Ecclesiology Today

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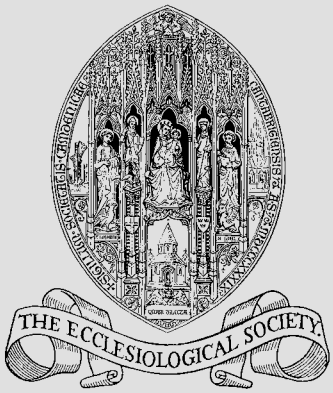

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Chairman's letter

John Henman

After a long period of service to the Society as a member of Council, John Henman decided last summer to step down as Hon. Membership Secretary.

Many of you will know John, or will have had had dealings with him, as he has been on the Council for approaching thirty years, and for much of that time has looked after membership matters. In 1981, when I believe he took over the role, there were 138 people on the membership list. Now there are well on the way to seven times that number.

So his work has been the foundation on which the Society has built and grown. He has dealt, steadily and uncomplainingly, with the accompanying growth in administration, and has been the all-important human face of the Society to those joining, and to the many members who have had subsequent queries. The Society's current good health owes a very great deal to his continued efforts, stretching over nearly three decades.

The Council in general, and I personally, am very grateful to John, and am sure that many members of the Society will want to join me in saying a hearty 'thank you'. I know the Society is close to John's heart, and we look forward to continued close contact, not least to seeing him at many of our future events.

We are fortunate that Dr Valerie Hitchman, whom some of you may know from her work administering the Society's annual conference, has agreed to pick up the reins as Hon. Membership Secretary.

Ecclesiology Today

This is the delayed edition of *Ecclesiology Today* for the end of 2008. Although there is no particular theme, I think you will find that three questions are repeatedly touched upon – patronage and funding, the practicalities of building, and the use of space. I hope you find something that interests you.

As previously announced, the next issue will be dedicated to church seating. Sarah Brown and I are editors of that edition. We are pleased that a number of experts are writing articles especially for that issue, which we hope will be of permanent value in the debate over pews and church seating in general.

I am very pleased to be able to tell you that the following issue will be edited by Dr Geoff Brandwood, and will be dedicated to lesser-known Victorian church architects. I have had early sight of the plans for this edition, and it looks to be most interesting.

Trevor Cooper
Chairman of Council

The medieval churches of Whittlewood Forest

P. S. Barnwell

THE EIGHT SURVIVING CHURCHES of the royal Forest of Whittlewood, which straddled the border of Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire from at least the Norman Conquest until 1853, are unspectacular, ordinary rural churches, even plain. Of the four medieval parochial churches which have been demolished, enough is known of two to indicate that they were no different. Yet, like all churches, these buildings, and the scanty pre-Reformation documents associated with them, contain evidence for the lives of the communities which built, maintained and worshipped within them. As a group the churches have no coherence apart from the fact that they all, at one time or another lay within the Forest (Fig. 1). The reason for studying them together is that the twelve medieval parishes which they served have recently been the focus of a major research project which examined the origins and varied types of medieval settlements found within them, some containing nucleated villages, others dispersed hamlets.[1] As part of that project the churches were investigated with a view to seeing what their evolution could contribute to understanding the ways in which the settlements as a whole developed.[2] The principal results of the project have been published elsewhere, and include some discussion of the evidence

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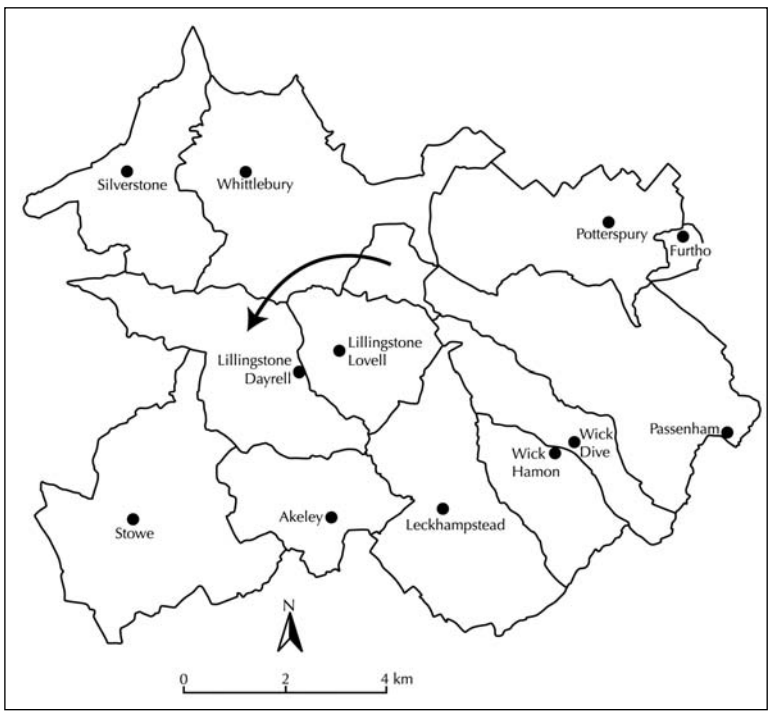


Fig. 1: The parishes of Whittlewood Forest. The Forest lies some ten miles west of Milton Keynes.

of the churches;[3] the purpose of this paper is to focus more tightly on the pre-Reformation church buildings, to consider how they evolved and the significance of the pattern of evolution.

Of an original twelve medieval parochial churches, those at Akeley, Silverstone and Wick Hamon have been demolished completely, and that at Wick Dive was so substantially rebuilt in the eighteenth century that little of the form of the medieval building can now be recovered. The fabric of the eight surviving churches (at Leckhampstead, Lillingstone Dayrell, Lillingstone Lovell and Stowe in Buckinghamshire; and at Furtho, Passenham, Potterspury and Whittlebury in Northamptonshire) has at various times been recorded and analysed, notably for the *Buildings of England* series, the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, and the Victoria County History,[4] but the buildings have not previously been treated synthetically. Discussion starts with a summary of the history of settlement in Whittlewood, moves to the evolution of the church buildings, and concludes by assessing the significance of that evolution.

Medieval Whittlewood

Before the Norman Conquest Whittlewood seems to have provided woodland for a number of extensive estates with access to multiple landscape resources, the centres of which lay at some distance from the Forest.[5] In particular, Whittlebury was part of an estate based at Green's Norton four miles to the north, on which the church was dependent, and both Lillingstone Lovell and the manor of Boycott in Stowe parish were part of the royal manor of Kirtlington, twenty miles away in Oxfordshire. Although some of them were dependent, the settlements in the Forest were by no means unimportant: in *c.*930, for example, King Athelstan held a council at Whittlebury,[6] the hunting-grounds of which may have provided both game for feasting and an arena for entertainment. In the south east, Passenham may itself have been the centre of a large estate next to Watling Street,[7] an important strategic route through the Midlands, and was where Edward the Elder over-wintered in 921 while the defences of Towcester were put in order during his campaign against the Scandinavians.[8] It is not certain how early there were churches at Passenham, Whittlebury and Lillingstone Lovell, but there are hints, discussed later, that it may have been earlier than elsewhere.

During the later Anglo-Saxon period, from the late-ninth to the eleventh century, parts of the large territories began to be carved up into smaller estates with local lords. The process is attested by some of the place-names, which often make a first recorded appearance in Domesday Book: Silverstone, carved out of Whittlebury, was Sæwulf's farmstead, Akeley Aca's clearing,

Deanshanger (in Passenham) Dynne's wooded slope. At the same time, and related to these developments, there were changes in the pattern of settlement as for the first time nucleated villages were formed, some representing expansions of earlier hamlets. The process was neither uniform nor complete, the parish of Leckhampstead in particular having retaining a scatter of small settlement foci as well as the main one at Church End. Also in the same period, and continuing into the thirteenth century, open fields were laid out and the proportion of arable land rose, though significant woodland remained. These developments were accompanied by a rise in population, that of Lillingstone Dayrell, for example, trebling from the 11 households recorded in Domesday Book to 33 in 1279, and the village increasing in size commensurately; Akeley followed a broadly similar trend, and the rate of growth at Leckhampstead was not much less.

The development of small estates and villages is reflected in the creation of local or manorial churches which, with the possible earlier churches, formed the basis of the later parochial system. In some instances there is positive evidence for the relative chronology of foundation. At Silverstone, for example, the chapel was dependent upon the church at its mother settlement of Whittlebury (which was, in turn, dependent on Green's Norton), and a record that in the twelfth century Akeley paid an annual rent to Leckhampstead indicates a similarly subordinate relationship.[9]

In the later middle ages population fell following the famine of 1317–20 and the decline was hastened by the Black Death in 1348–9 while recovery was impeded by subsequent outbreaks of plague. At Lillingstone Lovell, for example, the 50 households of 1327 had been halved fifty years later, and at Whittlebury the population declined by a third between 1301 and 1524. In these places, as well as in Silverstone, the settled area contracted, but most settlements, even the smaller ones, seem to have survived through the fourteenth century. In the fifteenth century, however, some places were completely depopulated, usually because of the direct action of the lord of the manor in engrossing holdings to switch from arable to sheep farming. This was most notably the case at Lillingstone Dayrell, which shrank to about a quarter of its former size after 1350 but was effectively abandoned a century later when the engrossment of eight peasant holdings led to the displacement of 40 people who occupied seven messuages and four cottages. There was a similar process at the tiny settlement of Furtho, its entire parish a mere 700 acres, where only three tax payers remained in 1524.[10] In general, it was those smaller places which had already been significantly weakened by population loss which suffered in this way, the larger and longer-established settlements remaining in existence even if shrunken.

Pre-Conquest Churches?

There is no certain evidence in the surviving church buildings of fabric dating from before the Norman Conquest. A case can, however, be made that there is part of an older building at Lillingstone Lovell, and much more tentative suggestions can be made that the forms of the churches at Whittlebury and Passenham contain artefacts of earlier buildings, though without invasive investigation, particularly excavation, neither case can be demonstrated.

Lillingstone Lovell

The plan of the church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Lillingstone Lovell is unusual in several respects (Fig. 2). The nave is very narrow in relation to its width (and height), as reflected in the fact that the fourteenth-century chancel is wider than the nave (its shortness results from truncation in the eighteenth or nineteenth century).[11] In addition, the north chapel is irregularly set out (Fig. 3), and the 'responds' at the east end of the nave are abnormally long, creating a sense of enclosure in front of the chancel arch. Combined with the way in which the west wall of the north chapel is aligned on the eastern pier of the nave arcade, these features suggest that the chapel represents a rebuilding on earlier foundations of a lateral compartment, cut

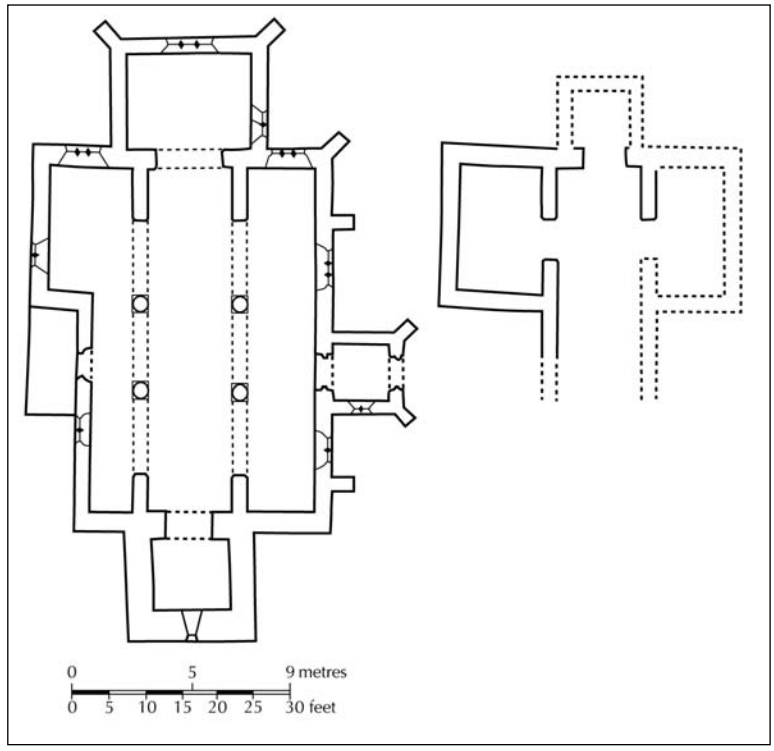


Fig. 2: Plan of the church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Lillingstone Lovell. Notice the irregularly set out north chapel, and the long 'responds' at the east end of the nave. It is suggested that this represents the remains of a lateral compartment or pair of compartments, shown in the speculative reconstruction on the right. This and the other plans are discussed in the text.

