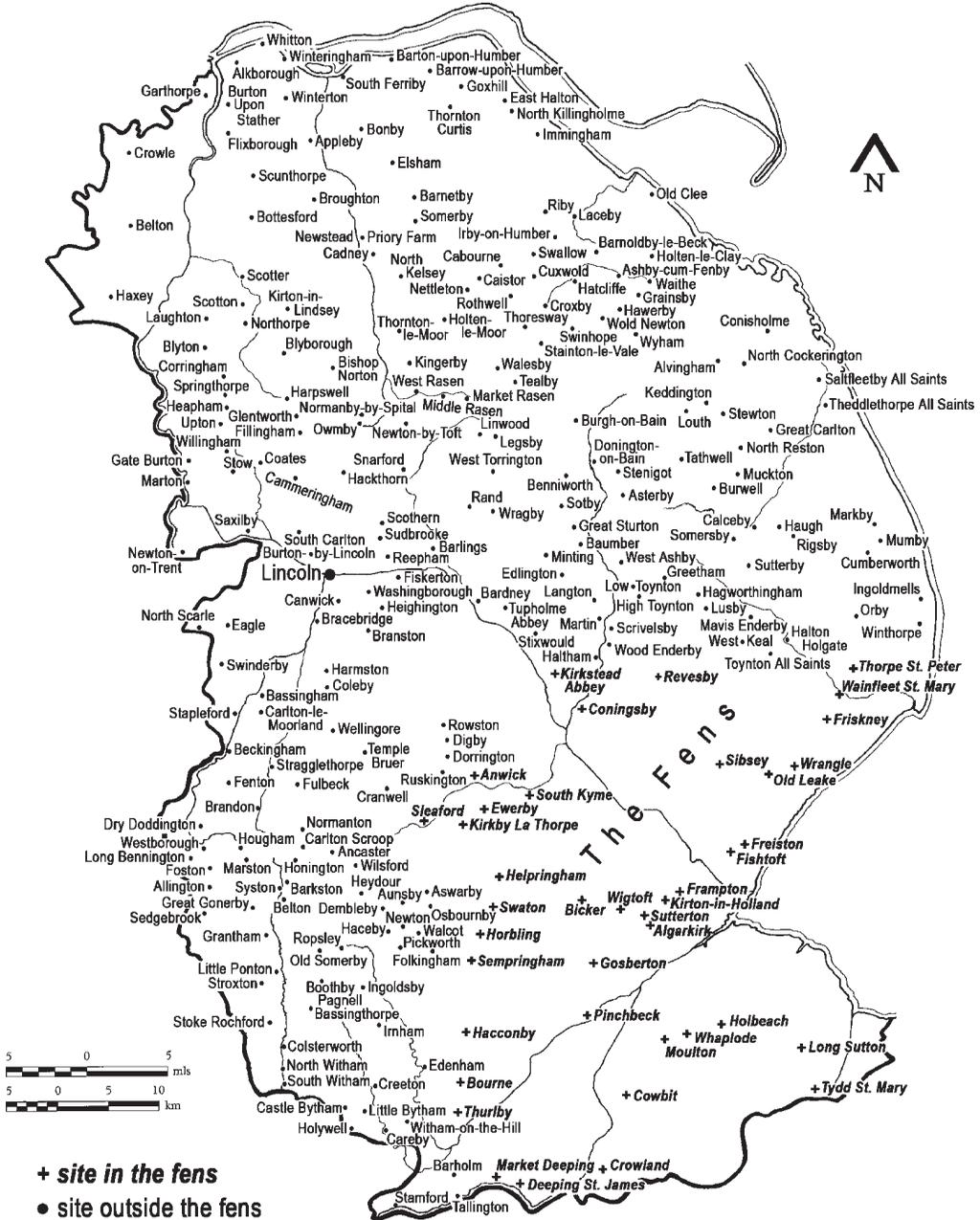


FIG. 1. Map of Lincolnshire sites with Romanesque sculpture

Drawing: Thomas E. Russo

Salt production was another major industry of the region with the majority of the Lincolnshire salt-pans located in the silt belt of the Fens and along the coastal edge. There were salt-pans in Bicker, Frampton, Gosburton, Kirton, Wrangle, Wainfleet, and Friskney, all Fenland villages with evidence of Romanesque churches. *Domesday* notes multiple, productive salt-pans in some of these sites, such as the fifteen salt-pans in Frampton and the twenty-two salt-pans in Bicker.¹³ It seems fair to assume that the exploitation of these resources required labour, which in turn precipitated settlement and the construction of large stone churches.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Fenland churches is their size relative to other churches in the county. The scale of some, such as the four-bay 12th-century nave of Bourne Abbey, can be explained by their institutional status, Bourne having been founded as an Augustinian house in 1138. Others, such as the extensive, six-bay nave arcade of St James, Freiston, may be explained by their patron, Crowland Abbey having taken responsibility for Freiston's foundation in 1114.¹⁴

But some parish churches, with no monastic connections, loom large in the landscape; St Mary at Long Sutton with its impressive seven-bay arcade; or the equally imposing seven-bay nave arcade of St Mary, Whaplode, whose four Romanesque bays are



FIG. 2. St Mary, Whaplode: nave from west

Thomas E. Russo



FIG. 3. St Mary, Sutterton: multi-scallop capital, north nave arcade, west respond

Thomas E. Russo



FIG. 4. St Mary, Sutterton: label stop above west respond of north nave arcade

Thomas E. Russo

juxtaposed with a further three Early English bays to the west (Fig. 2). St Mary, Sutterton, provides an example of a large, cruciform, parish church, a design type also found in the Fens at Algarkirk, Bicker, Gosberton, Horbling, and, originally, Freiston.

The fabric at Sutterton reveals a long history of transformation and renovation, but the north and south portals, the five-bay nave arcade, the western crossing arch and the responds of the north and south crossing arches are all late-12th-century. It is in these areas that Romanesque sculpture proliferates. Multi-scallop capitals, ubiquitous throughout the country, are used in the nave arcade, as are an astonishing variety of foliate-type capitals, and, as in so many fenland churches, the capitals are nicked (Fig. 3). Sutterton also introduces an aspect of Romanesque architectural sculpture that sets it off from its Anglo-Saxon forerunners: the significant increase of figural sculpture. Both human and animal forms take to Sutterton's stage, as seen in a label stop showing a dragon biting, or perhaps swallowing a figure wearing unusual strapped, head gear (Fig. 4). In the north nave arcade is a capital with a series of paired figures: on the east face a couple, one with short hair and one with long, turn towards each other; on the north-east angle a mythical harpy seizes the double-braided beard of a man, literally acting out the meaning of its name, 'to seize';¹⁵ on the north-west angle another harpy and man are bound to each other by a tree branch which they hold in their mouths; and on the south-west angle yet another harpy is depicted, this time with its mouth wide open tormenting its human companion with its banter (Figs 5–7). In a break with the previous representations, this last pair emphasizes the ears of both the harpy and the human, perhaps to underscore to those in the congregation the virtue of listening.

The Fens also offer up a number of outstanding Romanesque portals. St Andrew, Sempringham, retains an ornate south doorway of four orders (Fig. 8). At Kirton-in-Holland, the south doorway consists of 13th-century shafts beneath a late-12th-century arch which carries elaborate chevron and bobbin mouldings. Back at Sutterton, the south doorway supports a heavy chain moulding on an angle roll while the label has straddling directional chevron (Fig. 9). This type of chevron is very rare in the county and immediately brings to mind the north portal at Lincoln Cathedral, where it too is used on the label and terminates in large beast heads. Although eroded, the label at Sutterton also terminates with beast head stops though on a very different scale from those at Lincoln. One can still make out the round head, eye sockets, part of a snout, and the pointed ears of a beast (Figs 10–12). In a very subtle, but significant, design change, the Sutterton sculptor changed the position on the beast's ears in order to privilege the visual pause created by the stops after the rapid directional rhythm of the straddling chevron: thus on the left side the ears are splayed to meet the terminals of the straddling chevron, but on the right beast head, which is in an inferior state of preservation, the ear points turn inward to meet the tip of the last straddling chevron descending to the label. Ingenious



FIG. 5. St Mary, Sutterton: column 3 capital, north nave arcade, east face: human-heads and harpies

Thomas E. Russo



FIG. 6. St Mary, Sutterton: column 3 capital, NE angle detail: harpy pulling beard of adjacent figure

Thomas E. Russo



FIG. 7. St Mary, Sutterton: column 3 capital, SW angle detail: harpy with open mouth and emphatic ears

Thomas E. Russo

Romanesque Sculpture in Lincolnshire Parish Churches



FIG. 8. St Andrew, Sempringham: south doorway

Thomas E. Russo

FIG. 9. St Peter and St Paul, Kirton-in-Holland: south doorway

Thomas E. Russo

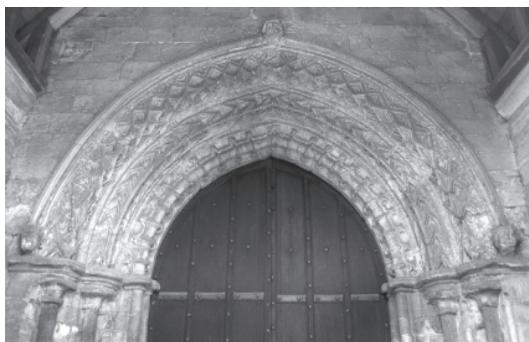


FIG. 10. St Mary, Sutterton: south doorway

Thomas E. Russo



FIG. 11. St Mary, Sutterton: south doorway detail: west label stop, beast-head

Thomas E. Russo



FIG. 12. St Mary, Sutterton: south doorway detail: east label stop, beast-head

Thomas E. Russo

design modifications such as these bring us tantalizingly close to the individuality of the anonymous craftsmen of the 12th century.

The north doorway at Sutterton is equally rich in its variety of motifs, from the foliage and lateral chevron of the capitals and arches to the interlacing ribbon of the label (Fig. 13). Here, too, figural forms are included, such as the beast head terminals on the label (Fig. 14). What is unusual here is that the forepaws of the beast are portrayed; a close parallel to this is found on another elaborate fenland doorway, at nearby St Mary and All Saints in South Kyme (Fig. 15). The South Kyme doorway deploys a wealth of motifs from the stone-carver's bag of tricks: unusual joggled voussoirs, ornamental edge point-to-point chevron, a compressed fret roll, and cable moulding on the label with beast head stops. At the apex of the label there is a beast head closely related to that at Sutterton, with a linear treatment of the face and the forepaws depicted beneath the jaw (Fig. 16). Two birds also appear on the right nook-shaft capital of the first order at Sutterton (Figs 17–18): on the north face the bird is flapping its wings and pecks at a ball of fruit (?) while on the east face the bird, with wings folded, calmly turns its head to look across its back and into the church as if in recognition that all is provided for to those who enter.

Human figures are represented on the Sutterton north portal as well. Just opposite the bird capital is a capital, mostly covered with foliage, whose inner face reveals the remnant of a face gazing across the threshold at the calm bird. And the keystone of the

Romanesque Sculpture in Lincolnshire Parish Churches



FIG. 13. St Mary, Sutterton: north doorway
Thomas E. Russo

FIG. 14. St Mary, Sutterton: north doorway
detail: east label stop, beast-head
Thomas E. Russo



FIG. 15. St Mary and All Saints, South Kyme:
south doorway
Thomas E. Russo

FIG. 16. St Mary and All Saints, South Kyme:
south doorway detail: beast-head keystone
Thomas E. Russo





FIG. 17. St Mary, Sutterton; north doorway detail: bird on west nook shaft capital, north face

Thomas E. Russo



FIG. 18. St Mary, Sutterton: north doorway detail: bird on west nook shaft capital, east face

Thomas E. Russo

inner order carries the head of a king or other crowned figure (Fig. 19). He is bearded, has a slight downturn to the mouth and wears a diadem decked out with three fleurs-de-lis. The lack of a roll moulding on the block from which the head projects and the clear compromising of the mortar joints indicate this is an insertion, while the shape of the block suggests it was originally a corbel figure. There is a similar royal corbel elsewhere in the fens at St Swithin, Bicker (Fig. 20). He, too, is a king with a beard and a head of curly hair capped off with a diadem. His large, wide eyes and the heavy downturn of his mouth give him a strong physical and psychological presence, a sense of gravitas similar to that seen in the figure of Adam on the Romanesque frieze at Lincoln Cathedral.¹⁶ He has not fared as well as his Sutterton counterpart, but enough of the stone remains to suggest that this piece also initially functioned as a corbel. It is situated in the spandrel of a 13th-century south transept arch, now mainly embedded in the south aisle wall.

Where this corbel king was originally located is not known. It seems likely it was found in the late 19th century and reset in this current position. There was a major restoration of St Swithin's in 1893–94 and, astoundingly, but happily, five photographs of the restoration-in-progress exist in the Lincolnshire county archives.¹⁷ Two of these photos show the compound pier and springing of the south transept arch now hidden within the wall and it is evident that the spandrel in which the king's head is now reset was completely rebuilt in 1894 (Fig. 21). Further, there is a notice in the *Associated Architectural Society Reports and Papers* for 1894 which describes the extent of the



FIG. 19. St Mary, Sutterton: north doorway detail: king-head keystone

Thomas E. Russo



FIG. 20. St Swithin, Bicker: king-head corbel reset in south aisle wall

Thomas E. Russo

restoration and concludes with the following remark: 'During this year's work, many rich and interesting portions of the Norman and Early English periods were discovered, and these will be preserved as evidence of the former grandeur of this ancient church.'¹⁸ This unambiguous 19th-century testimony to the iconic reuse of sculpture to preserve the local, cultural memory of a place illustrates why so many parish churches are palimpsests of architectural history.