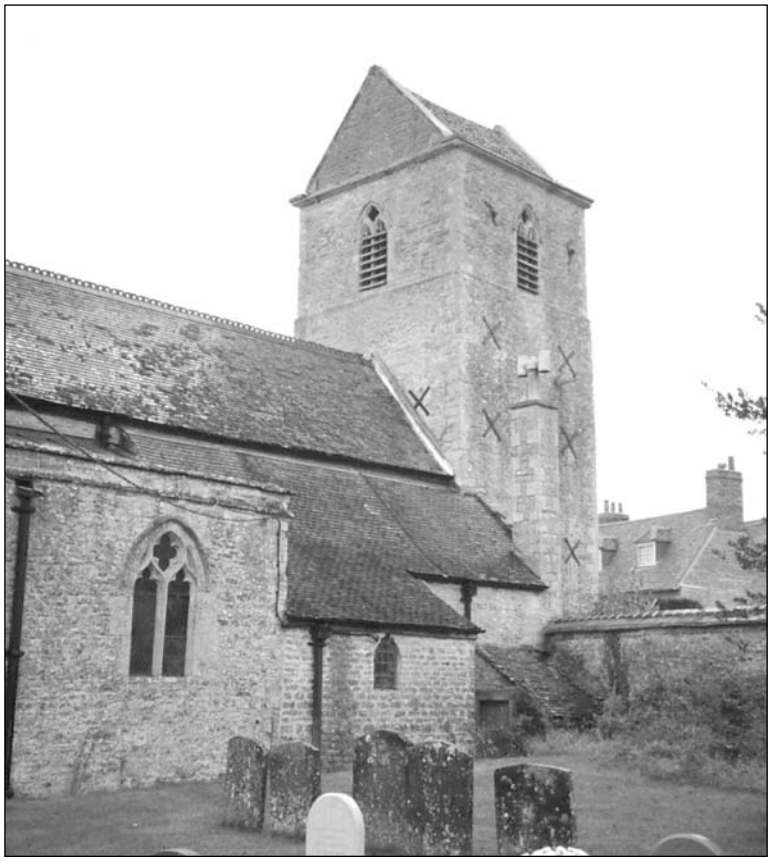


Fig. 3: Lillingstone Lovell, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, from the north-east, showing the north chapel, north aisle and tower.

into when the narrow nave aisle was built early in the thirteenth century. If the length of wall extending west from the chancel arch was complemented by one extending east from the former west wall of the compartment as represented by the pier, there would be space for a narrow doorway leading from the east end of the nave into the compartment in a manner characteristic of porticus in late Anglo-Saxon churches. The narrowness and height of the nave would be consistent with such a dating, and the clumsy construction of the tower arch may represent an altered pre-Conquest opening.[12] Without excavation of the floor in the aisle it is not possible to ascertain whether the north porticus was mirrored on the south, and the shape and form of the early chancel is completely unknown, though it is likely to have been small, and may have served as a private compartment for the clergy, with the altar standing outside to the west.[13] If these suggestions are correct, they may indicate that Lillingstone Lovell, although a dependent settlement (above), was furnished with a church of some importance, probably with rights of baptism and burial since the west tower must have been built to house bells, before the Normal Conquest.

Passenham and Whittlebury

Evidence for pre-Conquest churches at Passenham and Whittlebury is much more speculative, and would hardly be worth considering were it not known that the places were visited by kings in the early-tenth century. At Passenham, a straw in the wind is provided by the dedication to St Guthlac, a Fenland hermit who died in 714 and to whom only ten medieval churches in England were dedicated.[14] The only other possible hint of an early church is that the nave is exceptionally wide, at 25 ft 3 in. (7.7 m.), perhaps suggesting that the present, thirteenth-century, walls encased an earlier, narrower or generally smaller, church. It is also just conceivable that the position of blocked north and south doorways almost in the middle of the nave, rather than in the more usual position towards the west end, is an artefact of a shorter nave with entrances on the same alignment.

At St Mary's Whittlebury, the development of the church is more complicated (Figs. 4 & 5). Quoins on the west wall indicate that the nave was originally unaisled to the south; inside, the

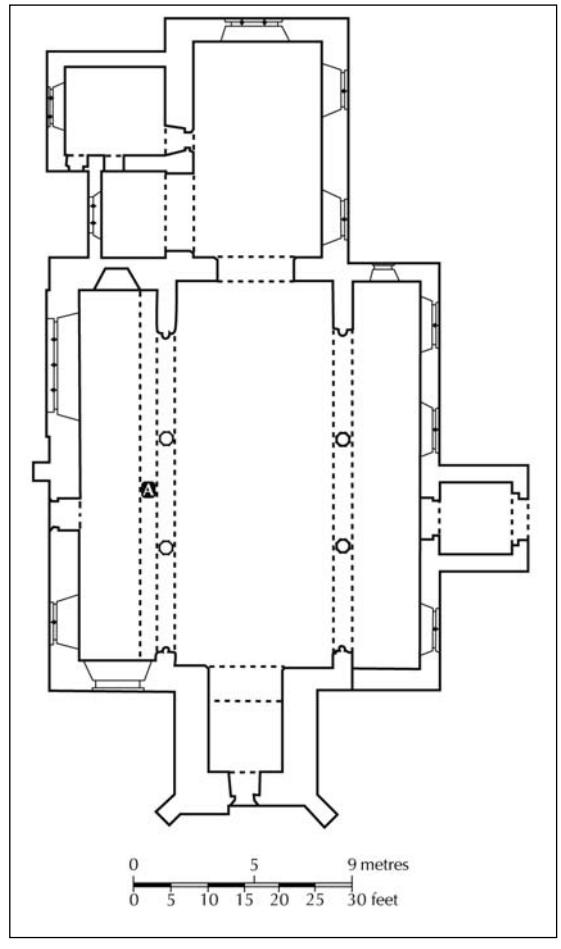


Fig. 4: Plan of Whittlebury, St Mary. Notice the fact that the nave is offset to the tower. The dotted line of the wall labelled 'A' (to the immediate north of the current north arcade) marks an earlier nave wall, as discussed in the text.

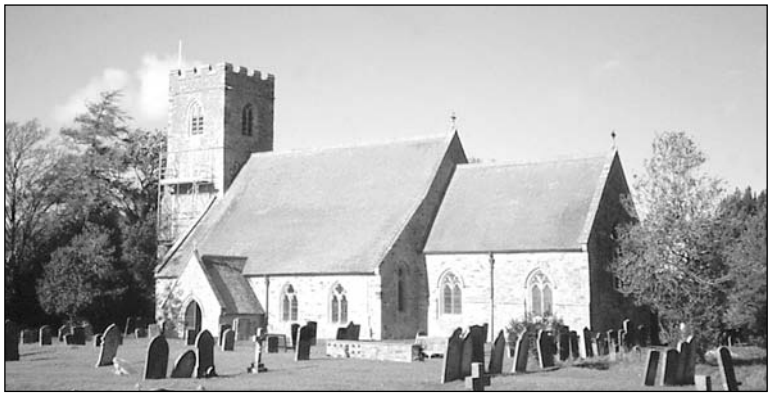


Fig. 5: Whittlebury, St Mary from the south-east.

capitals of the responds show that the arcade knocked through the formerly solid south wall was originally of *c.*1200. The way in which the nave is not aligned with the tower combined with the absence of similar quoins at the north suggests that the north arcade, perhaps slightly earlier than that on the south, was built one wall thickness inside an earlier wall and that the nave was therefore originally wider than now. The narrowing of a nave is relatively uncommon, but the reason may be that the nave was very wide – nearly as wide as that at Passenham; it still feels wide even in its slightly reduced form. This again opens the possibility that the present nave was constructed around something earlier.

Although the suggestion of earlier structures is speculative, both sites have a history which might suggest the presence of a church at some time in its past. At Passenham, King Edgar and his army leaders would have needed somewhere convenient to worship during the winter of 921, and the holding of an assembly at Whittlebury might well have required the construction of a place of worship if one did not already exist. Such buildings could have been temporary and might not have survived until the present churches were built, in which case their sites could nevertheless have been respected by the later permanent buildings; or, whether they were built of timber or stone, they might have survived until being demolished following encasement within the later buildings. These hypotheses could perhaps be tested by the use of ground-penetrating radar within the churches, though final interpretation would probably require internal excavation.

Saxon or Norman?

With one exception, the earliest stylistic evidence in the surviving churches, in the form of openings or mouldings, comes from the Norman period after 1120 or 1130. If this were to be interpreted as the time at which the present churches were first built it would

imply either that the villages formed between the middle of the ninth century and 1100 did not have churches, or that the Anglo-Norman lords of the villages systematically completely replaced earlier buildings, perhaps including some of timber construction. Both interpretations are possible, but there is a third: namely, that Anglo-Saxon churches were so altered in the post-Conquest period that, although parts of their walls may remain, there are no stylistic details.[15]

The issue can be illustrated by the church of St Nicholas at Lillingstone Dayrell (Figs. 6 & 7), where the chancel arch is of eleventh-century character and could have been built before or after the Conquest. The nave is likely to retain the proportions, and perhaps some of the walling, of the building in which the chancel arch was first constructed, but the creation of arcades later in the middle ages has removed all evidence for windows which might have contained clues of date, as has the creation of a thirteenth-century tower arch in the west wall.[16] Of the chancel which the eleventh-century arch served nothing remains, though the smallness of the arch suggests that it was both narrower and lower than the present chancel. It is also possible that a change in alignment about half way along the thirteenth-century chancel was caused by the building of the western half of the south wall immediately outside that of a shorter eleventh-century structure, but it could also result from rebuilding in two stages as possibly indicated by the forms of the windows.[17]

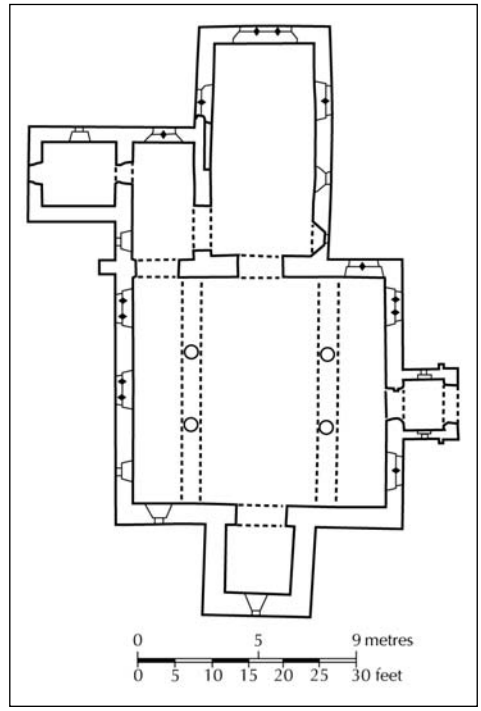


Fig. 6: Plan of Lillingstone Dayrell, St Nicholas. The chancel arch is of eleventh-century character.

Fig. 7: Lillingstone Dayrell, St Nicholas, looking north-east to the small chancel arch, of eleventh-century character.

At St Nicholas, Potterspury (Figs. 8 & 9), the earliest stylistic evidence is the eastern pier of the north nave arcade, which has a round shaft and square abacus with some dog-tooth, probably of the later twelfth century (Figs. 10 & 11). This indicates the presence of a nave and north aisle by that date. It cannot be determined whether there was an earlier, unaisled, phase, though the irregular setting out of the north arcade suggests there was. There are no other stylistic features in the building earlier than the thirteenth century, all other older walls (whether twelfth-century or earlier) having been either taken away or pierced by large late-medieval arches which would have destroyed earlier windows and doorways. All that can be said with certainty is that by the end of the twelfth century Potterspury had a church with some kind of chancel and a two-bay nave with north aisle, which may have been built in one or more phases between perhaps the middle of the eleventh century and the end of the twelfth.

Both Potterspury and Lillingstone Dayrell are typical of the kind of church which would be expected in a modest manorial village. A church probably also existed in the tiny parish of St Bartholomew, Furtho (Figs. 12-14), where the only evidence for a twelfth-century origin is a re-set door head in the south wall of the chancel and the fact that the chancel is narrower than the nave, as it also is at The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Stowe, and at St James, Akeley (demolished), the later form of which is known from nineteenth-century illustrations.[18] Whether stone churches of these proportions represent the first churches at these small village sites is unclear. If they do not replace earlier structures, either of timber, or of stone as at Furnells, Raunds, in Northamptonshire, it would appear that the nascent villages of the late Anglo-Saxon period were not served by local churches. It is perhaps more likely that they are replacements or improvements

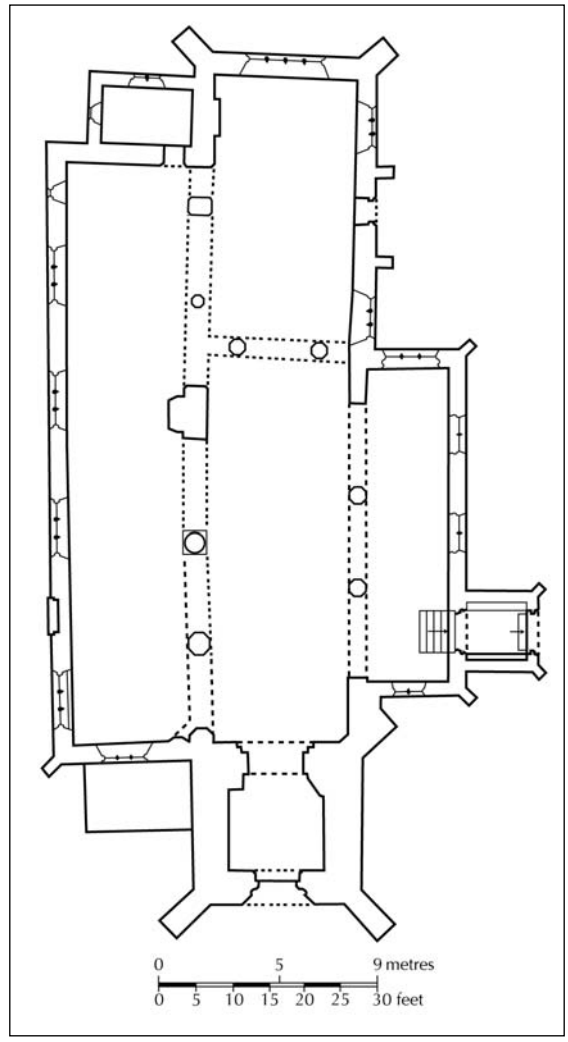


Fig. 8: Plan of Potterspury, St Nicholas. The church has a complex building history, discussed in the text.

of earlier buildings, and that their present form could date from the achievement of full parish status: as was seen above, Akeley was originally dependent on Leckhampstead, and the parish of Lillingstone Dayrell was carved out of the larger territory of Lillingstone Lovell, suggesting that its church may have been subordinate to that of the mother settlement.

The earliest extant phase of the Church of the Assumption of the Virgin at Leckhampstead (Figs. 15 & 16) also seems to have been of similar form. Although the nave is now much longer, quoins above the south porch, associated with changes in masonry and a horizontal step-back in the western part of the wall, suggest that the nave shared with the other village churches the characteristic proportion of being roughly twice as long as it was wide. In addition, the fourteenth-century chancel is off-centre to the nave, suggesting that the west end of its south wall stands on

the foundations of a twelfth-century or earlier predecessor, while the north wall was rebuilt outside the old one:[19] such a sequence would mean that the earlier chancel was probably the kind of small squarish compartment characteristic of the middle of the twelfth century at the latest.

An Age of Expansion

The two hundred years after the middle of the twelfth century saw the expansion of several of the Whittlewood churches. At Potterspury, as has been seen, either the church was built, or it was expanded by the addition of a north aisle. At Leckhampstead contemporary expansion was more radical. Perhaps in the third quarter of the twelfth century, the nave was extended to its present length. This may be related to the south doorway, which is more elaborate than anything else in the area and has a tympanum with entwined dragons (Fig. 17). The fact that the simpler north doorway is probably of the same date,[20] combined with the uniform nature of the north arcade (which consists of square chunks of wall (Fig. 18) left when the arches were knocked through), suggests that the north aisle or its predecessor was added as part of the same campaign. The tower may also have been built at that time, for the first-floor window in its west wall is flanked by shafts with capitals of late twelfth-century type and its

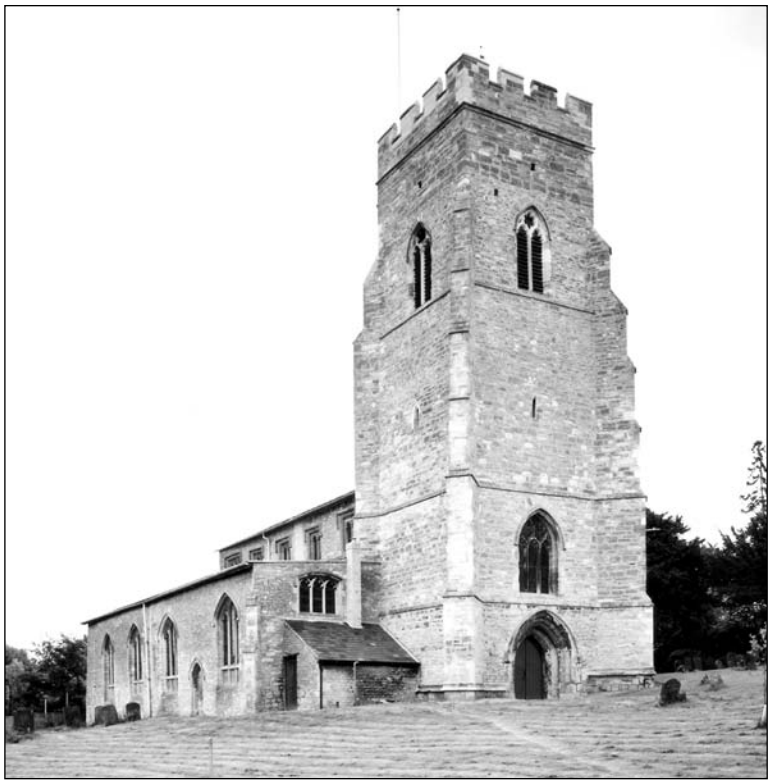


Fig. 9: Potterspury, St Nicholas from the west.

hoodmould, with lunettes cut in both upper and lower faces, is the same as that above the nave arcade. If this were the case, however, it would seem that the west doorway was inserted or replaced in the second quarter or middle of the thirteenth century as its mouldings have deep hollows and its shafts are lightly keeled.[21]

The addition of an aisle or aisles was one of the most frequent changes in the later twelfth and early-thirteenth century. It occurred on at least the north side of Lillingstone Lovell (Figs. 2 & 3) and on both sides at Whittlebury (Figs. 4 & 5), where the arcades (rebuilt at slightly different dates in the fourteenth century) were originally created *c.*1200 (above); at Lillingstone Dayrell, the responds of the early fourteenth-century arcades are also of thirteenth-century character (Fig. 6; the responds are just visible in Figure 7). Such early aisles, particularly that at Lillingstone Lovell, are very narrow – the latter little over 6ft (1.8 m.) wide. This is characteristic of the period, and was associated with low side walls under steep-pitched roofs.[22] At Leckhampstead, the aisle was rebuilt with taller walls and a lower-

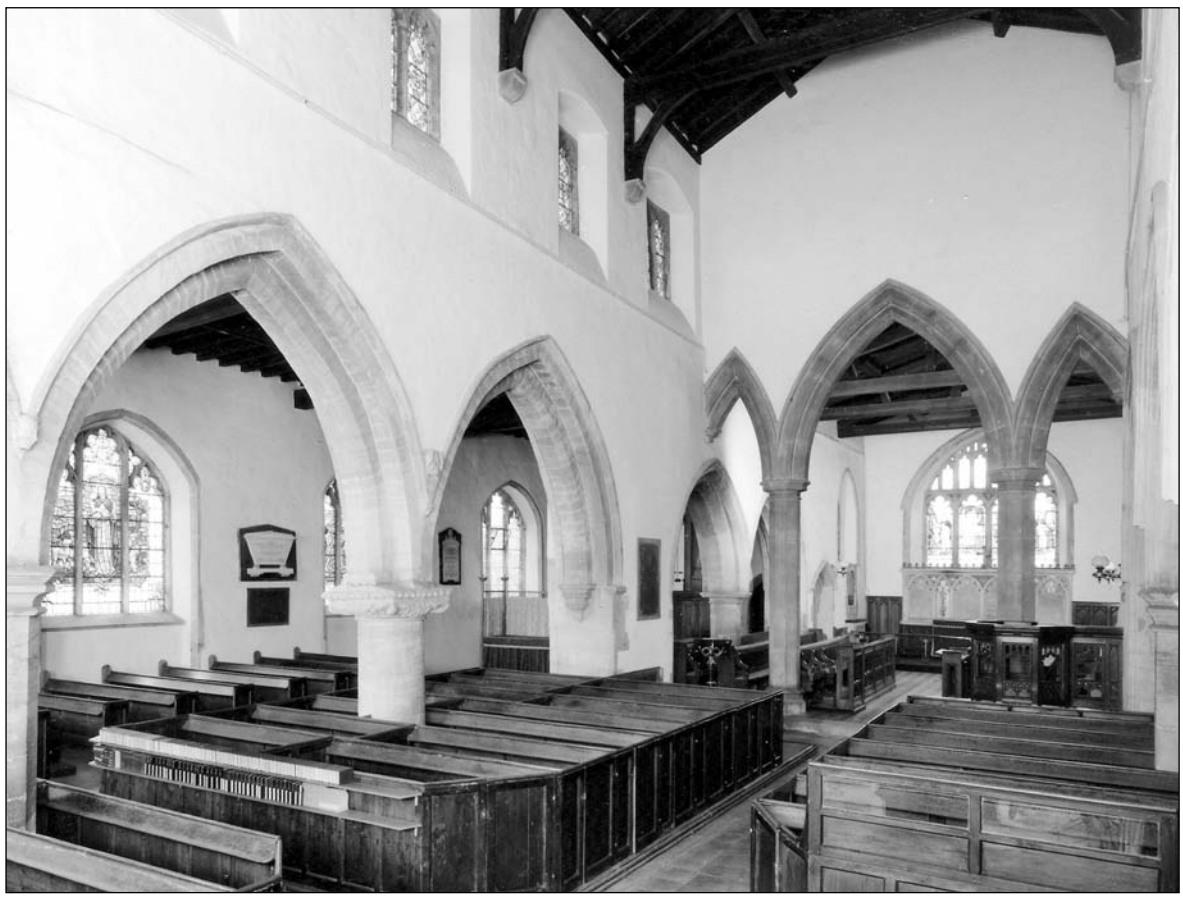


Fig.10: Pottesrpury, St Nicholas, looking north-east. The earliest feature is the round pier with square abacus and some dog-tooth in the north arcade (slightly to the left of centre of this picture).

pitched roof in the first half of the fourteenth century (Figs. 15 & 16); it is possible that it was at the same time widened by a wall thickness, with the twelfth-century doorway re-set, because the outer wall is thinner than the Norman walls, and it was quite common for the new structure to be built outside the old one so that use of the church was disrupted as little as possible during building operations. At Whittlebury the aisles were also heightened during the first half of the fourteenth century, and provided with new, taller, arcades to let light from the enlarged windows into the nave. A similar pattern is found at Lillingstone Lovell, where the south aisle was widened (with the thirteenth-century doorway re-set) and new arcades supplied on both sides of the church; and although the detailed chronology is more difficult to understand, the development of Lillingstone Dayrell may not have been very different, since the arcades appear early fourteenth-century rather than contemporary with the capitals of their responds (above), as does the flowing tracery of the east window of the south aisle.[23] At Stowe there is no evidence for narrow aisles of the late-twelfth or early-thirteenth century: that on the north, which is of normal later-medieval proportions, was built in the mid- to late-thirteenth century; that on the south (Fig. 19) possibly as late as the middle to end of the fourteenth. Since arcades could be altered leaving no trace in the surviving fabric (particularly when plastered over), and the wider aisles were built outside older, narrow, ones, the possibility that there was an earlier generation of aisles cannot be completely dismissed at either Stowe or the south side of Potterspury (Fig. 8), where the south arcade and aisle date from around 1400 or a little later.

Aisles were not the only area of the church which saw expansion between the end of the twelfth century and the middle of the fourteenth. As already discussed, the nave of Leckhampstead was extended to the west where a new tower was built. At much the same time the present tower was erected at Whittlebury, while the early-thirteenth century saw the construction of that at Lillingstone Dayrell, and at Lillingstone Lovell the tower was either built or rebuilt. At Passenham, where the nave and chancel appear to have been built in their present form *c.*1230, the tower was added around seventy years later, and at Stowe (Fig. 19) the present tower dates from no earlier than 1330–40. While there is no visible evidence to suggest that it replaces anything earlier, heavy and intrusive post-medieval buttressing against its west face could open the possibility that an earlier structure had required replacement; on the other hand, it might, like Furtho, where the tower is early seventeenth-century (Figs. 12 & 13), have remained without a tower, bells perhaps hung in an open bell cote or simple timber structure on the roof.[24] That may also have been the case

Fig. 11: Potterspury, St Nicholas, early north arcade pier. This photograph was taken some years after Fig. 10, and the pews have been replaced by chairs, allowing the base of the pier to be seen.

Fig. 12: Right. Plan of Furtho, St Bartholomew. The chancel is narrower than the nave. The door in the south wall of the chancel is of twelfth-century style, and has been reset into a later wall. The tower is of the seventeenth century.

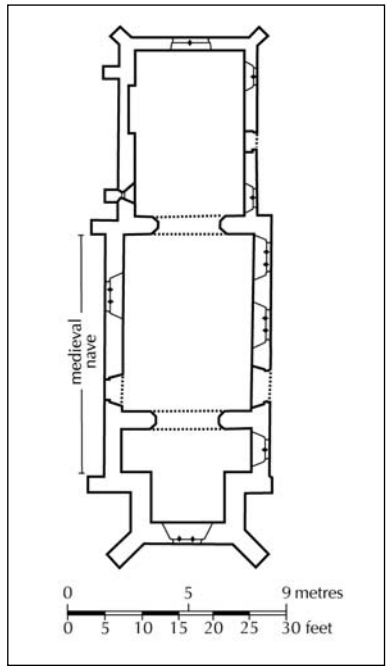


Fig. 13: Below. Furtho, St Bartholomew, from the south-east. The reset door into the chancel can be seen.

Fig. 14: Furtho, St Bartholomew, looking east from within the early seventeenth-century tower. The church is now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust. © Copyright English Heritage.NMR.

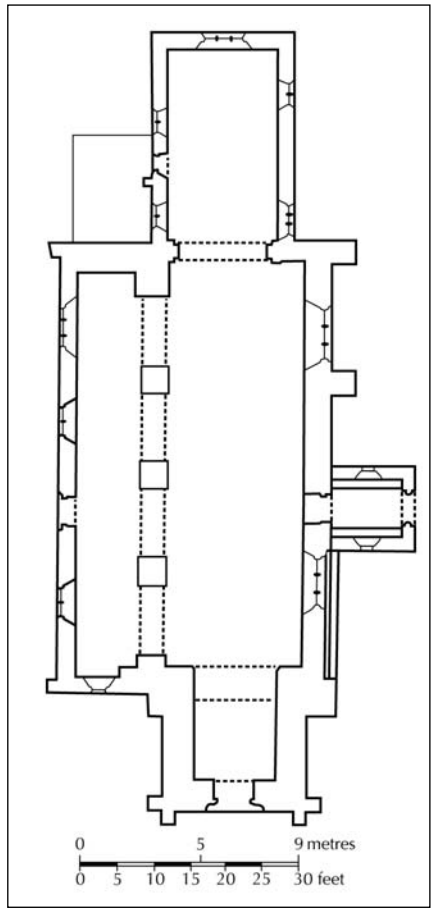


Fig. 15: Plan of the church of the Assumption of the Virgin, Leckhampstead. The fourteenth-century chancel is off-centre to the nave, suggesting that the north wall of the present chancel may have been rebuilt outside an earlier wall.

at Potterspury, where the nave was extended to the west when the present tower was built at the end of the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth century (Fig. 9), probably as part of a refurbishment which saw the creation (or rebuilding) of the south aisle, and must have involved a reconstruction of the north aisle since it ran the full length of the enlarged nave.