In addition to the king's head, there is a fragment of a second head on the other side of the spandrel, and Romanesque fragments used as corbels in the south aisle wall. Little remains of the second head other than several thick locks of hair and an ear, but its size is relatively consistent with that of the king's head, so perhaps it too was a corbel. All we can say with certainty is that it did not come from the existing exterior nave corbel table at Bicker, for this employs a nebule moulding of a type common in the fens, being also found on the nave of St James, Freiston and St Andrew, Sempringham (Fig. 22). Finally, to bring this discussion of corbels to a close, there is one more example at Bicker of an animal head *in situ*. It is located at the juncture of the west wall of the north transept with the north clerestory of the nave (Fig. 23). The change in masonry from the 12th-century nave to the 14th-century transept is clearly evident. This corbel is composed of a hollow chamfer onto which is carved a beast head. Though worn, the pointed ears, wide, open eyes, and snout are still visible. In profile, the snout especially stands out and it

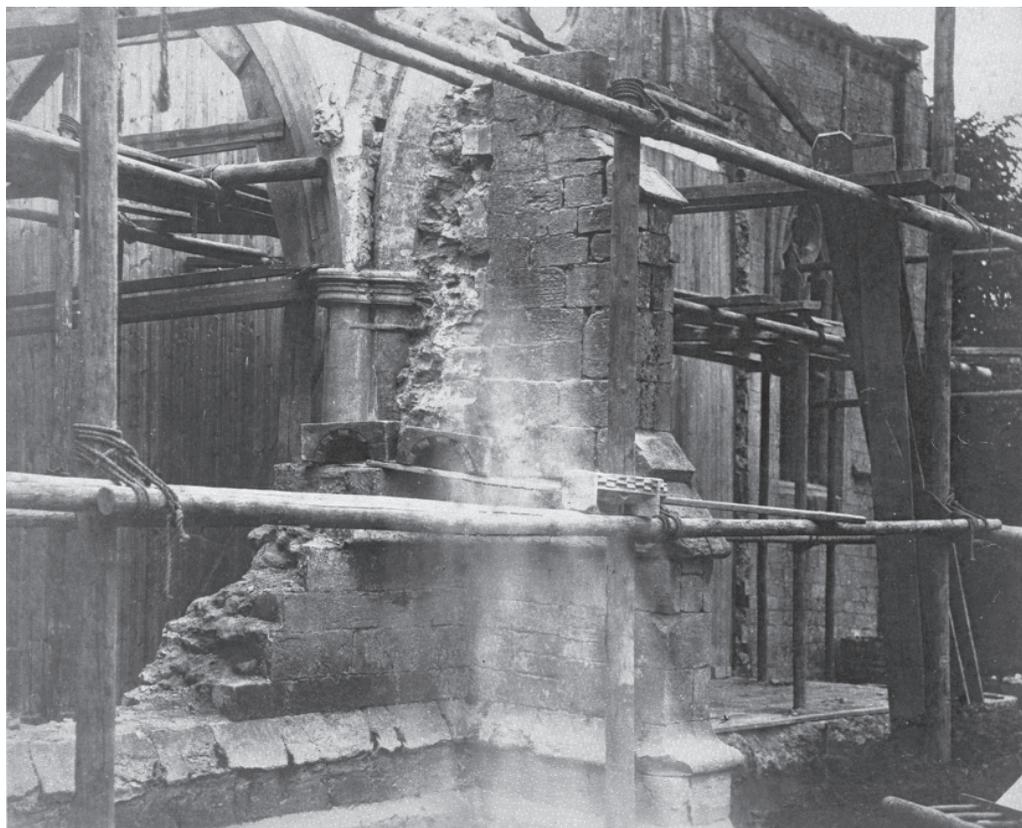


FIG. 21. Photograph of 1893–94 restoration of south aisle at St Swithin, Bicker
With the permission of Lincolnshire Archives

becomes evident that the beast holds a cylindrical, dowel-like object in its gaping jaws.¹⁹ In the fens, where rebuilding of churches on a vast scale took hold from the 13th century onwards, the survival of such a Romanesque figurative corbel *in situ* is fortunate.

Bicker also prompts a number of general reflections on Romanesque architectural sculpture in the fens. Like Sutterton, St Swithin's, Bicker is a large, cruciform church, its size perhaps a reflection of its economic status as a one of the leading Fenland salt producing villages, situated around the long-gone waters of Bicker Haven. The village name itself, derived from the old Scandinavian 'by-Kiarr' meaning 'the village marsh', reflects this vanished marine environment.²⁰ The Romanesque nave, now reduced to two bays, once continued further westward and still retains its clerestory. By comparison to the Anglo-Saxon period, the sheer quantity of surviving Romanesque work here, as elsewhere, makes it clear that the Fens, though perhaps topographically marginal, fully participated in the widespread rebuilding of churches in the 11th and 12th centuries. And this was no mean, perfunctory participation. The scale of Fenland parish churches and the substantial investment in expensive sculptural ornament is indicative of the ambition of the patrons



FIG. 22. St Swithin, Bicker: exterior corbel tables, north nave and clerestory walls

Thomas E. Russo



FIG. 23. St Swithin, Bicker: animal-head corbel at juncture of north transept and north nave clerestory

Thomas E. Russo

of these churches. Beyond statistical analysis, it seems fair to say that the extensive application of sculpture in Romanesque churches distinguished them from their Anglo-Saxon predecessors, and marked a new strategy for visual discourse in stone. This is not to say that Anglo-Saxon capitals and portals did not carry sculptural ornamentation, simply that it was not applied on anything like the scale adopted in the 12th century. In terms of object typology, the Romanesque siting of sculpture throughout the church, the concern for liminal architectural elements, the elaboration of arcades, doorways, and window arches, is quite unlike the Anglo-Saxon partiality for grave covers and crosses. A new spatial aesthetic is apparent in the Romanesque sculpture of the 12th century.

Relative to the rest of the county, the Fenland sites account for only 15% of surviving Romanesque material. Yet, as mentioned above, most Fenland parish churches were built on an appreciably larger scale than churches in the Wolds or along the limestone Cliff. Furthermore, the relative quantity of sculptural ornamentation found in the Fens, particularly the elaborate portals, is unparalleled in the county, and encountered at only a handful of parish churches elsewhere. If floor plan dimensions and quantity of sculpture correspond to costs, which they must, the parishes of the 12th-century Fens were extremely wealthy.

Finally, what can be said about the complex question of meaning in relation to the torrent of newly developed sculptural forms? We know from the famous letter of Bernard of Clairvaux to William of St-Thierry that contemporaries 'read' the sculptural ornamentation of churches to the point of distraction. This metaphor of 'reading' in

images, rather than books, invests ‘marginal imagery with the time and space of meaning’, as Michael Camille noted.²¹ The Romanesque sculpture of the Fens mostly consists of complex geometric forms, foliage, animal imagery, and human heads: not narrative images *per se*, but condensed signs. From a general point of view, placement offers a clue to meaning. There is a consistency as to where this sculptural ornamentation is found — at liminal points and along the margins, that is at the juncture of hierarchical divisions of space: on portals, arcades, chancel arches, stringcourses and corbel tables. These architectural elements serve to frame both horizontal and vertical divisions of space, and by extension privilege the subjective experience of passage through the time/space continuum, from the secular to the sacred, from the present to the eternal.

The sculptural forms can be broken down into two major groups: organic representations — foliage, animals, humans; and geometric designs — chevron, bobbin, and cable mouldings. Within the first group, specific meaning can be suggested for the disembodied bestial and human heads employed on labels, corbels, and on the nook-shaft capital at Sutterton. Camille has noted the use of such features employed for apotropaic purposes, warding off evil for the protection of those beyond the designated boundary signified by the sign.²² Thus they watch as guardians of the threshold and of the inner sanctum of the parish church. The royal head at the apex of the arch at Sutterton possibly allows a more explicit, spiritual interpretation. If read as a representation of Christ the king, this corbel figure may represent a lapidary translation of Paul’s teaching to the Ephesians. Peter Low has recently demonstrated the importance of Ephesians 2:11–22 for the Romanesque portal at Vézelay.²³ In his letter, Paul reminds the Gentiles that they were once ‘separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise’, but through the blood of Christ those ‘who once were far off have been brought near’ and now have ‘access in one Spirit to the Father’.²⁴ The spiritual transition between separation from and inclusion in the temple of the Lord is emphatically emphasized: ‘So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, *Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone*, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.’²⁵ This metaphor of Christ as the stone which joins together the spiritual foundations of the holy temple of the Lord is literally represented in the keystone, which joins together the voussoirs of the portal arch of the church at Sutterton. By passing underneath his visage and into the church, the parishioners, in what one might call a phenomenological meta-ritual of habit, separate themselves from their diurnal experience and metaphysically incorporate themselves within the house of God, stepping through the time/space *limes* of the portal and into the eternal, holy temple.

But organic, naturalistic representations are not the only means by which ritual meaning was assigned to liminal spaces. The mere application of prolific ornamentation, particularly as reserved for Romanesque doorways, suggests that great value was attached to portal spaces.²⁶ The significance of doorways as sites of transitional ritual has long been recognized.²⁷ Doors are inherently liminal, separating the exterior from the interior, setting off the temporal world from the eternal. Christ himself imparted metaphorical significance to portals when he said, ‘I am the door; if any one enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find green pasture’.²⁸ From a ceremonial perspective this is corroborated by the rituals of posting marriage banns, churching, and the blessing of the

palms for Palm Sunday, all carried out at church portals.²⁹ Just as the Greeks set off their temples from the earth by a raised stylobate and the Romans their temples by an even higher podium, so the churches of the Romanesque period were distinguished from the natural world by doorways surrounded by multiple orders of nook-shafts or intricate patterns of abstract designs. The use of elaborate, brightly painted, geometric motifs around 12th-century portals can be seen as a stark foil to the natural world, seeking to contrast to the greatest extent possible that which is without from that which is within; another facet of that tendency of Romanesque sculpture, in the Fens as elsewhere, to coalesce at points of transition.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the support of the office of the Dean of the College, Drury University, in providing funds for my participation in this conference. Much of the field research for this article was conducted during the spring of 2001 with the assistance of a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities (Washington, DC). I would also like to thank the British Academy and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (London) for their support of the *Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture in Britain and Ireland* (www.crsbi.ac.uk) for which the fieldwork for this article was undertaken in the first place. For their generous hospitality and companionship on visits to church sites I am grateful to Dr Michael O'Connor, whose knowledge of stone runs deep, Peter and Norma Green, Helen Hooper, and Linda Tilbury. My appreciation also goes to Professor Dyan Elliott for her assistance with material regarding churching and banns and Professor Rebecca Miller for technical assistance in creating Fig. 1. Finally, I would like to dedicate this article to Professor George Zarnecki; without his invitation to join the CRSBI research team back in 1990 and his continuing support over many years of field research, this article would not have been possible.

NOTES

1. H. C. Darby, *The Medieval Fenland* (Cambridge 1940); M. W. Barley, *Lincolnshire and the Fens* (London 1952, reprinted 1972).
2. H. C. Darby, *The Draining of the Fens* (Cambridge 1956, reprinted 1968); W. H. Wheeler, *A History of the Fens of South Lincolnshire* (Boston/London 1897).
3. N. Pevsner and J. Harris, revised by N. Antram, *Lincolnshire B/E*, 2nd edn (London 1989), 89.
4. H. Healey, 'An Iron Age salt-making site at Helpringham Fen', 1–19, and Healey, 'A medieval salt-making site at Bicker Haven', 82–101, in *Lincolnshire Salterns: Excavations at Helpringham, Holbeach St. Johns and Bicker Haven*, East Anglian Archaeology, 89 (1999); H. E. Hallam, 'Salt making in the Lincolnshire Fenland during the Middle Ages', *Lincolnshire Architectural and Archaeological Society Reports and Papers*, ns, 8 (1960), 85–112; also see Darby, *Medieval Fenland*, and Barley, *Lincolnshire*, sup. Note 1.
5. The statistics are derived from fieldwork I have undertaken in Lincolnshire since 1991 for the British Academy's database *The Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture in Britain and Ireland*. Completed site studies are being added to the database which can be accessed at www.crsbi.ac.uk. Unless otherwise noted, all sites mentioned in the main text are in the county of Lincolnshire.
6. In general, see D. Stocker and P. Everson, 'Rubbish recycled: a study of the re-use of stone in Lincolnshire', in *Stone: Quarrying and Building in England AD 43–1525*, ed. D. Parsons (Chichester 1990), 83–101. Though complete ensembles of architectural elements are less likely to be transported than individual elements it is not unknown for this to happen. The transporting and resetting of the entire 12th-century portal from the field-chapel at Scottlethorpe to the church of St Michael, Edenham, in the 1960s is a case in point; D. M. Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincolnshire* (Lincoln 1971, reprinted 1990), 7–8; T. Russo, 'Edenham, St. Michael', *The Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture in Britain and Ireland*, <http://www.crsbi.ac.uk/crsbi/frlisites.html> (9 January 2005).

7. Guthlac arrived in the fens c. 699 and King Ethelbald established a monastery in Guthlac's honour at Crowland in 716; VCH, *Lincolnshire*, II (London 1906), 105; D. Knowles and R. N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses in England and Wales* (Cambridge 1971), 63.
8. P. Everson and D. Stocker, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, V, *Lincolnshire* (Oxford 1999), passim; Bicker, Burton Pedwardine, Crowland Abbey, Dowsby, Gosberton, Ewerby, Great Hale, Howell, Kirby Laythorpe, Market Deeping, Sempringham, Sleaford, South Kyme, and Whaplode.
9. Everson and Stocker, *CASS, Lincolnshire*, 170–72, illus. 185–86.
10. Barley, *Lincolnshire and the Fens*, 43.
11. Darby, *Medieval Fenland*, 26–27, fig. 7.
12. Darby, *Medieval Fenland*, 31.
13. Darby, *Medieval Fenland*, 37–42, fig. 8; Healey, 'Medieval salt-making site', fig. 57.
14. VCH, *Lincolnshire*, II, 128–29, 177–78.
15. The word 'harpy' derives from the Greek *ārpazo*, to seize; on the use of harpy imagery, see S. Cohen, 'Andrea del Sarto's monsters: the Madonna of the harpies and human-animal hybrids in the Renaissance', *Apollo* (July 2004), 40–42.
16. This raises the important question of workshop connections between Lincoln and the parishes, a subject that needs a fuller treatment than current space allows.
17. Lincolnshire Archives, Document Ref. SHER 8/2.
18. *Associated Architectural Societies' Reports and Papers*, XXII, Pt II (1894), lxxv.
19. A corbel of a human head holding a similar cylindrical object in its mouth can be found at in the Cambridgeshire fens at Ely Cathedral on the south transept, east clerestory, bay 1, corbel 3; see R. Baxter, 'Ely Cathedral', *The Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture in Britain and Ireland*, <http://www.crsbi.ac.uk/crsbi/frcasites.html> (11 January 2005).
20. E. Ekwell, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names* (Oxford, Clarendon 1974).
21. M. Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (Chicago 1992), 62. Bernard's letter was written at some point between 1121 and 1125 to the Benedictine abbot, William of St-Thierry. See C. Holdsworth, 'The early writings of Bernard of Clairvaux', *Cîteaux*, XLV (1994), 21–60.
22. Camille cites the northern Celtic custom of worshipping decapitated heads and the medieval Latin poem, *Ysengrimus*, written c. 1150 by a monk of Ghent, which describes placing an animal head over a door for protection. Camille, *Image on the Edge*, 72.
23. P. Low, "'You who once were far off': enlivening sculpture in the main portal at Vézelay,' *Art Bulletin*, 85 (2003), 469–89.
24. Ephesians 2:11–18; the translation used is H. May and B Metzger ed., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* (New York, Oxford University Press 1977).
25. Ephesians 2:19–22. In his translation, Low offers 'keystone' as an alternative to 'cornerstone' which would make the Sutterton sculpture an even more literal rendition of the passage; Low, 473.
26. Just how precisely meaning can be assigned to such abstract designs is an open question; see R. Wood, 'Geometric patterns in English Romanesque sculpture', *JBAA*, 154 (2001), 1–39.
27. A. Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago 1960), 20–21.
28. John 10:9.
29. See W. Von Arx, 'The churching of women after childbirth', in *Liturgy and Human Passage*, ed. D. Power and L. Maldonado (New York 1979), 63–72; G. Gibson, 'Blessing from sun and moon: churching as women's theater', in *Bodies and Disciplines: Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. B. Hanawalt and D. Wallace (Minneapolis 1996), 139–54; B. Deimling, 'Medieval church portals and their importance in the history of law', in *Romanesque*, ed. R. Toman (Köln 1997), 324–27; for the Palm Sunday ritual, described in detail by Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, in his *Decretals* written c. 1077; see D. Knowles and C. Brooke ed., *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, rev. edn (Oxford 2002), 35–41.

Investment in Local Church Fabric in the Lincolnshire Fenlands c. 1150–c. 1250: Moulton and Whaplode

DUNCAN GIVANS

Church construction in the English Fenlands c. 1150–c. 1250 marks the last major phase of a great rebuilding of local churches that had begun a century or so earlier. The relative intensity and ambition of these projects reflect not only the wealth of Fenland parishes but their ability to commission leading masons who were concerned to experiment with the new Gothic style. The rebuilding in the Fenlands also corresponds to the period in which the parochial system was finally crystallizing into the form it would retain until the 19th century, and to a period in which consistent evidence first emerges for the interventions of parishioners in the life of local churches. The following account focuses on Moulton and Whaplode, two neighbouring parishes in the Lincolnshire Fenlands in which the rival Benedictine houses of Spalding and Crowland had significant interests. Together they offer a useful prism through which to begin a wider study of investment in church fabric that it is hoped will reveal evidence for the attitudes of monastic houses and lay lords towards their ecclesiastical property, and, by extension, how responsibility for the care of church fabric was apportioned between patrons and parishioners.

THE churches at Moulton and Whaplode are sufficiently large and impressive to be assured a place in the top tier of English local churches.¹ While both were the subject of alterations during subsequent centuries, the form and ambition of each was defined by work completed in the early 13th century. The century between c. 1150 and c. 1250 was one of intensive construction in the Fenlands, the scale of which suggests it formed the regional climax in a great rebuilding of churches whose origins might be sought in 10th-century continental Europe, but in England was most active in the period c. 1050–c. 1150.² Significant work from the first half of the 12th century survives in some Fenland churches, such as St Margaret's, King's Lynn and West Walton in Norfolk,³ and Whaplode and Bicker in Lincolnshire. However, a combination of factors suggests these buildings initiated rather than brought to a conclusion the most concentrated period of construction.⁴ The intensity of subsequent activity is both singular and remarkable in itself, and in relation to the available evidence for earlier work. Notwithstanding the fenland grave covers, there is also a lack of evidence for 11th-century stone fabric in local churches on the actual Fens, and most of the earliest post-Conquest work leans towards dates in the second quarter of the 12th century.⁵ Of 34 churches serving parishes in the Fenlands bordering The Wash between King's Lynn and Boston, 28 preserve work datable to c. 1150–c. 1250, and such was the

momentum gained that projects were underway at 16 sites *c.* 1180–*c.* 1210 (Table 1).⁶ This competitive spirit is the same phenomenon observed by Rodulf Glaber in Burgundy *c.* 1000 and given the value of Fenland churches, the ambition of the projects is not surprising.⁷

Towers are the most visible means by which competition in church building was engaged across a flat landscape, and on Fenland soils they are striking statements of ambition and competence.⁸ It is, however, the long aisled naves that mark the most consistent and distinctive quality of Fenland churches from this period.⁹ Over two-thirds of the 34 buildings noted above have arcades of between five and seven bays. Most of the remainder have arcades of four bays, which is ambitious enough for a local church, and in a clear majority of cases the visible fabric demonstrates that the extent of the nave was determined before *c.* 1250 (Table 2). These naves reflect the value of the extensive and increasingly productive tracts of land of which Fenland parishes were composed.¹⁰ Although somewhat later, the 1291 ecclesiastical taxation assessments offer bench-marks against which to make comparisons: Moulton was assessed at £53 6s. 8d., the vicarage at £33 6s. 8d., and the pension to Spalding Priory at £4; Whaplode was assessed at £73 6s. 8d. and the vicarage at £20. These figures are typical of many Fenland parishes and while some parishes in other parts of the country yielded similar sums, across many fertile and affluent areas of England, such as Northamptonshire, the average assessed value of a parish in 1291 was of the order of £11.¹¹

Such valuable property demanded careful protection, and building a church was one means of asserting or claiming possession and occupation. Scholars have long recognized the distinction between the control of ecclesiastical incomes from parishes, the right of advowson, and the care of souls, and to these should be added the construction of churches. A church as a foundation, its incomes, and the power to bestow these were understood as distinct categories of property and the care of souls was an

TABLE I
Churches with work datable to *c.* 1150–*c.* 1250
Sites in bold italics have work datable to c. 1180–c. 1220

Location	County	Location	County
<i>King's Lynn, St Margaret</i>	Norfolk	<i>Kirton-in-Holland</i>	Lincolnshire
King's Lynn, St Nicholas	Norfolk	<i>Long Sutton</i>	Lincolnshire
<i>Terrington St Clement</i>	Norfolk	<i>Moulton</i>	Lincolnshire
<i>Tilney All Saints</i>	Norfolk	<i>Pinchbeck</i>	Lincolnshire
West Lynn	Norfolk	Quadrang	Lincolnshire
West Walton	Norfolk	Skirbeck	Lincolnshire
<i>Algakirk</i>	Lincolnshire	Spalding, St Thomas	Lincolnshire
Bicker	Lincolnshire	<i>Surfleet</i>	Lincolnshire
Donington	Lincolnshire	<i>Sutterton</i>	Lincolnshire
Fishtoft	Lincolnshire	<i>Tydd St Mary</i>	Lincolnshire
<i>Frampton</i>	Lincolnshire	<i>Weston</i>	Lincolnshire
<i>Freiston</i>	Lincolnshire	<i>Whaplode</i>	Lincolnshire
Gedney	Lincolnshire	<i>Wigtoft</i>	Lincolnshire
Gosberton	Lincolnshire	Wyberton	Lincolnshire

TABLE 2
Nave arcades
Sites in bold italics have arcades, or evidence for arcades datable to c. 1150–c. 1250

	Location	No. Bays	Approx. earliest date of arcade
Norfolk	Clenchwarton	0	-
	King's Lynn, St Margaret	5	13th century (bases)
	King's Lynn, St Nicholas	11	15th century
	Terrington St Clements	7?	13th century (crossing pier only)
	Tilney All Saints	7	12th century
	Walpole St Andrew	4	15th century
	Walpole St Peter	7	14th century
	West Lynn	0	-
	West Walton	6	13th century
	Lincolnshire	Algarkirk	5
Bicker		>2	12th century
Boston		7	14th century
Donington		7	15th century
Fishtoft		5	13th century
Frampton		5	12th century
Freiston (priory church nave)		9	12th century
Gedney		6	14th century
Gosberton		4	15th century
Holbeach		7	14th century
Kirton-in-Holland		6	13th century
Long Sutton		7	12th century
Moulton		6	12th century
Pinchbeck		5	12th century
Quadring		4	15th century
Skirbeck		6	13th century
Spalding, Sts Mary & Nicholas		4	13th century
Surfleet		4	12th century
Sutterton		5	12th century
Swineshead		6	14th century
Tydd St Mary		5	12th century
Weston		5	12th century
Whaplode	7 (4+3)	12th century	
Wigtoft	4	14th century	
Wyberton	5	13th century	

added obligation. The church structure itself stood in relation to both. Pastoral care depended on the provision and support of a competent and committed priest. The construction of a church or chapel was also essential to the provision of pastoral care, as is illustrated by pleas for and the provision of chapels of ease to serve remote populations.¹² However, in many respects a church constituted a form of landed property and there is little evidence to suggest that in purely economic terms incomes from

patronage over them were treated differently from those derived from other forms of property.¹³ Indeed, the identity of a local church as property was such that where questions of title and advowson were at stake cases belonged to the king's court, while questions such as pensions and vicarages fell under the bishop's jurisdiction.¹⁴ As a result, investment in church building can be seen in part as an act of lordship, and church building should, therefore, be viewed in terms of proprietorial and predatory lordship.¹⁵ In this respect building a church that reflected its value was not only an effective means to honour God and the patron saint, but was a commitment to possession, an act of lordship that could tolerate no rival. On a frontier with marshland and the sea, in which boundaries were fluid and opportunities plentiful, defence of property needed to be vigorous.

It is widely acknowledged that up to the 12th century local churches were built by the patron of the benefice, for whom the status and value of a church were naturally crucial in motivating potential investment.¹⁶ While status was rooted in tradition, a patron might embark on a building project in order to assert possession, just as he might increase the value of a church's endowments to benefit himself or a cleric that he presented.¹⁷ Other factors motivating investment relate to the nature of a patron's other interests in the parish, and in neighbouring parishes, and relationships between the patron and other lordly parties in the surrounding area. However, in addition to the action of patrons, the long naves of Fenland churches may also reflect a contribution by parishioners, in particular the sokemen who accounted for about 30% of the population in the south-east Lincolnshire Fens.¹⁸

A growing body of evidence attests to local action in church construction and maintenance prior to *c.* 1220, though it is only from around this date that evidence builds for a division of responsibilities between patron and parish.¹⁹ In cases such as Moulton and Whaplode, the action of parishioners could only have been undertaken in consort with the patron, but it might have been welcomed for reasons in addition to the simple relief of costs and the benefits of co-operation.²⁰ Sokemen did not pose a threat to a patron's rights as might a rival lord with a potential interest in either carving out a new parish or, as was more likely by the middle of the 12th century, wresting control of the church. For sokemen the church serving the parish in which their land was situated, where their children were baptized and they were buried, must have had an importance quite separate from the questions of property that concerned patrons. Indeed, such participation by sokemen may mark the kind of co-operation that eventually led to a formal division of responsibilities in local churches between the parish and the patron. It is against this background that the construction of the churches at Whaplode and Moulton must be set.

THE CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS, MOULTON

JOHN the Spaniard, prior of Spalding, instigated the construction of a church at Moulton, probably during the reign of Richard I (1189–99).²¹ The church consisted of a chancel and aisled nave of six bays, the latter built in an early Gothic style with lingering Romanesque qualities (Figs 1 and 2).²² Of the chancel only the modest sedilia were retained in later rebuilding, but most of the fabric of the nave is intact. Blind arcades on the exterior of the nave clerestory survived the insertion of late Gothic windows and differences between the two sides indicate experimentation during the



FIG. 1. All Saints, Moulton (Lincolnshire): interior nave from west
Duncan Givans



FIG. 2. All Saints, Moulton (Lincolnshire): south nave arcade from east
Duncan Givans

process of construction. On the south side between each of the middle three windows a single round arch with a roll and hollow is set on clustered triple shafts with nascent stiff-leaf capitals. Between the westernmost pair of windows a single, slightly pointed arch presses hard against a buttress. On the north side three pointed arches with a roll and hollow and bell capitals set on a shaft survive between each of the windows.

Inside, the piers and responds of the late-12th-century arcades survive essentially unmolested.²³ The arches were all renewed. The responds all have a thick major shaft flanked by minor shafts with a keel profile. The second and fourth pairs of piers are circular with thick engaged shafts set on the cardinal axes, while the first pair of piers is formed from these shafts fused together and slender quadrants set in the angles. The third pair consists of simple columnar piers, the northern of which has a moulded capital without the foliate ornament found on the other capitals. The westernmost bay is treated independently and is divided from the rest of the arcade by a substantial engaged shaft with a foliate capital set to the nave that rises around one and a half times the height of the piers.²⁴ A tower embraced by the aisles was probably never attempted, but one may have been built at the west end of the church, where a Perpendicular tower is now situated.²⁵ The nave is rounded off by a south portal of two orders, and a north portal, single-ordered and slightly more advanced stylistically.