The east ends of the churches were also subject to considerable alteration and expansion during this period. The earliest surviving example is at Lillingstone Dayrell, where the chancel was widened (to north and south) and lengthened, though whether in one or two phases is unclear (above). At Potterspury (Fig. 10) there were more certainly two stages of work in the late-thirteenth century: the chancel itself was lengthened and refurbished in about 1260, and its north wall was pierced by an arcade into a predecessor of the present north chapel thirty years later. The chancel itself was again refurbished in the first half of the fourteenth century, when all the other surviving medieval chancels apart from that at Passenham seem to have been enlarged: at Furtho rebuilding involved lengthening but not widening; at Leckhampstead it saw

Fig. 16: Leckhampstead, Assumption of the Virgin, from the south-east.

lengthening and widening to the north; at Stowe lengthening and widening on both sides, as may also have been the case at Whittlebury where the nineteenth-century chancel is in a fourteenth-century style and may have re-used earlier foundations.[25] At Lillingstone Lovell, with its exceptionally narrow nave, the chancel was made wider than the nave and lengthened, only to be truncated in the eighteenth or nineteenth century.[26]

Stagnation

In contrast to the preceding period, the two hundred years after the mid-fourteenth century saw very little significant building. At Stowe the south arcade, aisle and porch were built in the late-fourteenth century (above), a clerestory was added in the later fifteenth century and a moderately elaborate two-bay north chancel chapel early in the sixteenth; and at Potterspury, in addition to the radical transformation of the nave, aisles and tower in about 1400 (described above), the third quarter of the fifteenth century saw an unusual and complicated set of changes which involved moving the chancel arch half a bay to the east when the clerestory was constructed; later, in 1510,[27] a series of bequests indicates that the south porch was built or renewed, and perhaps in the 1530s or 1540s the north aisle was refenestrated in a campaign which may have been arrested by the Reformation since the label stops were left uncarved. Elsewhere, while Lillingstone Lovell was furnished with a clerestory, the aisled churches at Lillingstone Dayrell and Whittlebury were not, and the only other definite addition was the porch at Leckhampstead. Otherwise a rood loft was almost certainly created in all the churches, necessitating the replacement or alteration of an earlier screen, but only in Lillingstone Lovell and Potterspury did the creation of the stair require intervention in the fabric of the building.

Fig. 17: Leckhampstead, Assumption of the Virgin, tympanum of south doorway with entwined dragons fighting over a small human figure.

Discussion

After the initial construction phase, which has already been discussed, the broad overall chronological pattern of development seems to correspond well with that of settlement and population expansion between the twelfth and early- to mid-fourteenth century, and also with the contraction thereafter, marked in the churches by a lack of investment. The picture is not, however, as simple as that, for it needs to take account both of the separate evolution of devotional practice during the middle ages, and of the wealth contained within each community, which was not directly proportionate to its size.

The enlargement of chancels and provision of new towers in the thirteenth and early-fourteenth centuries has nothing to do with the expansion of population, as neither created more space for the laity. Both were connected with the development of liturgy and of the sacraments. After transubstantiation became a formal doctrine of the church in 1215, space around the altar, which had already begun to be placed at increased distance from the laity, was regularly made more elaborate, as befitted the place where Christ himself was present in the building, and larger, partly in order to enable the laity in the nave better to see the elevation of the host and partly to provide space for lights and for torch-bearers to enter the chancel to glorify Christ without blocking the view from the nave.[28] At the same time, increased ceremonial surrounding the eucharist, and both baptism and burial, drove an increase in the number and size of bells which, in turn, led to the provision of new towers, replacing either earlier ones or small bell cotes.

It is partly against this background that the addition of nave aisles in the late-twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries must be

seen. Although aisles have often been seen as providing accommodation for an expanded population, they did not provide space from which people could participate in the action of the liturgy through seeing it, particularly seeing the elevation of the host, the focus for the laity at Mass. Furthermore, aisles as narrow as that at Lillingstone Lovell (or even the present aisle at Leckhampstead) would have provided so little space that the benefit would have been slight, and there is little evidence that the churches actually needed significantly more space: at Lillingstone Dayrell, the 11 Domesday households were so spaciously treated in the eleventh-century nave that all the members of the 33 households of 1279 could just have squeezed in. At Leckhampstead, while the western extension of the nave could have supplied space for more people, the expansion occurred a hundred years before the late thirteenth-century peak of population; and at Potterspury the nave was probably not enlarged until around 1400, when the population was in decline.[29]

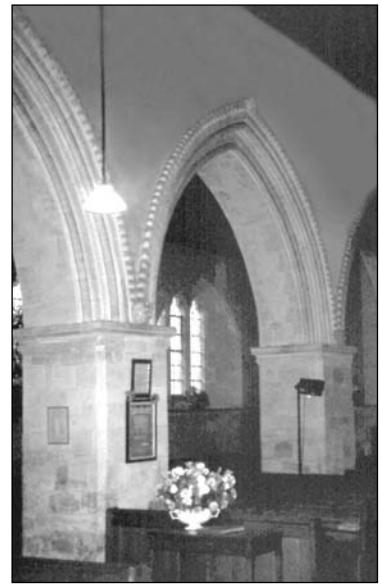


Fig. 18: Leckhampstead, Assumption of the Virgin, the north arcade.

Rather than being related to the growth of population, it is more likely that the addition, and then expansion, of aisles was, like the alterations and additions to chancels and towers, driven by changes in liturgical or devotional practice. It is also important not simply to assume that the later widening of the early aisles was necessarily to provide extra space for the activity already accommodated in them, rather than being for a new function. This issue requires fuller exploration, but it is possible that the narrow aisles may have been intended to house saints' images and their devotional objects, which became more important as lay access to the host was withdrawn, while the later, wider, aisles, were to accommodate the altars and burials required for the chantries and other forms of soul Mass once the impact of the doctrine of Purgatory (1274) was felt.[30] The fact the population was expanding contemporaneously is probably coincidental rather than causative. In addition, the fact that the churches at Akeley, Furtho and Passenham were not furnished with aisles may be a reflection of their smallness and poverty, but does not mean that they failed to participate in liturgical evolution, for in the early-sixteenth century Passenham had a nave altar of St Mary[31] and a resident chaplain as well as the rector's curate.[32]

The lack of late-medieval or Perpendicular fabric is a sign of poverty and perhaps of the decline in population, but, while greater wealth might have led to rebuilding and improvement, it would probably not have led to further radical expansion, since there were no further doctrinal, liturgical or devotional changes which required new forms of space. The exception to the pattern in Whittlewood is Potterspury, perhaps significantly the settlement next to Watling Street, the most important long-distance route

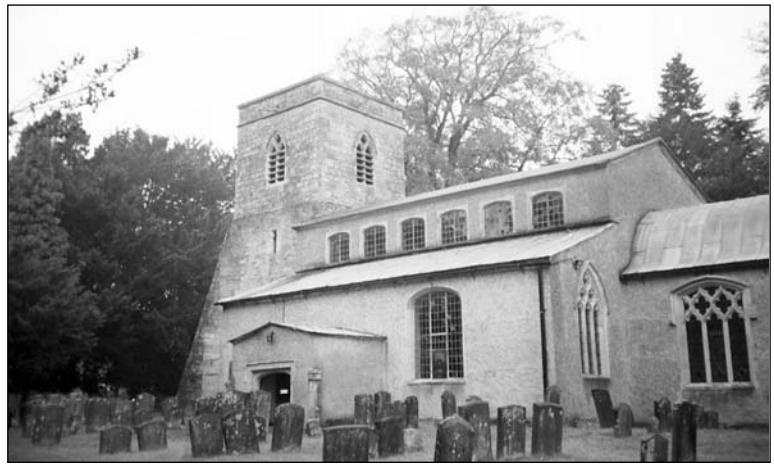


Fig. 19: Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Stowe, tower and nave from the south-east.

through the area, and the settlement with a significant industry (potting) which may have insulated it against the decline in agricultural wealth.

For the rest, the addition of clerestories and rood lofts shows that modest investment was made in the fittings required for changes in devotional fashion, particularly enhanced and affective piety towards the rood. Wills from the late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth centuries are rare, perhaps a reflection of the small number of parishioners and of a lack of wealth, and do not accurately reflect the number of small-scale bequests to lights and images or for single soul Masses, but there are hints that parishes were able to engage in the full range of devotional activities, even if in rather dated buildings. At the relatively prosperous Potterspury, there were, in addition to the high altar, altars to Our Lady, St Thomas and Jesus, and in 1526 there was a stipendiary priest as well as the vicar.[33] Stowe has its early sixteenth-century chancel chapel for soul masses; the nave piers contain evidence for the brackets to support elaborate images; and wills reveal that in addition to the high altar there were lights, and therefore images or altars, of Saints John the Baptist and Nicholas, and there is also mention of lights at the rood and sepulchre.[34] At Whittlebury, with no evidence for fifteenth-century fabric, wills indicate that aisle altars to Saints Katherine and Thomas were still in use in the early-sixteenth century, as well as the high altar,[35] while at Wick Dive (on the site of the present church at Wicken), there were the high altar of St John the Baptist and also altars of Our Lady, at which there was a chantry and a fraternity, St Katherine and St Kenelm.[36]

Analysis of church development demonstrates that, despite its continued hold over the popular mind, the idea that churches mirror changes in settlement and population is too simple, notwithstanding the chronological coincidence with the age of

expansion, since churches evolved to address liturgical and devotional needs which changed irrespective of population levels. What may more reasonably be suggested is that church development provides a crude index of wealth in a community. None of the Whittlewood parishes was rich at any period, but there was sufficient wealth in the thirteenth and early-fourteenth century for all churches to be to some degree enlarged to accommodate elaborated liturgy and increased lay devotional activity. After the middle of the fourteenth century there were few developments in liturgy or devotion which required the expansion of the ground plan of parish churches. In prosperous parts of the country new chantry chapels might be added and aisles, towers and chancels were often renewed with larger, better, more ornate ones: they enhanced the setting of worship but did not provide for new forms of liturgy or devotion. In Whittlewood investment was made in the rood screens, clerestories, altars and images required for full participation in late-medieval worship, but in most of the parishes in the Forest there were not the means for 'elective' spending on opulent new works in the new Perpendicular style.

Afterword: The impact of the Reformation

At the Reformation most of the late-medieval fittings, furnishings and images were cast out, and along with them the altars and other paraphernalia for looking after souls in Purgatory. Shorn of images and the semi-living dead, and at a time when population was not rising markedly, most of the churches were larger than was needed even when fixed seating was introduced. This has left its mark in a number of ways. At Lillingstone Dayrell, where the chancel already contained monuments, including a tomb chest with brasses commemorating Paul Dayrell (d. 1491) and his wife,

Fig. 20: Lillingstone Dayrell, St Nicholas, chancel looking south-west, showing the somewhat obtrusive tomb of Paul Dayrell and his wife, erected shortly after 1571.

the centre of the chancel was effectively blocked shortly after 1571 with the large and elaborate tomb of another Paul Dayrell and his wife (Fig. 20). The proportions of this lavish monument render the chancel difficult to use for Communion, as it blocks access to the high altar, and it is perhaps likely that it marked the transformation of the chancel into a family chapel,[37] and that a table for the Lord's Supper was set up west of the narrow chancel arch. Perhaps in the seventeenth century, the north aisle was taken down, probably on account of decay, and was only replaced in 1868.[38] At Lillingstone Lovell, also, the chancel may have fallen from use, since a visitation of 1530 reports it to have been 'ruinous'[39] and its present severely truncated form dates from the eighteenth or nineteenth century. At the modern village of Wicken the result was more drastic: the churches of the two parishes of Wick Dyve and Wick Hamon were only two hundred yards apart, and in 1587 the parishioners petitioned the Bishop of Peterborough that they might hold joint services alternately in the two churches;[40] the result was a union of the parishes, and the demolition of the church at Hamon.[41] Practically nothing remains, either, of the medieval church at Dyve, for the tower was replaced in the seventeenth century; and the rest was, in the years after 1753, designed by Thomas Prowse, lord of the manor, and built by Sanderson Miller in his favoured Gothick style, probably re-using the medieval foundations of the nave and aisles,[42] but with the chancel shortened.[43]

The picture between the Reformation and Civil War is not entirely one of decay, however, for the acts of individual patrons could have beneficial effects. The more striking example is at Passenham, where the population seems to have remained static, at about 19 households, from the early-fourteenth to the later seventeenth century.[44] In 1624, the manor was bought by Sir Robert Banastre, who had been Comptroller of the Household of James I and Court Victualler to Charles I.[45] He largely rebuilt the manor house and supplied it with an enormous barn and stable block, and in 1626 refurbished the church, rebuilding the chancel, an act recorded by an inscription over its south doorway. This was clearly intended for his own use, and reflected his own Laudian sympathies: the chancel screen, later made into a west gallery, was an elaborate work with Ionic columns, while beyond lay a remarkable set of stalls with misericords, in which Gothic and classical detailing is freely mixed, below niches, perhaps once with statues, bearing the names of the apostles and evangelists (Figs. 21 & 22). Above, and carried round the east of the chancel, was a scheme of *trompe l'œil* paintings depicting the prophets, evangelists

Fig. 21: Passenham, St Guthlac, misericord of 1626.