The variety and distribution of foliage on the capitals raises questions about the process of construction and the willingness of masons to experiment during that process. Together, the capitals illustrate an embryology of stiff-leaf forms from the relatively compressed to a budding plumpness close to true stiff-leaf, while on the two piers at the eastern end of the south arcade ample leaves are interspersed with Romanesque head forms. The various types of foliage have a vibrant, experimental quality, born out of the attempt to master the stiff-leaf capital of the new Gothic style, an experimental verve also seen in the mouldings of the portals. Whether the capitals were carved *ex situ* or *in situ* cannot be addressed here, but the distribution of foliate and other forms on the capitals lacks 'logical' development in any one direction, suggesting that the masons felt no need to obscure this experimentation or to give it spatial particularity.

THE CHURCH OF ST MARY, WHAPLODE

A two-cell church with an aisled nave of four bays typical of an ambitious class of Romanesque local church found in most regions of England was standing at Whaplode by *c.* 1170 (Figs 3 and 4).²⁶ A date range of *c.* 1140–*c.* 1170 is suggested by the character of the piers, the scallop capital forms and other decorative details, and the absence of forms indicative of a later date, such as are seen at Walsoken (Cambridgeshire).²⁷ By *c.* 1190 a project to expand the nave three bays westward was begun, and a tower was built abutting the eastern bay of the nave south aisle. A chapel, subsequently dismantled, was added early in the 13th century on the north side of the chancel in a confident Early English Gothic style. As at Moulton, the date of this phase is fixed by its lingering Romanesque qualities and the increasing confidence with which the Gothic forms assert themselves.

On the exterior of the nave, the clerestory survives from both campaigns. It follows the same scheme on both sides and is unaltered on the north side, while to the south side it is broken by late Gothic windows. The earlier work is regular, with single arches divided by a section of wall, a window set in every third arch, and the whole



FIG. 3. St Mary, Whaplode (Lincolnshire):
interior nave from west
Duncan Givans



FIG. 4. St Mary, Whaplode (Lincolnshire):
south nave arcade, responds joining the two
campaigns at the fourth pier
Duncan Givans

bound by a continuous hood-mould hyphenated over the gaps. All the arches are chamfered, as are the jambs of the blind arcades, while the windows have shafts and scallop capitals. The form of the windows is repeated internally. The later work has a continuous arcade, the windows divided by four and then three arches, with two additional arches at either end. The arches are chamfered and set with shafts and bell capitals, and the whole bound by a simple hood-mould. The form of these windows is also repeated internally.

Inside, the mid-12th-century Romanesque work is mature and confident. The chancel arch preserves motifs such as frontal chevron and lozenges and the nave arcades have three distinct pairs of piers: a square pier formed from eight thick shafts, with the shafts on the corners thinner than those in between; a plain columnar pier; and a plain octagonal pier. Each has a capital with multiple scallops. The responds have a major shaft flanked by minor shafts. The arches are of two orders with small chamfers and a half roll on the soffit. A blind roundel is set in each spandrel. The four piers of the later extension are of a common type, formed from a cluster of four shafts set on the cardinal angles, while the responds are of a similar cluster of three shafts. The arches are of two simple orders with chamfers. Each pier and respond is differentiated by its capital, with a trumpet form on the north-eastern respond and various essays pursuant of stiff-leaf across the rest of the work reaching greatest maturity on the south-east respond. The character of the various foliate forms is related to and slightly in advance of those at Moulton and, as at Moulton, the distribution suggests a vigorous experimentation with stiff-leaf forms.²⁸ There is a sense of development between the north and south arcades, but this is quite general and the progression does not reveal a 'logical' process from pier to pier.

The three nave portals have foliate capitals and roll and hollow mouldings that illustrate a developing confidence and fluency in Gothic running from north to south to west, the latter being flanked by a pair of matching niches. The tower was built in tandem with the nave extension.²⁹ Three stages survive, each with blind arcading: the bell stage was replaced in the 14th century. The lowest, with frontal chevron set on narrow pointed arches and bell capitals, dates to the earliest phase of the nave extension, while the upper two stages have the roll and hollow mouldings seen in the portals.

CHURCH BUILDING AT MOULTON AND WHAPLODE

THE pier and capital forms, and the variety of other decorative motifs used in the mid-12th-century work at Whaplode, are broadly comparable with Romanesque work at Bicker, Pinchbeck, Freiston and Long Sutton.³⁰ Amongst great churches, a comparison has been drawn with work at Peterborough,³¹ and similar forms of frontal chevron can be seen in the surviving fabric and fragments at Crowland. The work begun at Moulton and Whaplode in the later 12th century is closely related, and also shares a close affinity with fabric at many other Fenland sites including Weston, Sutterton and Frampton. In this work, although something of the muscularity of Romanesque architecture remains, it is mitigated by a reduced reliance on geometric surface ornament and an active engagement with types of foliage and mouldings more characteristic of early Gothic. The development of Gothic pier forms has also been noted and the logical distribution in pairs of the various pier forms, and use of keeled shafts on the arcade responds, reveal a mastery of the idiom.³² Features, such as the clerestory forms at Moulton, do show a consistent development between north and

south elevations, though this should be set against the early and experimental character of the capitals across the arcades, whose results are more randomly distributed. Ultimately, Moulton and Whaplode stand at a particular moment in the local assimilation of Gothic forms. Features such as the elegant detached shafts and delicate mouldings seen at West Walton and Wyberton, were as then unknown. Rather, each building offered masons a chance to grapple with the new forms available, and irrespective of the process of construction, the quality of the work is testimony to an active engagement with new modes of expression and not a reflection of masons aping novelties that they do not grasp.

The churches at Moulton and Whaplode served neighbouring parishes, closely comparable in terms of geography, economy and land tenure. Typical of Fenland parishes in being large when compared to those in less marshy parts of eastern England, both had developed as relatively thin stretches of land running north-south, from the shifting boundary of The Wash to the Cambridgeshire border. As in most large parishes there were several settlements, both permanent and seasonal, and like other parishes on the southern shore of The Wash, the main settlement and the church were located close to a line drawn between Spalding and King's Lynn. Consequently the villages and churches of Moulton and Whaplode are only a mile apart across the Fen, making a degree of competition perhaps even more inevitable than was normally the case between parishes and church builders. However, other factors both within each parish and also between the two, give the process at Moulton and Whaplode added dimensions.

In both Moulton and Whaplode land tenure was divided, with significant estates held by lay and monastic lords, and in both the estate held by a monastic house had interests in the church. The two estates at Moulton recorded in Domesday were both assessed with land in Weston, which lies between Moulton and Spalding.³³ The first was held by Ivo of Taillebois (died *c.* 1093) who, as a figure instrumental in the evolution of Spalding Priory during the post-Conquest era, probably established the priory's interests there.³⁴ Ivo's successors also retained land within the parish. The second Domesday estate, assessed in the lordship of Guy de Craon, was in fee to the de Moulton family by the earlier 12th century, and it was they who built the moated residence about a mile south of the main settlement in Moulton that is recorded in 1215/16.³⁵ Spalding Priory's possession of the church was established by late in the second quarter of the 12th century and between 1149 and 1156 it was appropriated to the priory.³⁶ They enjoyed apparently unchallenged control of the church and although there was some tension with the de Moulton family during the late 1190s, that was in respect of the church at Weston, and there is no reason to attribute the work at Moulton to any party other than Spalding Priory.³⁷

By the 1190s, thousands of churches had been gifted to monasteries by secular lords, in part for spiritual reasons and in part because it was seen as inappropriate for laymen to hold and control large numbers of churches.³⁸ Monasteries are often seen by architectural historians as great builders of local churches, though this usually gets no further than an anecdotal observation in respect of a grand and usually high status local church in the gift of a monastery.³⁹ By contrast, church historians have highlighted the neglect by monasteries of obligations to provide for pastoral care in favour of exploiting parochial incomes.⁴⁰ While the reputation of monks as negligent pastors and pecuniary-minded patrons is generally well deserved, we have seen a distinction must be maintained between pastoral care, the exploitation of incomes and rights of presentation, and the construction of churches. Monasteries could make use of the

opportunities to bestow benefices, but for them the diversion of incomes for the institution's needs was of greater significance. Hence, monasteries systematically appropriated churches in their gift, and were criticized for neglecting to appoint suitable priests and providing for them.⁴¹ Indeed, although the economic aspect of ecclesiastical property in monastic hands has not been widely studied,⁴² the extent to which monasteries depended on incomes from their 'spiritualities' is striking. This is set in stark relief by the position of Crowland Abbey as assessed in the 1291 ecclesiastical taxation, when spiritualities accounted for 37% of the abbey's assessment.⁴³ Monasteries could be great builders where doing so protected, served, and extended their interests, and as such, the construction of local churches by monasteries can legitimately be looked at in terms of property. In this monasteries acted like other lords defending, exercising and exploiting their patrimony in pursuit of income for itself, for the service of God and their patron saints, as well as to provide for the possible redemption of souls in the parishes. The church at Moulton presents a good example of what they were capable of commissioning.

Differences between the work at Moulton and Weston suggest that the former is the earlier, and we may speculate that Spalding began with Moulton and, having successfully defended their rights to the church at Weston, then started work there in order to assert possession and to match or exceed the standard established at Moulton. In respect of the latter we should entertain the prospect that in both places the resident population supported the construction work, both out of a sense of local pride and in rivalry with neighbouring Fenland parishes also engaged in building or rebuilding their parish churches at around the same time. Twenty-six sokemen are recorded in Domesday on the estates of Ivo of Taillebois at Moulton and Weston, the estates that formed the core of the priory's interests there.⁴⁴ As was noted above, the long naves of the Fenland churches may reflect in part the contribution of such communities of sokemen, a contribution likely to have been welcomed by a monastic patron keen to manage costs.

At Whaplode, the Domesday estate of Crowland Abbey was assessed in conjunction with land in Holbeach to the east, as were those of Guy de Craon and Count Alan, some of whose land was given over to the king.⁴⁵ This pattern of tenure and the close relationship with land in Holbeach, persisted throughout the Middle Ages, but the most important estate in terms of the present discussion was that which passed to the d'Oyry family, since they controlled the church.⁴⁶ The earliest reference to the d'Oyrys at Whaplode is from the 1150s when Emecina gifted the church to Crowland Abbey, the donation acknowledging the rights of her son, Baldwin d'Oyry, the incumbent, during his lifetime.⁴⁷ Emecina's title to the church was never questioned, though some of her descendants claimed she had no right to give it away, and members of the d'Oyry family continued to exercise rights and enjoy benefits in the face of efforts by Crowland to take possession.⁴⁸ A settlement agreed between 1186 and 1192 promised Crowland sole rights to the church after the death of the brothers Fulk and Geoffrey d'Oyry, who held the vicarage, termed a rectory in some documents, and of a chaplain named Hugh, with each man paying 100 shillings annually to Crowland.⁴⁹ This agreement was, however modified and arguments continued into the 1230s after which the abbey gained the upper hand.⁵⁰ The church was finally appropriated by Crowland in 1267 or 1268, though in 1294 the abbot still had to buy the quitclaim of Robert de Hakebeth, to whom the d'Oyry estates in Whaplode had passed by marriage.⁵¹

This evidence indicates that the d'Oyry family exercised effective control over the church at Whaplode between *c.* 1150 and *c.* 1230 and that they funded and directed

the construction of the Romanesque and the early Gothic church there. It is also clear that for the d'Oyrys and their successors the main concern was to ensure that members of the family and other followers benefited from the living, and this can also be seen in the complex and even more protracted dispute between the d'Oyrys and Crowland over the church at Gedney, which Emecina had given to the monks in addition to Whaplode.⁵² Indeed, the ability to bestow livings was probably the principal value of local churches for lordly families, and it was this that had to be balanced against the spiritual and social value of gifting such churches to monasteries.⁵³

The litigious nature of the relationship between the d'Oyry family and Crowland Abbey makes co-operation over building work unlikely. Furthermore, the mid-12th-century building was initiated around the time of the confirmation of the life-time rights of Baldwin d'Oyry following the gift to Crowland, while the late-12th-century nave extension is similarly contemporary with the confirmation of the life-time rights of Hugh the chaplain and of the d'Oyry brothers then holding the vicarage or rectory. The contribution of sokemen, a potential source of co-operation for work at Moulton, should not be discounted entirely, even though they are not prominent in the records for Whaplode, as potentially significant populations of sokemen were not recorded consistently in Domesday.⁵⁴ In any event, the first church with a four bay nave, and the tower and nave extension, can both be seen as an assertion of possession by the d'Oyrys, as well as a response to the competitive standards in church building set in neighbouring parishes.

What is at issue at Whaplode is the value attached to the church by its lay donors and monastic patrons. Income clearly mattered to both parties. However, it probably mattered more for Crowland, and for a monastery income could only be maximized if it controlled the benefice. For the d'Oyrys, as for other lordly families, the value was probably concentrated in patronage, and the original gift may have been made on the tacit understanding that the benefice would continue to be enjoyed by members of the d'Oyry family or their affinity. This was certainly the case with the initial gift, and with what might be described as the compromise of c. 1190, which assured the position of the d'Oyry appointees and guaranteed Crowland £15 per year. It is also noteworthy that, shortly before fighting off the last challenge in 1294, Crowland cut the value of the vicarage established in 1268 by 50%.⁵⁵ Care of souls was apparently not a priority for either group.