Fig. 22: Passenham, St Guthlac, south side of chancel with stalls and paintings of 1626.

and scenes from the burial of Christ. The artist is unknown, but inspiration may have come from the refurbishment of the chapel royal at Greenwich earlier in the 1620s.[46]

Without such patronage and refurbishment, it is likely that the church at Passenham would have decayed, and it might have succumbed to demolition during or before the nineteenth century, since already in the seventeenth century the main centre of population lay at Deanshanger, which acquired a chapel of ease in 1854. Today, although Deanshanger remains a chapel, it is the main focus for worship, and the site of the rectory.[47] Banastre did not own the advowson of Passenham, but did at nearby Furtho, the manor of which he purchased in 1625.[48] The village had been largely depopulated and demolished by 1524, while the road to Potterspury was blocked and enclosure completed by 1570,[49] so that the church served little more than the manor household. It stood, however, beside the blocked road which now formed the drive to the manor house, and in 1620 Edward Furtho built the tower which straddles the medieval west wall, and reconstructed the south nave wall.[50] Here, final depopulation may, paradoxically, have saved the church, creating circumstances in which it could be turned into an eye-catching garden feature on the way to the now very private residence of the lords of the manor.[51]

Acknowledgments

I have benefited greatly from the work of former investigators of the churches, even where I do not agree with their conclusions, and particularly from that of Hugh Richmond whose unpublished accounts of the Northamptonshire churches are available from the National Monuments Record in Swindon. I am also grateful to those with whom I have visited and discussed the

churches, particularly Sarah Brown, Christopher Dyer, Richard Jones, Mark Page and Paul Woodfield. All the drawings have kindly been adapted from originals of varied quality by Amanda Daw; Fig. 1 is freely based upon R. Jones and M. Page, *Medieval Villages in an English Landscape: Beginnings and Ends* (Macclesfield, 2006), 84, with the kind permission of Richard Jones. I am grateful to English Heritage for permission to reproduce Figs. 9, 10, 13 and 14.

Notes

1 The principal funding of the project, 'Medieval Settlements and Landscapes in the Whittlewood Area', was provided by the Arts and Humanities Research Council between 2000 and 2005, supplemented by the grants and assistance of a large number of other bodies. The project was directed by Professor Christopher Dyer at Leicester University, assisted by Dr Mark Gardiner of The Queen's University, Belfast, and Professor Stephen Rippon of Exeter University, and the research was principally conducted by Dr Richard Jones and Dr Mark Page, both of whom were based in Leicester.

2 The study of the churches was carried out by the present author, then of English Heritage, who also supervised an investigation funded by English Heritage of the vernacular houses of the area. The initial notes created by the investigation of the churches, 'The Whittlewood Project: Notes on the Medieval Churches', are deposited in the National Monuments Record. In so far as they consist of previously unpublished material, they are also available at http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/archive/whittlewood_ahrb_2006/.

3 R. Jones and M. Page, *Medieval Villages in an English Landscape: Beginnings and Ends* (Macclesfied, 2006), in which can be found full details of the project, its main results, and interim publications. The research material is available at the website given in n. 2 above.

4 For Buckinghamshire the accounts are in Royal Commission on Historic Monuments (England), *Inventory of Historic Monuments in Buckinghamshire*, 2 vols (London, 1912–13) vol. 2 (hereafter, RCHM, *Buckinghamshire*); *Victoria History of the Counties of England: Buckinghamshire*, 4 vols (London, 1905–28), vol. 4 (ed. W. Page) (hereafter, VCH, *Buckinghamshire*); N. Pevsner and E. Williamson, *The Buildings of England: Buckinghamshire*, 2nd edn (London, 1994). For Northamptonshire, the accounts are in N. Pevsner and B. Cherry, *The Buildings of England: Northamptonshire*, 2nd edn (Harmondsworth, 1973), and in unpublished notes for each church in the National Monuments Record (which also form part of the notes mentioned in n. 2).

5 This section is almost entirely derived from Jones and Page, *Medieval Villages*, to which reference should be made for more detail and discussion.

6 See Athelstan's sixth law-code, 'The Ordinance of the Bishops and Reeves of the London District', cap. 12.1, translated in D. Whitelock, *English Historical Documents 1: c.500–1042* (London, 1955), 389.

7 *Victoria History of the Counties of England: Northamptonshire*, 6 vols to date (London, 1902–), vol. 5 (ed. P. Riden) (hereafter, VCH, *Northamptonshire*), 234.

8 *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, MS A, *s.a.* 917 (*recte* 921), in *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, ed. by D. Whitelock, D.C. Douglas and S.I. Tucker, 2nd edn (London, 1965), 66.

9 *Newington Longeville Charters*, ed. by H.E. Salter, Oxfordshire Record Society 3 (Oxford, 1931), no. 16.

10 VCH, *Northamptonshire*, 127. Stowe is the other settlement which is now abandoned, its church standing in curious isolation near the house, but that was a product of later enclosure, in 1637, when the village was bodily moved to Dadford. See Jones and Page, *Medieval Villages*, 215.

11 RCHM, *Buckinghamshire*, 170.

12 I am grateful to Richard Halsey for confirming this suggestion.

13 See the discussion in P.S. Barnwell, 'The laity, the clergy and the Divine Presence: the use of space in smaller churches of the eleventh and twelfth centuries', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 157 (2004), 41–60.
14 F. Arnold-Foster, *Studies in Church Dedications or England's Patron Saints*, 3 vols (London, 1899), vol. 2, 95–99; vol. 3, 365 with 353.
15 This possibility is discussed in relation to other Northamptonshire evidence in P.S. Barnwell, 'Churches built for priests? The evolution of parish churches in Northamptonshire from the Gregorian Reform to the Fourth Lateran Council', *Ecclesiology Today*, 32 (2004), 8–15.
16 RCHM, *Buckinghamshire*, 167 and 168–69, is mistaken in thinking the tower arch is also eleventh-century.
17 RCHM, *Buckinghamshire*, 167 and 168 suggested two phases; the near-contemporary account in VCH, *Buckinghamshire*, 190, and the relatively recent one in Pevsner and Williamson, *Buildings of England*, 431, disagree. Those who participated in the Ecclesiological Society's 2007 Focus Day were divided in their opinions.
18 The illustrations are reproduced in Akeley History Group, *Akeley: Past Times* (Akeley, 2001), 98, 103. The impression they create is supported by the very brief description in B. Willis, *The History and Antiquities of the Town, Hundred and Deanery of Buckingham* (London, 1755), 129–30.
19 One-sided expansion is not common, but has been recognised at several churches in Northamptonshire, including All Saints, Pytchley. The phenomenon will be discussed in a forthcoming monograph on the medieval churches of Northamptonshire.
20 Pevsner and Williamson, *Buildings of England*, 429.
21 An alternative, suggested by RCHM, *Buckinghamshire*, 166, is that the tower is of the thirteenth century and that the window has been re-set. There is little sign of that, however, and the evidence of the hoodmould suggests otherwise. I am grateful to Sarah Brown for advice concerning this point.
22 P. Draper, *The Formation of English Gothic: Architecture and Identity* (New Haven and London, 2006), 175–76.
23 Nothing can be determined from the north aisle, since it was demolished in the eighteenth century and not replaced until the nineteenth. See Willis, *History*, 218; VCH, *Buckinghamshire*, 190.
24 An open bell cote remained at Akeley until the church was demolished in the nineteenth century and was shown in the illustrations mentioned in n. 18. For a simple enclosed structure, see the illustrated account of Glapthorn in RCHM, *An Inventory of Historical Monuments in the County of Northampton, VI: Architectural Monuments in North Northamptonshire* (London, 1984), 77.
25 There were several phases of work in the nineteenth century. The chancel, which adheres to ecclesiological principles, was probably added in the 1870s: Northamptonshire Record Office [NRO], ML 595 Visitation Book 1872, and ML 598 Visitation Book 1878.
26 RCHM, *Buckinghamshire*, 170.
27 R.M. Serjeantson and H.I. Longden, 'The parish churches and Religious Houses of Northamptonshire: their dedications, altars, images and lights', *Archaeological Journal*, 70 (1913), 394.
28 Cf. Barnwell, 'The laity', 56–57.
29 As implied by figures given in VCH, *Northamptonshire*, 290.
30 This will be discussed in my forthcoming monograph on the medieval churches of Northamptonshire.
31 Serjeantson and Longden, 'Parish churches', 387; there is a squint at the south-east side of the nave which presumably stood behind the altar.
32 *A Subsidy Collected in the Diocese of Lincoln in 1526*, ed. by H. Salter, Oxford Historical Society 63 (London, 1909), 161.
33 Serjeantson and Longden, 'Parish churches', 393–94; Salter, *Subsidy*, 161, cf. *Valor Ecclesiasticus tempore Henrici VIII auctoritate regia instituta*, ed. by J. Caley, 6 vols (London, 1810–34), vol. 4, 239.
34 Buckinghamshire Record Office, DAWe vol. 2, f. 13v.–16r. (will of Richard Halley, 1524); vol. 3, f. 204r. (will of Joan Hillsden, 1539).
35 Serjeantson and Longden, 'Parish churches', 433.

36 Serjeantson and Longden, 'Parish churches', 439–41.
37 Monuments to the Dayrell family continued to be inserted into the chancel until the end of the seventeenth century. See RCHM, *Buckinghamshire*, 169.
38 Pevsner and Williamson, *Buildings of England*, 431.
39 *Visitations in the Diocese of Lincoln, 1517–31*, Lincoln Record Society 33, 35 and 37, 3 vols (1940–47), vol. 2, 32: it was at least not as bad as the rectory, which was reported in 1517–20 as in a similar state (vol. 1, 122–23) but by 1530 was '*enormiter dilapidata et quasi ad terram collapsa*' ('greatly dilapidated and almost fallen to the ground').
40 Transcribed in Oxford, Bodleian MS Top Northants e.3, 146.
41 J. Bridges, *The History and Antiquities of Northamptonshire*, 2 vols (London, Oxford and Northampton, 1791), vol. 1, 330
42 H. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600–1840*, 3rd edn (New Haven and London, 1995), 787.
43 NRO, *Wicken* 362P/29. The chancel was lengthened in 1886 (NRO Faculties ML 1121).
44 VCH, *Northamptonshire*, 208.
45 VCH, *Northamptonshire*, 215.
46. K. Fincham and N. Tyacke, *Altars Restored: The Changing Face of English Religious Worship, 1547–c.1700* (Oxford, 2007), 259–60.
47 VCH, *Northamptonshire*, 236, 237.
48 VCH, *Northamptonshire*, 132.
49 VCH, *Northamptonshire*, 135.
50 Bridges, *History*, 297–98.
51 This is in contrast to the church at Stowe, which was intentionally hidden in a thicket when the new mansion was built.

The English squarson (*or* The black squires of England)

Timothy Cockerill

Timothy Cockerill is a retired solicitor and magistrate living near Cambridge.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND has produced some unique characters, none more so than the squarson, or squire-parson, who was in his heyday during the reign of Queen Victoria.

Although the concept of the squire (or largest landowner in the village) doubling up as the parson was not a new one, it is perhaps significant that the term squarson did not come into general use until the 1850s, according to *The Oxford English Dictionary*. The literary critic Raymond Mortimer thought that the word had been invented, half in jest, by the clerical wit Sydney Smith or by that robust Victorian Bishop, Samuel Wilberforce.[1]

In any event squarsons, even if not so called, had been around since the Middle Ages. For example, in the fourteenth century, at Harpley in Norfolk, the chief landowner, Lord of the Manor, patron and incumbent was John de Gourney.[2]

Two hundred years later the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII paved the way for a significant shift in land ownership. The Court of Augmentations sold large tracts of church lands to the laity, together with advowsons, giving the right to appoint a clergyman to a living as a rector or vicar. [3] As a result the new squirearchy often became closely involved with church patronage and not infrequently nominated a member of their family to a vacancy.

The eighteenth century

By the middle of the eighteenth century the position in society of a minister of the Established Church could compare very favourably with the law or the armed services as a respectable profession. The legal profession was more lucrative and the navy or army, with their gorgeous uniforms, cut more of a dash, but the English country parson, charged with the saving of his parishioners' souls, was second only to the squire in the local hierarchy. A fortunate Georgian squarson ruled supreme, combining as he did both rôles with nobody to gainsay him, enjoying ample leisure and a very comfortable way of life into the bargain. Although not a squarson himself, the famous Parson Woodforde, whose published diaries are so revealing, shows the lifestyle and outlook of a well-to-do country clergyman of the time.[4]

Some eighteenth-century squarsons were of an intellectual or antiquarian bent. Such a man was the Revd Sir John Cullum,

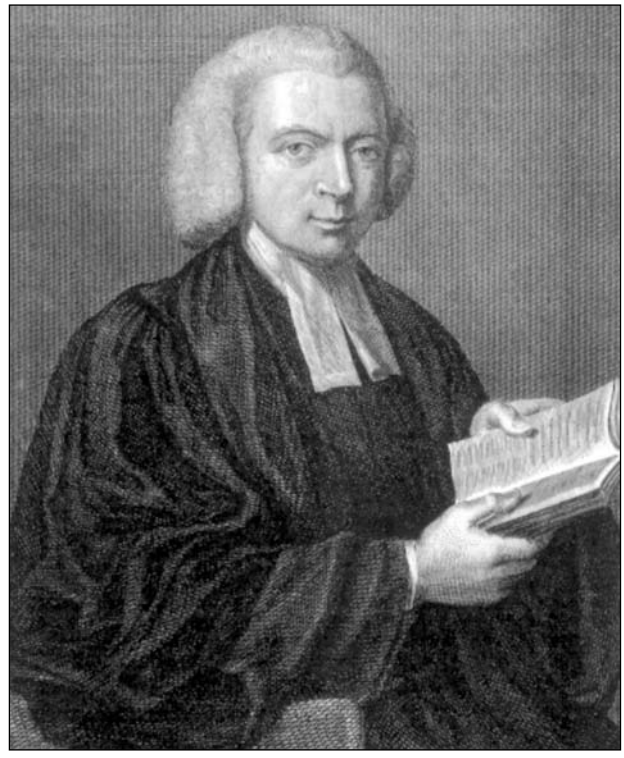


Fig. 1: The Reverend Sir John Cullum, Bart., pictured in 1778

6th Baronet, squire, Lord of the Manor, patron and Rector of Hawstead, near Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk (Fig. 1).[5] Born in 1733 and descended from a family of landed gentry, he was a noted scientist, botanist and historian. He was a Fellow both of the Royal Society and the Society of Antiquaries of London, and was friendly with many of the leading figures of the day. Although he took his local duties of squire and parson seriously he still found time to write and publish a monumental history of the parishes of Hawstead and Hardwick, which remains the standard work today. Despite his many other interests and achievements he probably saw himself essentially as a local leader, lived amongst his parishioners and tenants and was both liked and admired by them. He died in 1785.