Whether the potential correspondence between building work at Whaplode and a clarification of the relationship between its donor and monastic patron is part of a more general background to parish church building must await further research. It is, however, possible to advance an interpretation of Whaplode and Moulton that may be tested in such research, and that sets the work there in the context of contemporary circumstances worthy of note. The late-12th-century work at Moulton and Whaplode coincides with a famous and particularly virulent episode in the rarely fraternal relationship between Spalding Priory and Crowland Abbey. In May 1189 the abbot of Crowland closed tracts of fenland to the north and east of Crowland, claiming rights derived from the foundation of the abbey in the 8th century.⁵⁶ His stated purpose was to prevent overgrazing. The parishes of Moulton and Whaplode both border these tracts of fen. In response large number of men from the region, who also claimed traditional grazing rights, occupied the disputed area on the initiative of the prior of Spalding. The situation rapidly became enflamed. Disputes over grazing in the Fenlands were common in this period, but this particular dispute, which endured well into the 13th century, was remarkable for its rancour and for the weight attached to

it by Crowland's chronicler.⁵⁷ It would be nonsensical to suggest that any of the interested parties viewed church building at Moulton by the prior of Spalding, or at Whaplode by the d'Oyrys as directly relevant to the events set in train during the spring of 1189. However, it is against the background of a spiteful and violent grazing dispute, as well as the magnificent translation in 1196 of the relics of St Gulthac to his new shrine in Crowland Abbey, that work on the churches at Moulton and Whaplode must be set. If we accept that work at Moulton was initiated as a part of the prior of Spalding's assertion of his power and presence in the area, and potentially undertaken with contributions from the sokemen of the parish, and that the d'Oyrys at Whaplode responded to this and other local projects out of competitive pride, then the abbot of Crowland's pursuit of his rights at Whaplode must have been motivated by a need to maintain the initiative in an acutely competitive environment. Church building as a function of lordship needs to be taken as seriously as any other class of action, including those taken in respect of tracts of marshy pasture, ablaze, as they must have been in May 1189, with spring blooms, angry herdsmen and their grazing beasts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following: the various key holders of numerous parish churches and chapels in the Fenlands for permitting free access to the churches; Richard Plant for accompanying me during my fieldwork; the Boston Public Library; the University of Connecticut Library; the Massachusetts College of Art; John Goodall, Linda Monckton, Rachel Moss and John McNeill for keeping faith.

NOTES

1. N. Pevsner and J. Harris, *Lincolnshire B/E*, 2nd ed., rev. N. Antram (London 1989), 567–68 and 795–76. For an introduction to the hierarchy of 12th-century English local churches, see E. C. Fernie, *The Architecture of Norman England* (Oxford 2000), 219–32.

2. A classic introduction to the history of local churches in England is R. Morris, *Churches in the Landscape* (London 1989), esp. 140–48, but also chapters 3, 4, 6 and 7 *passim* for early foundations and the great rebuilding. Two important collections of essays that mark the breadth of scholarly approaches are J. Blair ed., *Minsters and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition 950–1200* (Oxford 1988); and J. Blair and C. Pyrah ed., *Church Archaeology: Research Directions for the Future* (York 1996). For the question of the great rebuilding in England, see R. D. H. Gem, 'The English parish church in the 11th and early 12th centuries: a great rebuilding?', in *Minsters and Parish Churches*, 21–30. For a review of the state of research of the early phase of this process and scholarly debate up to 1995/96, see E. Cambridge and D. Rollason, 'Debate: the pastoral organization of the Anglo-Saxon Church: a review of the "Minster Hypothesis"', *Early Medieval Europe*, 4 (1995), 45–66; J. Blair, 'Debate: ecclesiastical organization and pastoral care in Anglo-Saxon England', *Early Medieval Europe*, 4 (1995), 193–212; and D. M. Palliser, 'Review article: The "Minster Hypothesis": a case study', *Early Medieval Europe*, 5 (1996), 207–14. For a wider European context, see N. Hiscock ed., *The White Mantle of Churches: Architecture, Liturgy and Art around the Millennium* (Turnhout 2003).

3. A scallop capital, easily missed in the surrounding grandeur, is displayed on a ledge in the south aisle at West Walton.

4. This work may be seen as bridging the gap between the period of the great (re)building of local churches and the period of evolution that lasted through the rest of the Middle Ages. For the vigour of architectural work in 13th century local churches, see P. Draper, *The Formation of English Gothic: Architecture and Identity* (New Haven 2006), 175–95.

5. For Anglo-Saxon stonework now incorporated into Fenland sites which may, or may not, have originated there, see P. Everson and D. Stocker, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, V, *Lincolnshire*

(Oxford 1999). They note fourteen sites in or along the edges of the Lincolnshire fens, passim: Bicker, Burton Pedwardine, Crowland Abbey, Dowsby, Gosberton, Ewerby, Great Hale, Howell, Kirby Laythorpe, Market Deeping, Sempringham, Sleaford, South Kyme, and Whaplode. The nature and incidence of 11th-century Fenland grave covers is discussed in pp. 46–50.

6. This pattern is repeated if the area is extended into the rest of the Fenlands of Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. The remaining six churches, which were rebuilt during the later Middle Ages, are Clenchwarton, Walpole St Andrew and Walpole St Peter in Norfolk, and Holbeach, Swineshead and Boston in Lincolnshire. For church building in the Fenlands generally, see Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, 344–49.

7. Rodulfus Glaber, *The Five Books of the Histories*, ed. and trans. J. France (Oxford 1989), 114–17. The passage in question is the oft-quoted passage referring to the ‘white mantle of churches’.

8. Towers from the period c. 1150–c. 1250, or parts thereof, survive at King’s Lynn (St Margaret); King’s Lynn (St Nicholas); Tilney All Saints; West Walton; Long Sutton; Gedney; Whaplode; Algarkirk (rebuilt in 19th century); Sutterton (rebuilt in 19th century); Frampton. Every other church between King’s Lynn and Boston has a tower from later in the Middle Ages. Some of the towers have suffered from subsidence, the most striking examples being at Surfleet (14th century) and Quadring (14/15th century).

9. The length of the churches’ naves has been widely noted. See, for example, Pevsner and Wilson, *Norfolk 2: North-West and South B/E* (London 1999), 732.

10. H. C. Darby, *The Changing Fenland* (Cambridge 1983), 10–22.

11. The average total assessed value in 1291 for the 34 churches is £52 13s. 4d.; the median value is £50. Examples of total values in 1291 include (in ascending order): Wybeton £24; Bicker £30 13s. 4d.; Sutterton £50; Frampton £63 6s. 8d.; Pinchbeck £86 13s. 4d.; Long Sutton £156 13s. 4d. These figures are from the online *Taxatio Database*, <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/taxatio/>. For the Northamptonshire values, see Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, 284. In an effort to widen this sample I have made use of the online *Taxatio Database*, yielding similar results.

12. One of the earliest and most famous cases of construction undertaken in part at the request of the local population is from Whistley in Berkshire, built by the abbot of Abingdon and recorded by the Abingdon Chronicler. *Historia Ecclesie Abendonensis: The History of the Church of Abingdon*, ed. and trans. J. Hudson, 2 vols (Oxford 2002), II, 22–23. For the construction of chapels in Lincolnshire, see D. M. Owen, ‘Medieval chapels in Lincolnshire’, *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*, 10 (1975), 15–22, esp. 19 and 22. Up to the early 12th century construction of a chapel could result in the creation of a new parish or otherwise erode the rights of a mother church, though it should be stressed that this process was often one of co-operation not of conflict. By the 13th century there was still pressure for chapels to serve remote communities but many unlicensed chapels were also being built in lordly residences as a trapping of status.

13. S. Raban, *The Estates of Thorney and Crowland: A Study in Medieval Monastic Land Tenure* (Cambridge 1977), 80–81.

14. C. R. Cheney, *Hubert Walter* (London 1967), 8.

15. Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, 173–75.

16. Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, chapters 4–6 passim.

17. D. Dymond, ‘The parson’s glebe: stable, expanding or shrinking?’, in *East Anglia’s History: Studies in Honour of Norman Scarfe*, ed. C. Rawcliffe and R. G. Wilson (Woodbridge 2002), 73–91.

18. H. C. Darby, *The Domesday Geography of Eastern England*, 3rd edn (Cambridge 1971), 50. The proportion of sokemen in the Fens was lower than in some other parts of Lincolnshire, but of the simple head count in Domesday for villis between Spalding and the Norfolk border there were 71 sokemen (30%) and 238 villeins and bordars (70%). However, it should be noted that the sokemen were concentrated in returns for one estate in Holbeach and one in Moulton and Weston.

19. R. Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, 285–315 and chapter 7. Arguments based on archaeological, architectural and other historical evidence for the action of parishioners as early as c. 1100 have been put forward in D. Stocker and P. Everson, *Summoning St Michael: Early Romanesque Towers in Lincolnshire* (Oxford 2006), see esp. 74–75. Little documentary evidence has come down to us for the ways in which responsibility for the fabric of parish churches was divided up prior to the 13th century. The best evidence for 12th-century norms comes from northern France, as in the record of the decision regarding the maintenance of parish churches dependent on the priory of St-Vincent at Chaligny in the diocese of Toul. The bishop ruled that the patron (the abbot of Chaligny) was responsible for the walls and roofs of the body of the church and for providing such instruments as were necessary for the cult, including books and priestly vestments, the priest (appointed by the patron) was responsible for the restoration of the chancel, while the tower belonged to the parish. See M. Kupfer, *The Politics of Narrative: Romanesque Wall Painting in Central France* (New Haven 1993), 28–29. The problem with generalizing from this is that the bishop of Toul’s prescriptions are a response to a dispute — and relate to a particular set of local circumstances. They do, however, offer what might be regarded as a default position. In terms of the contribution of parishioners,

a distinction must be drawn between initiative and action: in the case of the chapel at Whistley, cited in note 12 above, the initiative attributable to the inhabitants was of limited impact until the abbot of Abingdon, unable to celebrate mass when staying at his manor there, acted. That the needs of the inhabitants are recorded by the chronicler suggests that they were of consequence, but not sufficient to actually elicit action from the patron.

20. For co-operation in village and parish communities, see S. Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe 900–1300*, 2nd edn (Oxford 1997), chapter 4, esp. 90–97.

21. W. Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, ed. J. Caley et al. (London 1817–30), III, 209.

22. Pevsner, *Lincolnshire B/E*, 567–68.

23. The nave arcade was raised during the 19th-century restoration.

24. This shaft is close in diameter to that of the circular nave piers.

25. A tower embraced by the aisles dating to c. 1180–c. 1220 survives at Frampton.

26. Pevsner, *Lincolnshire B/E*, 795–96. A fragment carved with chevron, which Pevsner suggests is 11th century, is probably from the mid-12th-century campaign, perhaps part of a portal.

27. For a date as early as c. 1130, see Pevsner, *Lincolnshire B/E*, 796. For a date of c. 1160–80, see Fernie, *Architecture of Norman England*, 228.

28. Pevsner, *Lincolnshire B/E*, 50 and 567.

29. That the mid-12th-century church had a tower cannot, as yet, be proven.

30. The date of Long Sutton is the subject of some tension between the character of much of the fabric and a document that refers to a donation for church building there c. 1180. Pevsner, *Lincolnshire B/E*, 535.

31. Pevsner, *Lincolnshire B/E*, 796.

32. For excellent introductions to the variety and development of pier forms in later Romanesque and early Gothic architecture in England, see L. Hoey, ‘Pier form and vertical wall articulation in English Romanesque architecture’, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 43 (1984), 258–83, and L. Hoey, ‘Pier alternation in early English Gothic architecture’, *JBAA*, 139 (1986), 45–67.

33. Domesday Book, Lincolnshire entries 14/99 and 57/53. *The Lincolnshire Domesday and the Lindsey Survey*, ed. C. W. Foster and T. Longley (Lincolnshire Record Society, 19, 1924), 89 and 184.

34. VCH *Lincolnshire*, II (London 1906), 118–19.

35. D. Roffe, ‘Moulton King’s Hall’, <http://www.roffe.co.uk/earthworks/castles/moulton.htm> at note 4.

36. *English Episcopal Acta I: Lincoln 1067–1185*, ed. D. M. Smith (London 1980), no. 248. The appropriation was for the benefit of the poor, travellers and the sick cared for by the monks.

37. Dugdale, *Monasticon*, III, 217, no. x. Weston church had been given to Spalding by the litigant, Thomas de Moulton, on the day he buried his father. The dispute was resolved in 1198 when Spalding’s rights were acknowledged by the same Thomas de Moulton. It is possible that the case arose from Spalding denying a de Moulton candidate the living at Weston and in retaliation they resorted to law. See also M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307*, 2nd edn (Oxford 1993), 156 and 259.

38. See, for example, M. Brett, *The English Church under Henry I* (Oxford 1975), 230–33.

39. There are many such comments in B/E volumes. See, for example, Pevsner, *Cambridgeshire B/E*, 362, in respect of Over, and Pevsner, *Lincolnshire B/E*, 305, in respect of Gedney. Such observations should be contrasted with the churches at Abbots Ripton, Broughton, Bury, Little Raveley, Upwood, Warboys and Wistow in the area of Huntingdonshire south-west of Ramsey that served parishes almost solely constituted from inland demesne estates of Ramsey Abbey. The quality of these buildings directly reflects the value of the church. Hence the work is very fine in the more valuable churches, but there is a lack of real ambition in the poorer parishes.

40. See, for example, B. R. Kemp, ‘Monastic possession of parish churches in England in the twelfth century’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 31 (1980), 133–60.

41. U. Rasche, ‘The early phase of appropriation of parish churches in medieval England’, *Journal of Medieval History*, 26 (2000), 213–37, esp. 231–37 for evidence from the diocese of Lincoln.

42. Raban, *Estates of Thorney and Crowland*, 80.

43. VCH *Lincolnshire*, II, 112 at note 95. Temporalities were assessed at just over £420 (63%) while the spiritualities accounted for over £250 (37%). A figure of between 10–20% may be a truer reflection of actual net incomes, see Raban, *Estates of Thorney and Crowland*, 80.

44. The total population assessed at Moulton and Weston was 26 sokemen, 31 villeins and 20 bordars. All but six of the villeins were on Ivo of Taillebois’ estates. Domesday Book, Lincolnshire entries 14/99 and 57/53. *Lincolnshire Domesday*, ed. Foster and Longley, 89 and 184.