Quite a different and far less pleasant eighteenth-century squarson was the Revd Sir Henry Bate-Dudley (1745–1824) of Bradwell Lodge, Bradwell Juxta-Mare in Essex (Fig. 2).[6] During his eccentric and sometimes notorious career he played many parts including founding and editing *The Morning Post*, Master of Foxhounds and pugilist. He was the friend of David Garrick, William Hogarth and Mrs Siddons. Another friend, Thomas Gainsborough, painted him.

Bate-Dudley seems to have been equally at home in the London saloons or riding out with his hounds. One famous chase

ended up with the fox being killed on the roof of Creeksea Church, the Master having shinned up a drainpipe to witness the event. However he also did useful work at Bradwell, restoring both the church and his estate cottages and reclaiming 250 acres of marshland at a total cost to himself of almost £30,000.

Bate-Dudley's clerical career can only be described as bumpy. In 1773 the newly ordained curate was walking with an actress in Vauxhall Gardens in London when she was insulted by a group of swells. A boxing match in lieu of a duel was arranged between Bate-Dudley and the swell's nominee, who turned out to be a noted prize fighter. Nothing deterred, our parson entered the fray with enthusiasm and beat his opponent, thereafter often being referred to as 'The Fighting Parson'. In 1782 he purchased the advowson of Bradwell for £1,500 but when the incumbent died in 1797 and Bate-Dudley appointed himself, the Bishop of London refused to institute him on the grounds of simony. Shortly afterwards he was sued for libel by the Duke of Richmond and sentenced to twelve months imprisonment in the King's Bench prison. On his release he spent ten years of virtual banishment in Ireland before being rescued by Bishop Sparke of

Fig. 2: The Reverend Sir Henry Bate Dudley, Bart., Canon of Ely

Ely, who made him a Canon of Ely Cathedral. This strange appointment apparently came about due to pressure from Bate-Dudley's patron, the Prince Regent, from whom he also obtained a totally unmerited baronetcy 'in repayment of a long standing obligation'. At the time of the Littleport Riots near Ely in 1816 the Revd Canon Sir Henry Bate-Dudley, Bt., J.P., summoned the Militia from Bury St. Edmunds, rode at their head and, after reading the Riot Act, persuaded the rioters to surrender. Perhaps because of this he was given the job of preaching in Ely Cathedral before the Assize Judges sent to punish the offenders. His text, taken from the Book of Timothy, urged obedience to God's laws and offered thanks 'for deliverance from the terrors of devastation amidst which even this venerable temple was profanely marked to fall'. At the subsequent Assizes several of the rioters were condemned to death and others transported to Australia for life.

When Bate-Dudley died in 1824 his Bradwell parishioners and tenants must have had mixed feelings about their Fighting Parson, who was still as pugnacious as ever.

The nineteenth century

By the middle of the nineteenth century the power and influence of the squarson was at its zenith. The Anglican clergy held a respected place in the social hierarchy. The High Church or Oxford Movement and the moral tone of the Royal Family put religion centre stage although Darwin's theory of evolution, the extension of the franchise, the great Chartist Rally in 1848 and the early murmurings of the trade union movement would have been seen as threats by the old time squarsons, who were for the most part all for the *status quo*.

The Victorian squarson was a powerful figure in his own area since he not only owned most of the land and employed a large section of the village on it, and was incumbent of the parish church, but was in addition often a magistrate and so the local upholder of the law.

However, the number of squarson was never great. Looking through *Walford's County Families 1876* we find just 79 clergy who are both Lord of the Manor and incumbent of the same parish (see appendix 1). This scarcity is not surprising. For one thing it was the eldest son who inherited the family estate whilst a younger son normally went into the Church and was often presented to the family living. However, sometimes the eldest son died before his younger parson brother and the latter succeeded him. Or, more unusually still, the eldest son decided to become a clergyman although heir to a landed estate. This was the case with the Revd Sabine Baring-Gould (1834–1924) of Lew Trenchard, Devonshire, perhaps the best known of all the squarsons.[7] Despite

his father's opposition he insisted on taking Holy Orders and in due course succeeded his father as the squire, having appointed himself as the Rector.

A bird's eye view of the landed Anglican clergy - many of whom were not, of course, squarsons - can be gleaned from *The Return of the Owners of Land 1873*. Sometimes known as the modern Doomsday Book, it listed all the landowners in Great Britain holding one acre or more. The landowners are listed alphabetically by county and in England there were 260 clergymen owning 1,000 acres, of which 15 held more than 5,000 acres (see appendix 2). On a random sample analysis of 100 of these landed parsons well over half of them were also squires or titled with entries in *Burke's Peerage* or *Burke's Landed Gentry*. However, of the 15 clergymen owning in excess of 5,000 acres only four were strictly landed clergy, the remainder being primarily squires who, although ordained, had no cure of souls.

The distribution of the landed clergy in the early 1870s is patchy and rather puzzling. It seems, however, that the size of the county and especially its whereabouts tended to govern the number of landed clergy living within it. For example, larger counties such as Yorkshire (the three Ridings), Shropshire and Norfolk had an above average number of county families and this is reflected in the number of landed gentry, most of whom were closely related to them. All three counties could muster a total of 45 landed clergy, whereas remote and poor counties like Cumberland and Westmorland could not field a single one.

The world of the squarson was closely linked to church patronage and the nineteenth century saw an increase in the sale of advowsons. *The Clergy List 1880* shows that about 10% of private, as opposed to institutional, patrons were clergymen.

The personal column of *The Times* newspaper was one way of advertising the sale of an advowson, which could be bought and sold as a commercial transaction. Often the sporting and social potential of the district was stressed rather than the job itself. Sir W.S. Gilbert amusingly satirized such a situation in his *Bab Ballads* (1869). He introduces us to a worldly clergyman with the significant name of the Revd Simon Magus, who was offered a 'rich advowson, highly prized' by an unscrupulous agent.[8] For full 24 verses the wily agent tempts Magus, spelling out the advantages of the cure of Otium-cum-Digge, which was said to possess 'the snuggest vicarage on earth', no sort of clerical duties to speak of and £1,500 p.a. The parson, on complaining that there appeared to be no fashionable society in the area, 'I mean, of course, no sinners there, whose souls will be my special care', was hastily reassured that no less than four noblemen had their seats nearby, which immediately clinched the deal!

Squarson dynasties

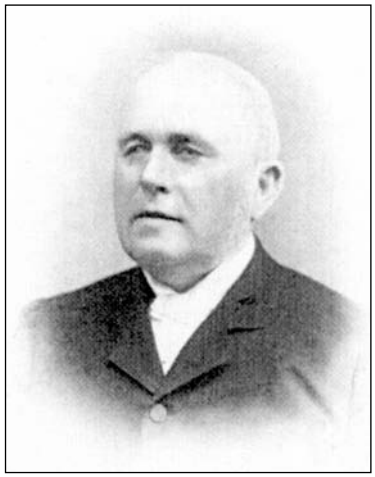
Not only were there individual squarsons but there were also a number of squarson dynasties covering several generations, who were extremely influential over period of a century or more.

A fine example of a Cheshire dynasty of squarsons was provided by the Armitstead family.[9] It all began with the Revd John Armitstead (1764–1814) who came from a Yorkshire yeoman family and was not a university graduate. However, he was astute enough to marry into a local landed gentry family, whereupon he petitioned the College of Arms for a coat of arms for his own family. He managed to obtain such a grant in the name of his grandfather, thus, in his own eyes at least, making him a third generation gentleman. Later he purchased the advowson of Sandbach in Cheshire and the Cranage Hall estate of 1,600 acres, but died shortly afterward.

His son, the Revd John Armitstead II, was born in 1801, went to Oxford University and in 1828 was presented to the living of Sandbach by his father's executors. Here he laboured for the next forty years, building three churches at his own expense, writing a pamphlet on Sabbath-day cheese making (he was against it) and, as a keen cricketer, once postponing the celebration of Ascension Day by a week because it clashed with an important cricket match.

His son, the third generation, was Canon John Richard Armitstead (1829–1919), Vicar of the family living of Sandbach from 1865 until 1919, who was also a Canon of Chester Cathedral, an Alderman on Cheshire County Council and a keen member of the Cheshire Hunt, until an unfortunate accident at a meet left him lame for life (Fig. 3). A low churchman he was always robed in a black gown by his butler before entering the pulpit. In 1877 he succeeded his cousin to the Cranage Hall estate.

Fig. 3: The Reverend Canon John Richard Armitstead, MA, CC



The fourth generation of this remarkable squarson dynasty was Archdeacon John Hornby Armitstead (1868–1941). Launcelot Fleming, later Bishop of Norwich, spent a summer vacation in his parish between the Wars and was greatly impressed by him. He described Armitstead as one of the best of the old squarsons, an autocrat who ran the local town despite its Mayor, and a man whose whole life was selflessly devoted to the welfare of his parishioners, by whom he was greatly loved. He restored Sandbach church, was a Canon of Chester Cathedral like his father, was prominent on the Cheshire Education Committee and was later Archdeacon of Macclesfield. In 1928 he presented Sandbach church with electric light to mark the centenary of the Armitstead's tenure of the living. He died during the Second World War.

Another lengthy squarson dynasty was provided by the Harrison family of Bugbrooke, near Northampton.[10] In 1785, Henry Bagshaw Harrison, a Daventry attorney, purchased the advowson and four years later presented his son to the living. By judicious marriages and thrift the Harrisons gradually established themselves as the leading landowners as well as the incumbents of Bugbrooke, building a substantial mansion (later known as Bugbrooke Hall) in a parkland setting in the early nineteenth century. By 1873 they owned 1,800 acres, were Lords of the Manor and patrons of Bugbrooke and on friendly terms with the leading county families, such as the Cartwrights of Aynho and the Drydens of Canons Ashby (Fig. 4). A nice story is told about one of the Harrison squarsons, probably the Revd James Harwood Harrison (1799–1890) who, as an elderly and infirm magistrate, dispensed justice through the open window of his library. On being confronted by a hapless local criminal he would shout the sentence 'You will go to the House of Correction for 14 days' so loudly that he could be heard from a great distance away.

Fig. 4: The Harrison family of Bugbrooke, Northants

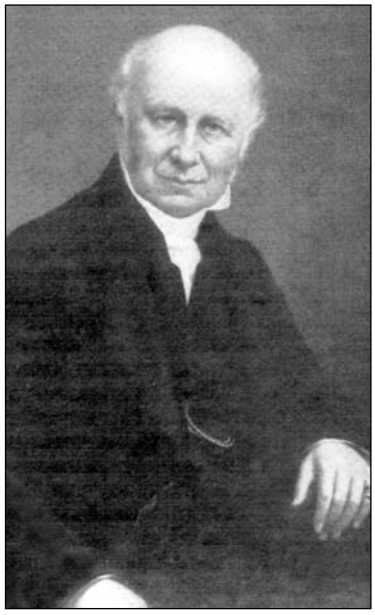


Fig. 5: The Reverend Francis Edward Witts

The Harrisons continued to rule Bugbrooke as its squires and rectors until 1920, continued as its incumbents until 1974 and still retain the advowson and Lordship of the Manor.

The Cotswolds, always a much favoured area in which to live, have also provided their fair share of squarsons. One of the best documented, thanks to the skilful editing of his diaries, is the Revd Francis Edward Witts (1783–1854) of Upper Slaughter near Stow-on-the-Wold.[11] He was descended from rich Oxfordshire linen drapers and mercers who had purchased land and been accepted into the ranks of the landed gentry. Educated at Wadham College, Oxford he was appointed Rector of Upper Slaughter in 1808 and subsequently became the Lord of the Manor and owner of the advowson (Fig. 5). In 1814 he was appointed Vicar of Stanway by the Earl of Wemyss of Stanway House. As if this was not enough Witts also managed to obtain the incumbency of East Lulworth, Dorset, but was always non-resident there.

Apart from his clerical career Francis Witts was a Justice of the Peace, a Deputy Lieutenant for the county and was for many years prominent at Quarter Sessions. A high Tory of the old school, he was severe in his outlook towards the lower classes, something of a snob and a great diner out. He was also quite censorious of his clerical brethren and did not approve of them going out hunting. He lived in some style at Upper Slaughter Rectory (a large house now known as the Lords of the Manor Country House Hotel). Witts founded a three generation dynasty of Cotswold squarsons, his grandson reigning until 1913.

One further example of a squarson dynasty can be found in Berkshire. The Stevens family of Bradfield had purchased the advowson in 1751 and by 1800 had accumulated a landed estate of 4,300 acres. The Revd Thomas Stevens, a third generation squarson, was born in 1809 and educated at Oriel College, Oxford where he was a contemporary of John Keble and other early Tractarians (Fig. 6).[12] However, although Stevens always liked what he called 'a good musical service' he was never a High Churchman himself, spending much of his undergraduate days studying natural history. In the vacations his practical bent showed itself by taking instruction from the village blacksmith.

As the second son, Thomas Stevens was probably always destined to be a clergyman but in 1830 his elder brother died and he found himself the heir to the family estate at Bradfield. To start with he helped his father run the estate but after the Poor Law Act 1835 he threw his boundless energies into becoming the rather over-vigorous Chairman of the Bradfield Union. As a result it became one of the most notorious Unions in England. Despite this, or perhaps in consequence of it, he was appointed an Assistant Poor Law Commissioner for England, establishing Unions in

Derbyshire, Leicestershire and parts of Staffordshire. He also became a close friend of the up-and-coming architect George Gilbert Scott, who was then designing workhouses.

Stevens was ordained in 1839 and, on his father's death in 1842, he presented himself to the Bradfield living, worth £1,200 p.a. and one of the richest in Berkshire. Now he was both the squire and the parson and with enormous enthusiasm he threw himself into numerous local tasks and projects. He spent about £30,000 of his own money on restoring Bradfield Church and as a progressive landowner he was an early pioneer of steam ploughing. His greatest and most lasting achievement, however, was his founding of Bradfield College in 1850. Largely his own architect he erected a series of piecemeal buildings on a thirteen acre site around the old manor house. His new public school, the object of which was to instil religious learning into his young pupils, had the support of several prominent men including W. E. Gladstone.

Thomas Stevens, although full of energy and ideas, was also a notable eccentric. Whilst happy to spend large sums of his own money on Bradfield Church, estate improvements and his new college, his family did not fare quite so well. Their Rectory had become dingy and dilapidated and by the 1880s the dining room had not been redecorated for 40 years. Worst still, the passages

Fig. 6: The Reverend Thomas Stevens

were crammed with architectural oddments and part of the house was given over to his museum of 250 stuffed birds, his collection of pipes and a vast array of walking sticks of various shapes and sizes which he had made himself. His appearance was not very prepossessing either as he preferred to dress as a rough looking country squire, complete with a battered beaver hat, and not at all like the usual neatly dressed country clergyman. Indeed, he did not behave like one either, his dog always accompanying him to church, where he rarely preached if he could avoid it (or if he did, repeated sermons he had often delivered previously) and, never a man to waste valuable time, he would stride into the dining room saying grace on the hoof.

Although his Rectory seems to have lacked some of the home comforts his family might reasonably have expected, they had no less than eight servants to look after them, as well as a butler and coachman in 1851, so that in this respect Thomas Stevens was certainly in the squarson mould.

However, by the 1880s Stevens was in a poor financial way, having spent such large sums on his various projects in the past, and he was eventually declared bankrupt. After this public humiliation he never returned to Bradfield College, of which he had been the first Warden, and he died in 1888, his affairs still in disarray. Bradfield College was saved by his son, but the Stevens dynasty of squarsons was gone for ever.

Non-dynastic squarsons

Generally, however, the Victorian squarson seems to have prospered. Usually, too, he was a one-off figure and not part of a dynasty. Two examples must suffice, both quite different characters.

The Revd Henry Mills of the Manor House, Pillerton Hersey, Warwickshire, was born in 1815, the year of the Battle of Waterloo (Fig. 7).[13] His father was a country parson but not a squarson and the family descended from an eighteenth-century Chancery official and were connected with the London banking house of Glyn Mills. His mother was a daughter of a neighbouring squire, Sir John Mordaunt, Bt. of WaIton Hall.

Young Mills attended Rugby School under Dr Arnold and then went on to Balliol College, Oxford, where his fellow undergraduates included two future Lord Chancellors and three future bishops. No high flyer himself, Henry Mills was content to rely on family patronage and influence for the comfortable and perhaps not very demanding life that he chose to follow. Ordained in the late 1830s he was appointed Vicar of Pillerton Hersey, a small village between Banbury and Stratford-upon-Avon, in 1841. He lived at the Manor House at Pillerton, inheriting the

Fig. 7: The Reverend Henry Mills (extreme left) outside Pillerton School in 1906, when in his 91st year

surrounding estate of 2,630 acres from his father. The Mills family purchased the estate from the Duke of Rutland in 1790.

As the local squarson Henry Mills set about not only ministering to his parishioners' spiritual needs but also to improving the village sanitary system and paying for a new elementary school for 80 children.

However Mills was best known in his lifetime for his notorious exploits as the Chairman of the local Kineton Magistrates. He had the reputation of being unusually strict on the bench and his reactionary views and frequent outbursts in court seem to have intimidated his fellow magistrates almost as much as the criminals brought before him. Yet it was universally acknowledged that he possessed an excellent grasp of the law and, although frequently in a minority of one, he was usually sound in his judgments. An instance of this is illustrated by the part he took in the celebrated Mordaunt divorce case of 1875. His cousin Sir Charles Mordaunt had accused his wife of adultery with (amongst others) the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII). Mordaunt's lawyers, fearful of a national scandal, advised him not to cite the Prince in the divorce papers. Unhappy with this advice Mordaunt passed the papers to the Revd Henry Mills. Mills, fearless and robust as ever, advised that the Prince of Wales must be cited and his advice was followed and proved technically correct.

Mills acted for many years as Chairman of the Kineton magistrates, as well as regularly attending Quarter Sessions. In fact,

he never retired, nor did he change his old fashioned views and opinions, which by the time he was ninety, were reactionary in the extreme. He enjoyed good health and remained active until a week before his death in 1906 aged 91. The local newspaper carried a surprisingly candid obituary and a few days later a detailed account of the funeral of 'the deceased Lord of the Manor'. There were to be no flowers at his funeral but the village children were permitted to place a wreath on his coffin bearing the words 'Let him be numbered with Thy Saints in glory everlasting'.

Yorkshire has supplied a goodly array of squarsons, many of them of the sporting variety. The Revd Charles Slingsby (he was originally Slingsby Atkinson) of Scriven Park, near Knaresborough was born in 1842, the nephew and eventual heir of Sir Charles Slingsby, 10th and last Baronet and Master of the York and Ainsty Foxhounds, who was drowned whilst out hunting in 1869.[14]

Educated at Rossall School and Oxford University, the young Charles Slingsby Atkinson was ordained in 1860 and was a High Churchman. In 1880 he was appointed Rector of a small Yorkshire parish which gave him time to pursue his other interests which included collecting and telling a fund of folk stories in the local dialect, singing a good song and drawing amusing caricatures of his friends.

By 1900 he had changed his surname to Slingsby on succeeding to the Scriven Park estate, which included a large Palladian mansion. He was also the Lord of the Manor, patron of two livings and a J.P. in addition to his duties as a country parson.

Essentially a sporting squarson, he was a keen supporter of the York and Ainsty Hunt. In 1911, when he was 69, he suffered a bad fall from his horse, but was soon back in the saddle. The following year, however, he was not so lucky. Galloping across his own fields in the vanguard of the hunt his horse suddenly stumbled at a large hedge and Slingsby was thrown off, landing on his head. His neck was broken and death was instantaneous. A fellow clergyman who was out hunting that day immediately held a short service over his comrade's body as he lay in the field where he had fallen, the hunt followers gathering round in silent tribute. He was buried at Moor Monkton church on his estate in a coffin made of his own trees, on top of which were his spurs and whip. Hunt servants in their scarlet coats escorted the cortege.

In 1913, exactly a year later, Cosmo Gordon Lang, the Archbishop of York, unveiled a memorial window to the Revd Charles Slingsby. The Archbishop waxed lyrical over the benefits of foxhunting and described Slingsby as a pillar of society, a keen sportsman and lover of the countryside, who was universally liked and respected.

The twentieth century

By 1914 the old order was about to change for ever and the days of the old time squarsons were numbered. However the breed was not quite extinct.

Only nine years after the hunting accident which killed the Revd Charles Slingsby was born one of the last of the squarsons, Henry Thorold, who was born in 1921 into an ancient Lincolnshire family (Fig. 8).[15] Created baronets in 1642 the Thorolds had held the Manor of Marston near Grantham since the fourteenth century. Young Henry was the son of a distinguished Chaplain-General to the Forces and went to Eton and Christchurch, Oxford, before being ordained. Thereafter he was a housemaster and chaplain at Lancing College, Sussex, for many years, doubling up at Marston Hall as the squire and co-patron of Marston. A friend of John Piper and Sir John Betjeman he was a prolific author, writing the Shell Guides for four counties, *Lincolnshire Churches Revisited* and *The Collins Guide to Cathedrals, Abbeys and Priories of England*. The indefatigable Chairman of the Lincolnshire Old Churches Trust, he could often be seen behind the wheel of his large old Bentley in the narrow lanes of his beloved county. James Lees-Milne, not always the kindest of observers, once described Henry Thorold as 'having a profile like George III and a stomach like George IV ... he knows Lincolnshire backwards and all the families that ever were, they being to a man his relations ... [he] should be an Archdeacon'.[16]

Fig. 8: The Revd Henry Thorold of Marston Hall, Lincs.

Thorold, always a genial host and born raconteur, welcomed many friends and visitors to his ancestral home at Marston Hall, complete with its eccentric garden, a gazebo and a folly. He died in 2000.

Another more recent squarson survived into the twenty-first century. Canon Gervase Markham of Morland, near Penrith, Cumbria, was born in 1910 and claimed to be the last squarson in England (Fig. 9). Possessed of an impeccable clerical lineage (his father was Bishop of Grantham and his eighteenth-century ancestor Archbishop of York) he was ordained in 1937 and had a distinguished war record as an army chaplain. On demobilisation he was appointed Vicar of St Stephen's, Burnley, after which he was Vicar of Grimsby for twelve years. In 1965 he became Vicar of Morland, of which he was already the Squire. His prodigious energy and enthusiasm for both his parish and his estate included the founding of a summer music camp for young people for which he was awarded an MBE in the Millennium Honours list. After his retirement at 74 he took up stone wall building and became a highly proficient and ruthless croquet player. His passion for genealogy led him to produce a vast family tree mounted on rollers on a specially constructed table.

Fig. 9: Canon Gervase Markham

His continuing enthusiasm for life was exemplified in the tale of how, at the age of 90, he lost his hearing aid when dancing in a hayfield by moonlight. On the seventieth anniversary of his ordination he preached to a packed congregation in his local church at the age of 96. He died on 27 December 2007. Pastor, army chaplain, squire and much more besides, he personified in full measure the many robust qualities of the old time English Squarson.[17]

Appendix 1: Squarsons in 1876

The table lists all Anglican clergymen in *Walford's County Families 1876* who are shown as Lord of the Manor and Rector or Vicar of the same parish. Often they were also the patron (i.e. owner of the advowsons). Parsons who were Lord of the Manor in one village but incumbent of another have not been included.

Note: all individuals were styled simply 'The Revd' unless otherwise stated.

County	No.	Names
Bedfordshire	1	Boteler Smith of Culcote, nr Woburn, b. 1825
Buckinghamshire	3	William Andrewes Uthwatt, J.P. of Maids Moreton, b. 1810
		John Graves, J.P. of Bradenham, High Wycombe, b. 1811
		Randolphe HenryPigott, J.P. of Grendon Underwood, b. 1838
Cambridgeshire	2	William Godfrey, J.P. of Kennett, nr Newmarket, b. 1845
		George Granado Graham-Foster-Pigott of Abington Pigotts, nr Royston, b. 1795
Cheshire	3	George Mallory of Mobberley, Knutsford, b. 1806
		Richard Richardson, J.P. of Capenhurst, Chester, b. 1811
		Thomas France-Hayhurst, J.P., D.L., of Bostock, b. 1803
Cumberland	0	
Devonshire	4	Dacres Adams, J.P. of Bowden, Totnes, b. 1806
		James Arthur, J.P. of Atherington, Bamstaple, b. 1797
		Sabine Baring-Gould of Lew Trenchard, b. 1834
		George de Carteret Guille of Little Torrington, b. 1815
Dorset	1	John Cree of Ower Moigne, Dorchester, b. 1806
Essex	7	Peter Maxey Brunwin of Bradwell, nr. Braintree, b. 1820
		Walter Treve1yn Bullock of Fau1kbourne, nr Witham, b. 1818
		Henry John Earle, J.P. of High Ongar, b. 1799
		Samuel Farman of Layer Marney, b. 18—?
		William Edward Lionel Lampet, J.P. of Great Bardfield, b. 1841
		John Whitaker Maitland of Loughton, b. 1831
		John Mayne St Clare Raymond of Be1champ, b. 1814
Gloucestershire	1	Edward Francis Witts J.P., D.L., of Upper Slaughter, b. 1813
Hampshire	2	Charles Henry Everett of Tangley, nr Andover, b. 1835
		Thomas Fielder Woodham, J.P. of Farley Chamberlayne, b. 1804
Herefordshire	4	Henry Blisset, J.P. of Letton, nr. Hereford, b. 1808
		The Revd Sir George Henry Cornewall, Bt. of Moccas, b. 1833
		John Eckley of Credenhill, b. 1785
		William Trevelyn Kevill-Davies, J.P., D.L. of Kingsland, b. 1826
Hertfordshire	1	Francis William Adye, J.P. of Markgate Cell, nr. Dunstable, b. 1821
Huntingdonshire	2	William Hopkinson, J.P. of Great Gidding, b. 1840
		Matthew Carrier Tompson of Woodstone, b. 1800
Kent	4	Edward Baines, J.P. of Yalding, b. 1801
		Joseph West Bramah of Davington, Faversham, b. 1821
		William Henry Edmeades of Nurstead, Gravesend, b. 1803
		Hugh Forbes Smith-Marriott, J.P. of Horsemorden, b. 1840
Lancashire	0	
Leicestershire	2	Gerard Charles Fenwicke of Stockerston, nr. Uppingham, b. 1819
		Joseph Mayor of Cossington, nr. Loughborough, b. 1790
Lincolnshire	2	Richard George Walls, J.P. of Firsby, b. 1818
		Robert Fawssett Ward of Salmonby, nr. Horncastle, b. 1834
Norfolk	6	Charles Barnwell Barnwell, J. P. of Mileham, nr. Swaftbam, b. 1836
		Thomas Berney of Bracon Ash, nr. Norwich, b. 1816
		Henry Collison of East Bilney, b. 1791
		The Revd Sir Edward Repps Jodrell, Bt., J.P. of Saxlingham,