45. Domesday Book, Lincolnshire entries 1/33, 11/1, 12/83, 12/84 and 57/50. *The Lincolnshire Domesday*, ed. Foster and Longley, 19, 60, 71 and 184.

46. K. Major, *The d’Oyryys of South Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Holderness 1130–1275* (Lincoln 1984), esp. 13–15 and Appendix I, nos 2–10.

47. *English Episcopal Acta I: Lincoln 1067–1185*, no. 102, and Major, *The d'Oyrys*, 46. Major contends that the gift must date from after 1150, while Smith suggests a date of 1148x1161. This is also the earliest reference to the church. Emecina's ancestry is not known, but she was wife successively of Geoffrey d'Oyry and Walter de Cantelu.

48. In a case before the king's court in 1230 Fulc d'Oyry claimed, amongst other things that because Emecina held the land in dower it was not hers to give to Crowland. *Curia Regis Rolls XIV: 14 to 17 Henry III (1230–1232)*, ed. C. T. Flower (London 1961), no. 169. See also Major, *The d'Oyrys*, 14.

49. *English Episcopal Acta IV: Lincoln 1186–1206*, ed. D. M. Smith (London 1986), no. 44.

50. Major, *The d'Oyrys*, 14–15. In 1238 the d'Oyrys obtained licence from Robert Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, to build a private household chapel on their land in Whaplode to which typically strict provisions were attached ensuring the parish church retained full rights over baptisms, marriages, burials and the celebrations of major feasts. *The Rolls of Robert Grosseteste and Henry Lexington, Bishops of Lincoln 1235–1259*, ed. F. N. Davis (Lincolnshire Record Society, 11, 1914), 25–6. See also Owen, 'Medieval Chapels in Lincolnshire', 22.

51. *The Rolls of Richard Gravesend, Bishop of Lincoln 1258–1279*, ed. F. N. Davis, C. W. Foster and A. Hamilton Thompson (Lincolnshire Record Society, 20, 1922), no. 33. The appropriation of the church was sealed in a deal with Richard Gravesend, bishop of Lincoln, by which Crowland surrendered the advowson of Sutton-le-Marsh, a village on the central Lincolnshire coast. The medieval church and much of the old village of Sutton has been lost to the sea. See *Lincolnshire B/E*, 732. In 1290 Robert de Hakebeth claimed the advowson and gave up his claim for 40 shillings, a modest sum given the value of the church. *VCH Lincolnshire*, II, 112, at notes 89–93.

52. Major, *The d'Oyrys*, 9–13.

53. For a general overview, see D. Crouch, *The Image of the Aristocracy in Britain 1000–1300* (London 1992), chapter 10, esp. 321–34. For a regional study, see H. M. Thomas, *Vassals, Heiresses, Crusaders and Thugs: The Gentry of Angevin Yorkshire 1154–1216* (Philadelphia 1993), chapter 5, esp. 136–37.

54. Domesday Lincolnshire entries list one sokeman out of 31 for Gedney, one in 32 for Holbeach, and 12 out of 84 for the sokeland in Whaplode and Holbeach belonging to Gedney. *The Lincolnshire Domesday*, 19 and 71. A portion of the combined estates at Whaplode and Holbeach assessed together in Domesday is sokeland, described as 'belonging to Gedney' but no population of sokemen is recorded, either at Whaplode or Gedney; 26 sokemen are recorded in lands assess solely at Holbeach. Domesday is obviously not a definitive source for the second half of the 12th century, but for there to be no sokemen at Whaplode and Gedney by this date would be truly remarkable given the well established free populations living in the other parishes along the south shore of The Wash. For unrecorded sokemen, see D. C. Douglas, *The Social Structure of Medieval East Anglia*, Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History IX, ed. P. Vinogradoff (Oxford 1927), 123.

55. This occurred in 1290 after the death of a papal nominee who had been enjoying the benefice. The agreement with Bishop Gravesend had apportioned 60 marks (£40) for the vicarage. The papal nominee, who presumably had been appointed during a vacancy of the abbacy of Crowland, had drawn 80 marks. *VCH Lincolnshire*, II, 112 at notes 91–93.

56. D. Roffe, 'On Middan Gyrwan Fenne: intercommoning around the island of Crowland', *Fenland Research*, 8 (1993), 80–86, esp. 80.

57. D. Roffe, 'On Middan Gyrwan Fenne', 80 and 84–85.

Medieval Choir Stalls in Parish Churches

DONALD O'CONNELL

A conference concerned with medieval King's Lynn and the Fens promised to be an ideal occasion on which to explore the somewhat neglected subject of choir stalls in parish churches. The area provides a good range of examples, and it seemed possible that one might be able to build on the pioneering work done by J. Charles Cox and Francis Bond early in the 20th century. This paper, whilst discussing a number of general problems, focuses on churches where the surviving material is sufficiently extensive that it might shed light on the variety of stallwork open to parishes of varying importance. It had also been hoped, more than in the event proved possible, to assess how changing attitudes to the provision of music in parish churches might have been reflected in the desirability, quantity and arrangement of parochial stalls. Nevertheless, some physical evidence has been reviewed. From an academic standpoint, the subject is in its infancy and this article is offered less in the expectation of providing answers, and more in the hope it will increase awareness of some of the problems involved, and encourage future research.

For ease of reference, the term 'classic stall' refers to stallwork with elaborately carved divisions between tip-up seats which are, in turn, provided with misericords — similar, in general terms, to that in most great churches. This format is to be distinguished from the provision of simple bench seating — albeit often furnished with good deskwork, especially on the lateral sides of the chancel — and, as will become evident, certain hybrid forms. The term 'import' refers to stallwork brought in and adapted for reuse in a parish church.

IMPORTED STALLS

A major problem in assessing the medieval provision of stalls in parish churches is that many medieval parish churches have fragments of classic stalls, sometimes quite extensive, which have almost certainly come from elsewhere. The evidence for this is usually archaeological. Only rarely is the date at which they were acquired, or their provenance, recorded. And, although inherently interesting works in their own right, sifting out imported stalls is essential if one is to form any view as to the medieval parish. St Mary, Tansor (Northamptonshire), with seven very finely carved and designed early-15th-century classic stalls, is one of very few cases where there is documentation that they were presented to the church, in this case early in the 17th century and with the collegiate church at Fotheringhay as the origin (Fig. 1).¹

In rather more cases there is simply a local legend that the stall fragments come from elsewhere (usually a monastic church). At East Lexham (Norfolk), for example, the bizarre spectacle of three high quality misericords mounted on a damaged stall inevitably invites scepticism (Fig. 2), and indeed it is locally said that the original woodwork comes from Castle Acre Priory — a perfectly plausible story given the similarity of the misericords to fragments in St James at Castle Acre. But in many cases there is not even a



FIG. 1. St Mary, Tansor (Northants): imported stalls

Donald O'Connell

local legend and it tends to be assumed that the stalls represent the remnants of parish provision. This may be the case, but often the date and quality of the work together with the modest size of the parish provokes suspicion. The appearance of what may be cut-down sections of great church stalls in parish churches is a phenomenon much in need of detailed research.

A particularly interesting example is St Mary and All Saints at Willingham (Cambridgeshire), where eleven classic stalls have been arranged in two lateral ranges with four return stalls set against the back of the rood screen, all of them mounted on a pierced stone base of a kind which could imply an acoustic chamber (Fig. 3). Much of the stallwork is 19th century but most of the lateral ranges look original (possibly 15th century) and the whole ensemble seems an attempt to produce a convincing parish appearance. However, as will become evident, the provision of classic stalls on the lateral sides seems to have been rare in parish churches, especially in such small towns, while the cutting and rearrangement suggest that the medieval remains were long ranges only, and longer than they are now. Furthermore, the medieval stalls (now lacking the misericords for which they were clearly designed) are relatively crudely carved and are of a distinctive, and slightly unusual, design. They are similar, but not exactly identical, to extensive stall remains at St Andrew, Soham (Cambridgeshire), mostly, again, lengthy ranges, and St Nicholas, Swineshead (Bedfordshire) — both of which preserve some crude misericords — as well as some fragments in a large and probably mostly imported collection at Tilney



FIG. 2. St Andrew, East Lexham (Norfolk):
recomposed chair

John McNeill

FIG. 3. St Mary and All Saints, Willingham
(Cambs): choir from east

Donald O'Connell



All Saints (Norfolk). All of the above seem likely to be later imports, even though at one time the Soham examples were arranged in the chancel.

Whilst there appears to be no local legend about the origin of the stalls at any of these places, there are strong indications that at Willingham the present nave and aisle roofs are reused and were fitted in 1613, having possibly come from Barnwell Priory near Cambridge.² This is not, of course, conclusive evidence for a more extensive importation of material, especially as there is much medieval screenwork at Willingham which almost certainly survives from its own chantry chapels. But there is ample cause for suspicion, and further research might actually be able to pin down the likely history of the above group of stall fragments.

There are many other examples of possible imports in parish churches, and it may be that a systematic survey would reveal that more of them actually represent the remains of brutalized parish stall ensembles than has been taken into account here. But for the rest of this paper the focus is on what do seem to be relatively complete and genuine remains of parish ensembles, beginning, at what might be described as the grand end — parish churches in big, prosperous, towns where guilds and other chantries were especially numerous and rich. From the early 14th century it seems to have become increasingly the practice for chantry priests to assist in parish services, thus creating a potential requirement for extra seating in the chancel.³ Equally, from the early 14th century, bishops seem to have fought a losing battle against the wishes of prominent members of the laity to be seated in the chancel.⁴ As such, the pressure for additional chancel seating in parish churches is likely to have increased as of the beginning of the 14th century, particularly in major parish churches. This underlines the limitations of the physical evidence on which this paper is based. The early 14th century does not seem to provide examples of parochial stallwork at the point one would expect to begin finding it,⁵ while, an extension of this same point into the particular, it can be as difficult to account for absence as for presence at a local level. The elaborately carved desk-ends at St Peter and St Paul, Swaffham (Norfolk), for example, whilst possibly from a side chantry chapel, suggest a capacity for fancy seating which it is tempting to think should have run to a good choir stall ensemble in a town as important as Swaffham. For similar reasons, isolated stall fragments at, for instance, St Nicholas, North Walsham (Norfolk) and St Peter and St Paul, Wisbech (Cambridgeshire), may in fact be survivors of once lavish parish church stallwork.

MAJOR PARISH CHURCHES

CLEARLY the grandest example, and probably the biggest and earliest surviving purely parish ensemble in the country, is that of St Botolph at Boston (Lincolnshire). Here are over sixty beautifully carved and designed classic late-14th-century stalls, albeit now in an arrangement which includes a few imports from elsewhere. Boston was, and continued to be a major port, even if it may have been past its zenith by the time the stalls were made. All the same, the huge extent of the stalls seems surprising. When it came to chantry endowments, St Botolph's main competition came from the local friaries, but the major parochial guild, of St Mary, had sufficient prestige to attract bequests from a very wide area.⁶ The pre-eminence of this guild may have given the parish church an advantage over prominent town churches elsewhere, a preferential access to lay bequests which may have been all the more pronounced given the relatively early date at which the stalls are likely to have been commissioned. St Nicholas, King's Lynn, where an unknown number of early-15th-century stalls once existed, also seems to have hosted guild chapels, even though it remained a chapel of ease and the most important guild, Holy Trinity, remained loyal to the official parish (and monastic) church of St Margaret.⁷

Equally, St Peter Mancroft in Norwich, where again all but a couple of fragments of the late-15th-century stalls have disappeared, was in competition for chantries and patrons with the nearby collegiate church of St Mary in the Fields, with a multitude of other parish churches and, above all, with a Dominican friary which was extremely popular with the trade guilds.⁸ Excavations beneath the choir at St Peter Mancroft in the mid-19th century suggested that there could have been about twenty-six stalls. This number, whilst nowhere near that at Boston, is similar to that in several other of the major parish churches reviewed. The acoustic chamber which these excavations also revealed will be discussed with other possible examples at the end of this paper.⁹

At St Peter and St Paul, Salle (Norfolk) there are twenty-six classic stalls — both lateral and return — of mid-15th-century date with superbly carved, if slightly unadventurous, misericords (all subject to some later modifications).¹⁰ The stalls are mounted on a stone pierced base with an acoustic chamber (Fig. 4). This is clearly an exceptionally ambitious ensemble in a famously ambitious church, built in a town with a late medieval population which has been estimated at around 500 (which is almost certainly smaller than, say, Southwold, where St Edmund made do with fourteen stalls).¹¹ The reason for the extent of the Salle stalls is not clear. The town was a major wool-merchanting centre with numerous private chantries and sufficient activity to support seven guilds of varying prosperity. Part of the explanation may be that Salle's most important guild, as measured by membership, was the Holy Trinity Cloth Guild of Coventry — perhaps implying that cloth producers might seek to induce loyalty in their suppliers via guild membership.¹² All



FIG. 4. St Peter and St Paul, Salle (Norfolk): choir from east
Donald O'Connell

the same, it is difficult to explain the number of stalls purely in terms of making chancel seating available to chantry priests, especially as many minor chantries were unable to maintain a permanent and full-time priest. Perhaps, at Salle, the needs of the chantry priests combined with a desire for chancel seating on the part of important patrons and guild officials.

It is possible that this same sort of combination applies to the ensemble at St Mary Magdalen, Newark (Nottinghamshire) which, whilst outside the area covered by this survey, is too important to omit. Once again there are twenty-six classic stalls, in Newark's case early 16th century with high coved screen canopies. Even more remarkably, the more prominent coverings are on the aisle sides, rising above ensembles of short pews which face east towards big, stone, wool merchants' chantry chapels (Fig. 5). It is not clear whether these aisle ensembles were, as has been speculated, guild chapels, though guilds certainly played an important role in parochial life in late medieval Newark.¹³ Indeed, most of the fourteen chantries known to have existed at the Reformation seem to have been founded by guild members. This may reflect Newark's importance as a 'thoroughfare' town, the river crossing much in demand by sheep drovers, as well as wool merchants anxious to move wool to Boston and other east coast ports. One chantry was specifically founded to provide two priests to help the hard-pressed rector whilst another specifically provided for the priest to celebrate a morrow mass for the drovers setting out at dawn.¹⁴ None the less, although the history of Newark has been extensively written up, much remains unclear. Thus whilst the chancel furniture was financed, at slightly different dates in the 1520s, on the one side by the rector and on the other side by a local baker, it is not clear whether this included the screens and aisle chapel furniture.¹⁵

The evidence for lay involvement in the financing of the stalls at Newark is invaluable, as it hints at the possibility of lay involvement in the provision of chancel furniture elsewhere. There are examples of monies being made available for chancel furnishings from wills at Southwold (Suffolk), at Wakefield (Yorkshire), and three in Norfolk, which engenders the hope that as investigation of wills extends, more such evidence will build up.¹⁶

In what is perhaps the most extraordinary case of parish church stallwork, there is absolutely no doubt as to patronal responsibility. Holy Trinity, Balsham



FIG. 5. St Mary Magdalen, Newark (Notts): north chancel aisle to west
Donald O'Connell

(Cambridgeshire) preserves twenty-four, originally twenty-eight, terribly damaged late-14th-century classic stalls of a most unusual design (Fig. 6). They lie in a fairly modest parish church in a town which was never large and which never seems to have supported many guilds.¹⁷ A memorial brass in the chancel commemorating John of Sleaford (d. 1401), rector at the time of his death, claims that he made the stalls (and the date would fit stylistically with the stalls, although the brass also claims that he made the church which is a little more problematic).¹⁸ John of Sleaford was successively a canon of Ripon and Wells, and King's clerk, appointed rector of Balsham *c.* 1365. He eventually rose to become Keeper of the Great Wardrobe to Edward III, but was put out to grass on Richard II's accession in 1377. Tempting as it is to see these stalls, especially with their unusual design, as some sort of resentful demonstration, it is possible that the intention was to make the church collegiate, but that the patron died before this could happen. If John Leland is to be believed the case of choir stalls being erected in anticipation of a collegiality that never took place would not be unique — for this seems to have been the case at St Mary, Ashford (Kent), albeit in the early 1480s.¹⁹ Balsham is just possibly a case where the collegiate and the parochial overlap, as well as being an impressive exercise of patronal power on the part of an ambitious and well connected rector.

Finally, Walpole St Peter (Norfolk) is the most intractable of the major parochial examples. The chancel seems likely to date to the first quarter of the 15th century and bears all the signs of an ambitious set of stalls — now difficult to assess because of extensive alteration (Fig. 7). Each side of the chancel supports eleven stone lateral stall canopies, while stone canopies are slanted across the chancel arch pillars in a way which implies four, rather than six, return stalls, giving twenty-six seats in total. These striking angled canopies compare to the arrangement, in wood, at St Andrew, Wingfield (Suffolk), the design of which is also early 15th century but collegiate, and St Mary, Nantwich (Cheshire), again early 15th century and parochial. The badly damaged misericords now placed in the lateral stone stalls appear to be of three different styles, and it seems most unlikely this stone ensemble was designed to have anything other than bench seating. Unfortunately the deskwork, despite the tempting hints of choir boy perches, seems mostly later reconstruction, even if it undoubtedly does incorporate a lot of original material. The same is true of the timber pierced base. A post-medieval reconstruction is confirmed by the return stalls where, given the ambition of the lateral canopies, four classic stalls would be expected. The south returns seem most likely to have been put together in the 17th century, and like the extraordinary tiers of benches in the south nave aisle, probably incorporate some original material, while, on the north side, there are two damaged classic stalls with misericords related to those now placed in the lateral stalls. Unfortunately this last pair is cut at its north end, and must originally have formed part of a range of at least three stalls. As such, it could not possibly fit with the slanted end of the stone canopies. For the moment, therefore, it has to be concluded that whilst it is probable that Walpole St Peter originally had four classic return stalls, the present fragments are interlopers.

MINOR PARISH CHURCHES

A considerably more modest version of what may have been the intention at Walpole St Peter is to be found at St Mary, Gamlingay (Cambridgeshire). Later modifications are confined to details, and the essential form of the ensemble is almost certainly original (Fig. 8). Gamlingay is likely to be mid-15th century, later than Walpole St Peter and broadly contemporary with Salle.²⁰ Here, there are lateral bench seats with good, only slightly modified, desks, a high timber backboard, again only slightly modified, and six

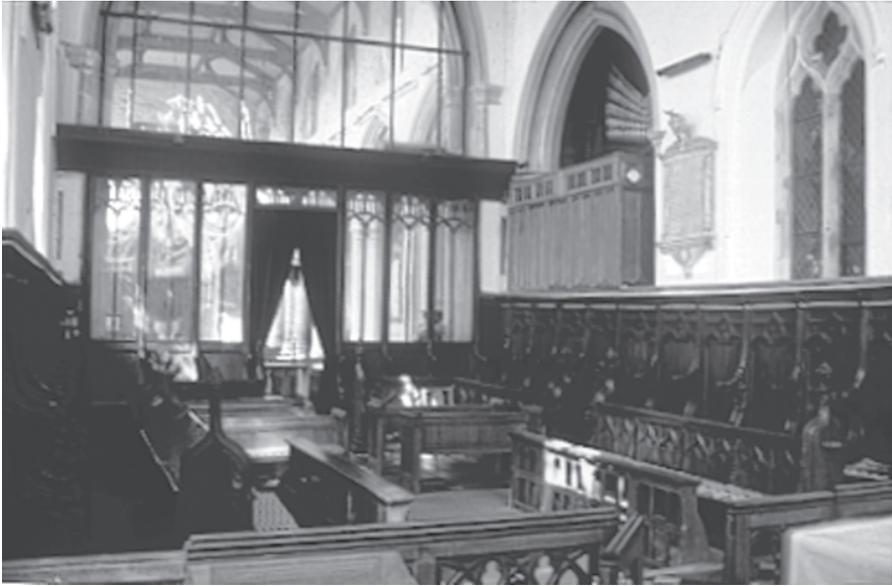


FIG. 6. Holy Trinity, Balsham (Cambs): choir to north-west
Donald O'Connell



FIG. 7. Walpole St Peter (Norfolk): choir to north-west
Donald O'Connell

robustly carved classic return stalls. There is no sign of a stone pierced base. Gamlingay was a market town with evidence for a dominant guild, and the ensemble seems about right for the moderately ambitious parish church. The high backboards are especially striking (a point discussed below) and their authenticity may be confirmed by the fact that on the north side at least there is a sliding panel which gives a sight of the high altar via a long squint from a side altar — a device that seems unlikely to have been invented by later restorers.

At things stand, Gamlingay seems to embody a type of stall arrangement favoured in what might be described as moderately ambitious parish churches. Norfolk and the Fens seems to provide two followers, albeit both flawed and much later. At St Botolph, Trunch (Norfolk), bench seats are organized on the lateral sides above a pierced stone base, with good desks and six early-16th-century classic return stalls, though without a high backboard (Fig. 9). Sadly, however, the bench and deskwork incorporates early material but has been so extensively reconstructed that the possible evidence for choir boy perches cannot be relied on.

Similarly at St Botolph, Grimston (Norfolk) another ensemble of bench laterals with desks (no stone pierced base) and six somewhat basic classic return stalls survive (Fig. 10). Here, the classic return stalls, which on the face of it seem to be late 15th century, do seem in situ, while the rest of the ensemble is a 19th-century reconstruction (see the tiled floor), albeit one incorporating some original material. This raises the question of the extent to which restorers might invent relatively modest ensembles in the absence of crucial evidence for the lateral arrangements.

Flawed as they are, Trunch and Grimston may hint at a wider distribution of the Gamlingay-type arrangement. Indeed, in a sense this is reflected by what might be regarded as its reduction at Holy Trinity, Elsworth (Cambridgeshire). Here, there is a most exciting and impressive ensemble of mid-16th-century lateral stalls with bench seats and superb linenfold backboards (Fig. 11). The desks look to have been slightly modified at the front, and while there is no sign of a pierced stone base (in contrast to nearby



FIG. 8. St Mary, Gamlingay (Cams):
choir to north-west

Donald O'Connell

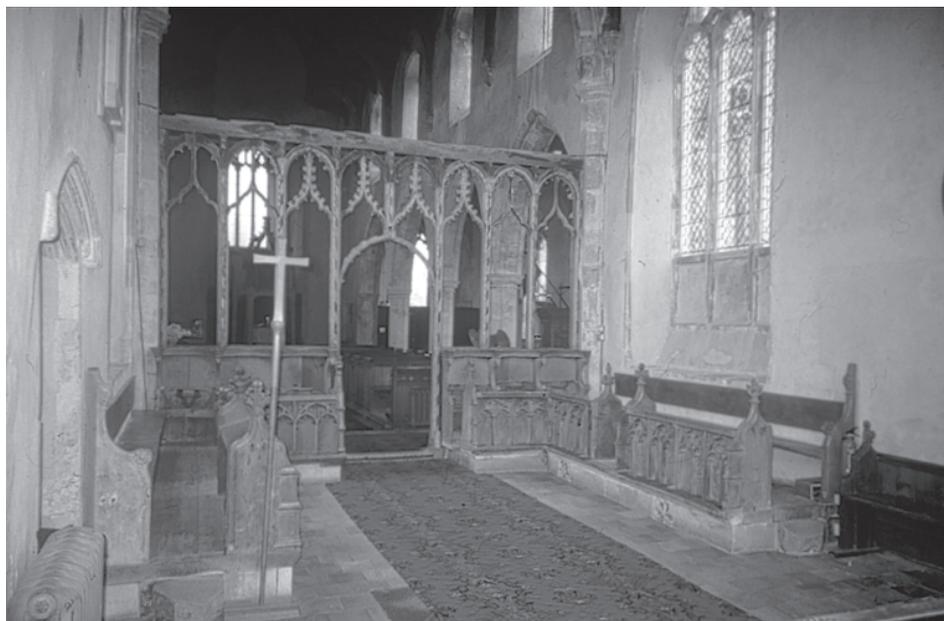


FIG. 9. St Botolph, Trunch (Norfolk): choir to west
Donald O'Connell



FIG. 10. St Botolph, Grimston (Norfolk): choir to west
Donald O'Connell

Willingham), beneath the desks are linenfold lockers. Even more interestingly, the six return stalls are hybrids — that is, stalls with fixed seats but shaped seat dividers (Fig. 12). These return stalls seem to have been redeployed, as they have been detached from the back of the rood screen, the ensuing gap being filled with an assembly of linenfold panelling and lengths of reused cornice. In sum, it would appear that in the course of a major mid-16th-century refurbishment, bits of an earlier parish ensemble were reused, the earlier elements being themselves of relatively recent manufacture.²¹

There may be a parallel to this Elsworth 'hybrid style' at Tilney All Saints (Norfolk), where a large ensemble of eighteen mostly classic stalls seems to have been assembled from two or three different sources, all of them mounted on a pierced stone base and abutting a Jacobean screen. Most of this collection is likely to have been imported, but among its various elements are three small stalls with fixed bench seats and crudely carved shaped seat dividers (Fig. 13). These look like a slightly more confident version of the Elsworth return stalls, and may well be the remnants of the original parish ensemble before it was swamped by the later imports. Needless to say, the chancel furniture at Tilney All Saints is another case crying out for more research.

Although Elsworth appears to have been a fairly modest parish, appreciably more so than Tilney All Saints, the use of 'hybrid' return stalls in both suggests the form could have been quite a widely used. But the possibility of an even more modest form of parochial chancel seating should be borne in mind — bench seating all round. Whether this arrangement enjoyed a medieval currency remains to be shown. At St Mary, Winthorpe (Lincolnshire), superb early-16th-century desks with possible choir boy perches are



FIG. 11. Holy Trinity, Elsworth (Cambs): choir to west
Donald O'Connell

combined with bench seating all round. The bench seating, however, seems later and the ambition of the desks seems so out of keeping with the seating as to exclude this example pending further research. Perhaps the example of St Mary, Harlton (Cambridgeshire), whilst terribly eviscerated, serves to give some idea of this most modest end (Fig. 14).



FIG. 12. Holy Trinity, Elsworth (Cambs):
return stalls

Donald O'Connell



FIG. 13. Tilney All Saints (Norfolk): hybrid
stalls

Donald O'Connell



FIG. 14. St Mary, Harlton (Cambs): bench seating in choir to north-west

Donald O'Connell

BACKBOARDS

GAMLINGAY and Elsworth (Figs 8 and 11), whilst of very different dates and prominence, raise the question of the extent to which high backboards may have been common in medieval parish chancels. Since these tend to reduce light levels it may be that they were particularly vulnerable to being cut back in post-medieval chancel rearrangements. At least one superb survival, at All Saints, Little Shelford (Cambridgeshire), encourages one to entertain the possibility (Fig. 15). Here, in a church largely refurnished in the later 19th century, two high backboards survive to the north and south in the chancel, rising appreciably clear of the window sills. Although details have undoubtedly been reworked and the whole ensemble has been rather dramatically repainted, the backboards do seem to be late 15th century. The key to their extraordinary survival may be that they were painted and repainted with Freville family heraldry, for whom, despite their separate chantry chapel, the chancel had special significance as housing the tomb of Sir John de Freville.²²

MUSIC

THE effects of chantries, of guilds, of patrons and legacies, have been briefly surveyed as possible influences on what, on present evidence, seems a gradual growth in parish stall provision which accelerated through the 15th century. Occasional references to possible acoustic chambers and choir boy perches raise the larger question of the role that music may have played in encouraging parishes to provide larger choirs with more seating. Late medieval music in parish churches is a subject way beyond the scope of this paper. What follows is a short review of the evidence for the provision of acoustic chambers beneath choir stalls, and, it is assumed by extension, investment in musical potential — or, at least, sound quality.

Reference has already been made, where appropriate, to evidence of acoustic chambers. The dimensions of those that can be firmly established vary a little, but all so far assessed seem to be between 2 ft 6 in. and 3 ft 6 in. wide (0.75 m to 1.08 m) and between 3 ft and 4 ft 6 in. deep (0.9 m to 1.4 m). Interestingly, the acoustic chamber below the late-14th-century stalls in the Carmelite friary at Coventry also falls within these same limits.²³

How widespread were such chambers? No statistically valid answer is currently possible, but circumstantial evidence suggests acoustic chambers were not at all unusual in parish churches. Contemporary with the mid-19th-century excavations at St Peter Mancroft in Norwich, an acoustic chamber was discovered at St Peter Parmentergate in Norwich.²⁴ The pierced stone base at Salle bears a striking resemblance to those at Trunch, Tilney All Saints, Willingham and, in a wooden version, St George, Stowlangtoft (Suffolk), while the elaborate piercing of the chancel stall base at Southwold would seem to be in a class of its own.²⁵ It cannot be claimed without exhaustive investigation that a pierced stone base is an infallible indicator of an acoustic chamber, but, on the whole, it seems likely that if the stall base was originally pierced in the Middle Ages, this was the intention. The incidence of pierced stone bases is patchy, but the form is sufficiently distinctive for it to seem unlikely that restorers would invent them in locations that had never had them.

Whether this is also true of choir boy perches is debatable. Some do look quite convincing — Stowlangtoft (Fig. 16) or Winthorpe, for instance — and a number seem over-restored — though here the form is superficially picturesque, and one feels far less confident in presuming medieval antecedence in specific cases.



FIG. 15. All Saints, Little Shelford (Cams): backboards on north side of choir
Donald O'Connell



FIG. 16. St George, Stowlangtoft (Suffolk): choir boy perches
Donald O'Connell

The parish stalls explored in this paper suggest that, from at least the mid-15th century, acoustic chambers were not unusual in large, ambitious parish churches. Archaeological investigation of other pierced stone bases to the stalls might reveal that such chambers could also be provided at more modest levels and that these in turn might be associated with choir boy perches. On the other hand the lack of any such evidence at Elsworth with its substantial eve-of-Reformation showpiece refurbishment, suggests that below a certain level of ambition such musical aids were not provided, even if accommodation for a choir was. The absence of either a pierced stone base or choir boy perches at the relatively unmodified and moderately ambitious example of Gamlingay of the mid-15th century may suggest that it is only after this date that such features extended to more modest parishes. However, whilst it is difficult not to see these features as indicative of a developed interest in musical performance, their implications, especially for modes of music and modes of performance remains to be elucidated.²⁶

CONCLUSION

THE sample area — basically East Anglia and the Fens — has provided reasonably clear evidence of the provision of choir stall ensembles in parish churches, in varying forms and down to such modest levels as to suggest that many fragmentary remains may well indicate parish stallwork. The reasons for the provision of special chancel seating seem clearer in the larger and most prosperous parish churches, though the role played by ambitious patrons — compare, say Balsham and Little Shelford — makes generalization perilous. The relatively wide distribution of what appear to be acoustical bases beneath parish stalls is slightly surprising, and seems to suggest that by the middle of the 15th century sound quality and music were becoming important in parish churches.

Without further research, it is difficult to say whether East Anglia and the Fens are typical. Exceptionally grand sets of parish church stalls clearly do exist elsewhere — at St Lawrence, Ludlow (Shropshire), St Mary, Beverley (Yorkshire), St Helen, Sefton (Lancashire), or, most spectacularly, St Mary, Nantwich (Cheshire), to cite some of the better known examples — but the extent to which more modest arrangements were employed in the north, or midlands, remains to be investigated. At this stage, no conclusions as to regional variation can be reached. A county by county, and case by case, examination of parish church choir seating is really needed — together with a review of what documentary evidence there is — so as to distinguish *in situ*, or original, parish church stalls from those imported into parish churches after the Reformation. This last is also a fascinating area for future research. Why, how, and when were great church stall fragments acquired, used, stored and eventually donated for parish church use? St Peter, Wolverhampton — where the stalls were brought from Lilleshall Abbey — seems, like Tansor, a rare case where the process is recorded. But the evidence of arrangements such as that at East Lexham suggest that great church stalls were not simply being moved into parish churches in the later 16th and early 17th centuries, but could have been donated as recently as the 18th or 19th centuries.

This paper has concentrated on the physical evidence for parish church stall ensembles, and the likely reasons for such provision. After it was presented, the Proceedings of the 2002 Harlaxton Symposium on the English late medieval parish were published. The paper by Magnus Williamson in that volume, combined with his earlier work on Louth, takes the musical aspects many steps further.²⁷

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks go to John McNeill for starting and then fostering my interest in choir stalls, to Charles Tracy for constant encouragement and advice, and to Anne Williams for typing and computerizing my illegible manuscript.

NOTES

1. R. M. Sergeantson and H. Isham Longden, 'The parish churches and religious houses of Northamptonshire: their dedications, altars, images and lights', *Archaeol. J.*, LXX (1913), 413. There are several other churches in this area with stall pieces believed to come from Fotheringay.
2. VCH *Cambridgeshire*, 9 (London 1989), 411.
3. H. F. Westlake, *The Parish Gilds of Medieval England* (London 1919), 47.
4. F. A. Gasquet, *Parish Life in Medieval England* (London 1929), 45.
5. St Andrew, Clifton Campville (Staffordshire) may be an exception.
6. W. M. Ormrod ed., *The Guilds of Boston* (Boston 1993), 48; and Sergeantson and Longden, 'Parish Churches', 254–55.
7. On the stalls at St Nicholas, King's Lynn, see the article by Charles Tracy in this volume.
8. M. P. Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich* (Toronto 1984), 70–71. See also the introductory chapters in D. King, *The Medieval Stained Glass of St Peter Mancroft, Norwich*, CVMA (GB), V (Oxford 2006).
9. G. W. Minns, 'Acoustic Pottery', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 7 (1872), 98.
10. On Salle, see W. Parsons, *Salle: the Story of a Norfolk Parish, its Church, Manors and People* (Norwich 1937), and E. Duffy, 'Late medieval religion', in *Gothic: Art for England 1400–1547*, ed. R. Marks and P. Williamson (London 2003), 62–65.
11. H. Munro Cautley, *Suffolk Churches and their Treasures*, 4th edn (Ipswich 1975), 348.
12. W. Parsons, *Salle*, 94. See also M. Harris ed., *The Register of the Guild of the Holy Trinity, St Mary, St John the Baptist and St Katherine of Coventry* (Dugdale Society, 13, 1935) who suggested that impetus behind the appearance of Salle parishioners in the membership lists of the Trinity Guild was coming from the suppliers, who wished to tie up their customers, and not vice versa.
13. See J. C. Cox, *Bench-Ends in English Churches* (Oxford 1916), 105, who likens the short pews (now gone) in the chapel of the Guild of Our Lady at St Mary, Hitchen (Hertfordshire) to those at Newark. The two sets of short pews at Newark may now be unique in their extent. See also T. M. Blagg, *A Guide to the Antiquities of Newark and the Churches of Holme and Houghton* (no place of origin given 1906), 55.
14. C. Brown, *A History of Newark-on-Trent*, I (Newark 1904), 213 and 223. See also J. C. Cox on Newark chantries in VCH *Nottinghamshire*, 2 (London 1910), 148–49.
15. C. Brown, *A History of Newark-on-Trent*, I, 284.
16. For Southwold, see J. Agate, *Benches and Stalls in Suffolk Churches* (Ipswich 1980), 32. For Wakefield, F. A. Gasquet, *Parish Life*, 53. For the Norfolk examples, see P. Cattermole and S. Cotton, 'Medieval parish church building in Norfolk', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 37 (1983), 246, 257 and 264.
17. W. M. Palmer, 'The village guilds of Cambridgeshire', *Transactions of the Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire Archaeological Society*, I (1904), 384.
18. The relevant sections of the inscription on the brass of John Sleaford read *Eccl(es)iam struxit ba(n)c; nu(n)q(ua)m postea luxit; Haec fecit stalla, large fu(n)de(n)s q(ue) m(e)tella*. [He built this church; he never grieved for it afterwards. He made these stalls, generously pouring out gold and silver]. The inscription also speaks wistfully of his relationship with Edward III. On the building, see N. Pevsner, *B/E Cambridgeshire* (Harmondsworth 1970), 294–96.
19. 'Asscheforde church was a meane to be collegiated by the request of one Fogge, a gentleman dwelling ther about that was countrowlar to Edward the Fourthe. But Edward dyed for Fogge had finished this enterprise. So that now remaineth at Asscheforde the only name of a prebend. And this place hath lands, priests and chorsts but removable. For they have no common seale.' L. Toulmin-Smith ed., *The Itinerary of John Leland in or about the Years 1535–1543*, 2 (London 1909), 38.
20. RCHME, *Inventory of Historical Monuments in the County of Cambridgeshire, Vol I, West Cambridgeshire* (London 1968), 103.
21. *Ibid.*, 86.
22. See VCH *Cambridgeshire*, 8 (London 1982), 226, which notes that in 1742 sixteen chancel stalls survived but that these had disappeared by 1980 (possibly destroyed when the chancel screen was removed in 1854).

23. C. Tracy, 'Choir stalls from the 14th-century Whitefriars church in Coventry', *JBAA*, CL (1997), 84–85.

24. G. W. Minns, 'Acoustic pottery', 98.

25. The author has not yet found any documentary evidence for an acoustic chamber at Salle but was able, by torchlight, to establish that there was a cavity beneath the stalls, roughly 3 ft wide and 3½ to 4 feet deep.

26. See the entry by R. Bowers on John Taverner in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 25 (MacMillan 2001), 131–32, which indicates that in the early 16th century a choir of up to thirty singers was maintained at Boston by the St Mary's Guild. Whilst this probably underlines Boston's continuing pre-eminence, it also provokes speculation as to whether, as with the stalls, this represents the grand end of a development reflected more modestly, in parish churches elsewhere.

27. M. Williamson, 'Liturgical music in the late medieval parish', in *Harlaxton Medieval Studies Vol. XIV: The Parish in Late Medieval England*, ed. C. Burgess and E. Duffy (Stamford 2006), 177–242; and M. Williamson, 'The role of religious guilds in the cultivation of ritual polyphony in England: The case of Louth, 1450–1550', in *Music and Musicians in Renaissance Cities and Towns*, ed. F. Kisby (Cambridge 2001), 82–93.

Previous volumes in the series

- I. *Medieval Art and Architecture at Worcester Cathedral* (1978), ed. G. Popper
- II. *Medieval Art and Architecture at Ely Cathedral* (1979), ed. N. Coldstream and P. Draper
- III. *Medieval Art and Architecture at Durham Cathedral* (1980), ed. N. Coldstream and P. Draper
- IV. *Medieval Art and Architecture at Wells and Glastonbury* (1981), ed. N. Coldstream and P. Draper
- V. *Medieval Art and Architecture at Canterbury before 1220* (1982), ed. N. Coldstream and P. Draper
- VI. *Medieval Art and Architecture at Winchester Cathedral* (1983), ed. T. A. Heslop and V. Sekules
- VII. *Medieval Art and Architecture at Gloucester and Tewkesbury* (1985), ed. T. A. Heslop and V. Sekules
- VIII. *Medieval Art and Architecture at Lincoln Cathedral* (1986), ed. T. A. Heslop and V. Sekules
- IX. *Medieval Art and Architecture in the East Riding of Yorkshire* (1989), ed. C. Wilson
- X. *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology in London* (1990), ed. L. Grant
- XI. *Medieval Art and Architecture at Exeter Cathedral* (1991), ed. F. Kelly
- XII. *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology at Rouen* (1993), ed. J. Stratford
- XIII. *Medieval Art and Architecture at Lichfield* (1993), ed. J. Maddison
- XIV. *Medieval Art and Architecture in the Diocese of St Andrews* (1994), ed. J. Higgitt
- XV. *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology at Hereford* (1995), ed. D. Whitehead
- XVI. *Yorkshire Monasticism: Archaeology, Art and Architecture* (1995), ed. L. R. Hoey
- XVII. *Medieval Art and Architecture at Salisbury Cathedral* (1996), ed. L. Keen and T. Cocke
- XVIII. *Utrecht, Britain and the Continent: Archaeology, Art and Architecture* (1996), ed. E. de Bièvre
- XIX. *'Almost the Richest City': Bristol in the Middle Ages* (1997), ed. L. Keen
- XX. *Medieval Art, Architecture, Archaeology and Economy at Bury St Edmunds* (1998), ed. A. Gransden
- XXI. *Southwell and Nottinghamshire: Medieval Art, Architecture, and Industry* (1998), ed. J. S. Alexander
- XXII. *Medieval Archaeology, Art and Architecture at Chester* (2000), ed. A. Thacker
- XXIII. *Medieval Art and Architecture in the Diocese of Glasgow* (1999), ed. R. Fawcett
- XXIV. *Alban and St Albans: Roman and Medieval Architecture, Art and Archaeology* (2001), ed. M. Henig and P. Lindley
- XXV. *Windsor: Medieval Archaeology, Art and Architecture of the Thames Valley* (2002), ed. L. Keen and E. Scarff
- XXVI. *Anjou: Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology* (2003), ed. J. McNeill and D. Prigent
- XXVII. *Carlisle and Cumbria: Roman and Medieval Architecture, Art and Archaeology* (2004), ed. M. McCarthy and D. Weston
- XXVIII. *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology at Rochester* (2006), ed. T. Ayers and T. Tatton-Brown
- XXIX. *Cardiff: Architecture and Archaeology in the Medieval Diocese of Llandaff* (2006), ed. John R. Kenyon and Diane M. Williams
- XXX. *Mainz and the Middle Rhine Valley: Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology* (2007), ed. by Ute Engel and Alexandra Gajewski