		b. 1825
		Henry Joseph Muskett of Clippesby, nr. Norwich, b. 1820
		E.B. Sparke of Feltwell, b. 1805
Northamptonshire	3	George Halliley Capron, J.P. of Southwick, nr. Oundle, b. 1816
		James Harwood.Harrison, J.P. ofBugbrooke, b. 1800
		Cecil Henry Maunsell of Thorpe Malsor, nr. Kettering, b. 1847
Northumberland	1	Thomas Ilderton of Ilderton, nr. Alnwick, b. 1811
Nottinghamshire	2	George Marsland ofBeckingham, nr Newark-on-Trent, b. 1811
		Francis Staunton of Staunton, b. 1839
Oxfordshire	1	Charles Vere Spencer, J.P. of Wheatfield, nr Tetsworth, b. 1831
Rutlandshire	1	John Henry Fludyer, J.P. of Ayston, nr Uppingham, b. 1803
Shropshire	3	Henry Fleming Baxter of Sibdon, nr. Craven Arms, b. 1838
		Charles Walcot of Bitterley, nr Ludlow, b. 1794
		Francis Henry Wolryche-Whitmore, J.P. of Quatt-Malvern, b. 1820
Somerset	2	Charles Old Goodford, D.D. of Chilton Cantelo, b. 1812
		Henry Hoskins of North Perrott, nr Crewkerne, b. 1790
Staffordshire	2	Thomas Green Simcox of North Harborne, b. 1810
		George Inge of Thorpe Constantine, b. 1800
Suffolk	9	Edward Richard Benyon, J.P. of Culford, b. 1802
		Francis William Cubitt, J.P. of Fritton, nr. Lowestoft, b. 1799
		Wareyn William Darby of Shottisham, b. 1839
		John Foster, J.P. of Foxearth, nr. Sudbury, b. 1820
		Robert Gwilt, J.P. of Icklingham, nr Mildenhall, b. 1811
		Henry Hill, J.P. of Buxhall, nr. Stowmarket, b. 1834
		James Richard Holden, J.P. of Lackford, nr. Bury St Edmunds, b.1807
		William Mayd, J.P. of Withersfield, nr. Haverhill, b. 1797
		Charles Thomas Scott of Shadingfield, b. 1810
Sussex	1	John Goring of Wiston, b. 1824 (14,139 acres – the largest of all)
Warwickshire	2	Henry Mills, J.P. of Pillerton Hersey, b. 1815
		The Ven. Charles William Holbech, J.P. of Farnborough, nr. Banbury, b.1816
Westmoreland	0	
Wiltshire	0	
Worcestershire	4	William Comyns of Cotteridge, nr. Worcester, b. 1810
		Henry Browne of Eastham, nr. Tenbury, b. 1824
		George Hill Clifton of Ripple, nr. Tewksbury, b. 1818
		William Samuel Symonds, J.P. of Pendock, nr. Tewkesbury, b. 1818
Yorkshire	3	James William Geldart, J.P., L.L.D., of Kirk-Deighton, b. 1785
		William Gooch, J.P. of Stanton, b. 1800
		Thomas Sheepshanks of Arthington, b. 1819

Appendix 2: Clergy owning 1,000 – 5,000 acres of land (counties shown in rank order)
Source: Return of Owners of Land 1873

Rank	County	Number of clergy with 1k – 5k acres
1	Norfolk	18
2	Lincolnshire	13
3	Suffolk	12
4	Herefordshire	10
5	Shropshire	9
6	Essex	7
	Kent	7
	Somerset	7
	Yorkshire – East Riding	7
	Yorkshire – West Riding	7
7	Gloucestershire	6
	Hampshire	6
8	Cambridgeshire	5
	Bedfordshire	5
	Buckinghamshire	5
	Northamptonshire	5
	Northumberland	5
	Oxfordshire	5
	Warwickshire	5
9	Cornwall	4
	Derbyshire	4
	Lancashire	4
	Yorkshire – North Riding	4
10	Dorset	3
	Durham	3
	Sussex	3
	Wiltshire	3
	Total	172

Appendix 3: Clergymen owning more than 5,000 acres in 1873 (shown alphabetically by county)
Source: Return of Owners of Land 1873

Note: all individuals were styled simply 'The Revd' unless otherwise stated.

County	Name	Acreage
Cheshire	T.F. Hayhurst of Davenham	7,353
Cornwall	St Aubyn St Aubyn of Clowance	5,888
Herefordshire	A. Clive of Whitfield	5,799
	The Revd Sir G.H. Cornewall, Bt. of Moccas★	6,946
Norfolk	John Micklethwait of Taverham	5,187
Shropshire	W.B.G. Botfield of Decker Hill	7,270
	John Corbett of Sundorne	8,118
	H.S. Pelham of Shrewsbury	5,753
Somerset	J.S.H. Horner of Mells★	6,786
Southampton (now Hants)	Thomas Best of Upper Chatford	6,184
Staffordshire	Walter Sneyd of Keele	5,628
Suffolk	E.R. Benyon of Culford★	9,461
Yorkshire – East Riding	J.D. Jefferson of York	6,243
Yorkshire – North Riding	John R. Hill of Pickering	7,632
	Thomas Witham of Lartington (a Roman Catholic priest)	7,510

★ a squarson

Notes

1 Review by C.R.B. Mortimer in the *Sunday Times* (7 April 1957) of W.E. Purcell's *Onward Christian Soldiers* (1957), a life of the Revd Sabine Baring-Gould.
2 See Harpley Church Guide.
3 The Court was formed in 1535 out of the Court of Exchequer.
4 The Revd James Woodforde (1741–1803). See John Beresford (ed.), *The Diary of a Country Parson*, 4 vols. OUP, 1926).
5 See entry in *Dictionary of National Biography*.
6 William Addison, *Essex Worthies* (Chichester, 1973), 17; Peter Meadows and Nigel Ramsey (eds.), *A History of Ely Cathedral* (Woodbridge, 2003), 209–10.
7 Apart from Purcell's biography (see note 1., above), Baring-Gould is also the subject of *Sabine Baring-Gould, Squarson, Writer and Folklorist* by his grandson H.G. Dickinson (Newton Abbot, 1970).
8 F. E. Christmas (ed.), *The Parson in English Literature* (Stroud, 1983), 230–33. The name Simon Magus for the worldly cleric is the origin of the word simony, i.e. the traffic in sacred things, an allusion to his offer of money to the Apostles (Acts viii. 18–19).
9 Kenrick Armistead (revised and edited by Nigel Watts), *The Cheshire Armitsteads* (1999), at http://www.fitzwalter.com/afh/Armitstead/armit.htm (accessed June 2008). I am grateful to Mr Watts for his permission to quote from this work.
10 Information kindly supplied by William and Joanna Sanders (née Harrison) of Balsham, Cambs. and from their copy of *The Harrisons and Longes of Bugbrooke and Elsewhere, a Family History* written 'by one of them with the assistance of others' (unpublished, 1991).
11 David Verey (ed.), *The Diary of a Cotswold Parson* (Stroud, 1991).
12 Information kindly supplied by John Sims of Wallingford, Oxon., and a descendant of the family Dorcas Ward of Frilsham, Berks.
13 Information from The Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon- Avon (DM240), Mr J.C.S. Mills, and Tim Newcombe of Pillerton Hersey.
14 Mrs Stuart Menzies, *Sportsmen Parsons in Peace and War* (n.d. [?1919]).
15 See his obituary in the *Daily Telegraph* (3 February 2000). Actually he was never incumbent of Marston but was to all intents and purposes its squarson.
16 Taken from his book *A Mingled Measure* (1994) p. 276.
17 Obituary in *The Times* (7 January 2008).

St Mary the Virgin, Stratfield Mortimer: building a Victorian church in rural Berkshire

J. R. L. Allen

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THE NINETEENTH CENTURY saw in Britain a prodigious increase in the size of the population and to varying degrees a growth in the piety of the nation across established and new denominations. One conspicuous result was a boom in the building, to an extent competitive, of churches, chapels and meeting houses. In historic Berkshire alone the Anglican and Roman Catholics between them substantially or wholly replaced or built anew more than 130 churches.[1] A similar level of activity is apparent in other counties. There was work aplenty for architects and designers who, influenced by Augustus Pugin, the Cambridge Camden Society, and John Ruskin, as well as by the activities of their contemporaries, returned to antiquarian models and to an interest in decoration.[2] The new means of low-cost transport, presented first by the canals and especially later by the railways,[3] allowed many of them to experiment with previously unfamiliar building materials and new ways of handling them.

One of these churches was St Mary the Virgin – large, elaborate and costly – in the small village of Stratfield Mortimer on the Berkshire-Hampshire border. Built over almost three years between September 1866 and July 1869, it was erected and given to the villagers at the cusp of the church-building boom at the expense of a wealthy local landowner. Although architecturally of its time, St Mary's is of exceptional interest because of the survival of an extraordinary documentary record giving details of its construction and costs, which could have been surpassed only by continuous, personal attendance at the building-site at the time. This record consists of 152 weekly returns by the Clerk of Works to the sponsor, detailing each week by name, trade and pay the workers attending; the materials, goods and services purchased or otherwise made available; and the general progress of the work.[4] Most of these returns are of three or four foolscap pages each. In terms of the evidence for the builders and the building process, St Mary's is thus comparable with medieval Harlech Castle in Wales, late medieval Trinity House, Hull, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and Early Modern St Paul's in London.[5] The present paper attempts to summarize the more important insights this remarkable record gives into the construction of St Mary's and the church-building industry of the mid nineteenth century. A full, technical analysis of St Mary's for specialist readers appears elsewhere, including the demographic and economic settings and comparative costs with other churches in historic Berkshire.[6]

The architect and his building

Stratfield Mortimer lies some 10 km to the south-southeast of Reading. The present parish church of St Mary's rises boldly from the verdant western slopes of the valley of the Foudry Brook (British National Grid Reference SU 668641), within a few hundred metres of Mortimer Station on Brunel's Reading to Basingstoke branch (1848, broad gauge) of the Great Western Railway between London and Bristol.

The church (Fig. 1) replaced a smaller, medieval building on the same site. It was designed by the London architect Richard Armstrong Senior. He worked briefly for the Church Building Commission,[7] and was sponsored by the lord of the manor, Richard Benyon II of Englefield House to the west of Reading, the proprietor of the Englefield Estate. It was in 1854 that Benyon (d. 1897) inherited the estate, comprising properties in Berkshire, Essex and London. Benyon eventually became Lord High Sheriff of Berkshire, and the family remains influential in the county. Over many years Richard Armstrong and his son of the same name assisted this improver of Englefield Park and House, who was also a prolific builder of churches and schools on his properties.[8]

St Mary's cost Benyon £9,917 in cash, in addition to architect's fees and expenses of £582, and numerous provisions of materials, equipment and services from the Englefield Estate valued at *c.*£4,500.[9] The church certainly accommodated 450–500 people and may have been intended for as many as 600. At a cost per sitting of well over £20, it was therefore one of the

Fig. 1: Stratfield Mortimer, St Mary the Virgin from the southwest. [All illustrations copyright the author, unless otherwise stated.]

most expensive of historic Berkshire's nineteenth-century churches. The erection of the church was under the day-to-day control of William Rhind, Clerk of Works to the Englefield Estate. Rhind was born *c.*1840 in Banff in north-east Scotland, and so came young to this highly responsible task, but not without relevant background (his father was a stonemason). By 1861 Rhind was working in London as a house-carpenter in association with a builder before marrying in 1865 into a family (Jessett) with a drapery business in Reading. He remained in the employ of the Englefield Estate until some time in the early 1890s.

Armstrong's design for the church (Fig. 2) closely followed the plan of its medieval predecessor. The body of the church consists of a tall nave divided by arcades of five bays (Fig. 3) from wide aisles with steeply-pitched roofs. Each aisle has a porch, that on the south and lower part of the site allowing access to the church by means of six steps (Fig. 4). The centrally-placed western tower of the original church was replaced by one at the southeastern end of the south aisle, becoming a steeple about 50 metres high with a broached spire. The original vestry was put at the base of the tower, but in a later reordering was rebuilt (1896) with an external door at the western end of the nave. The tower has an external turret giving access to the bell ringers' chamber. At the corresponding corner of the north aisle is a mortuary chapel with

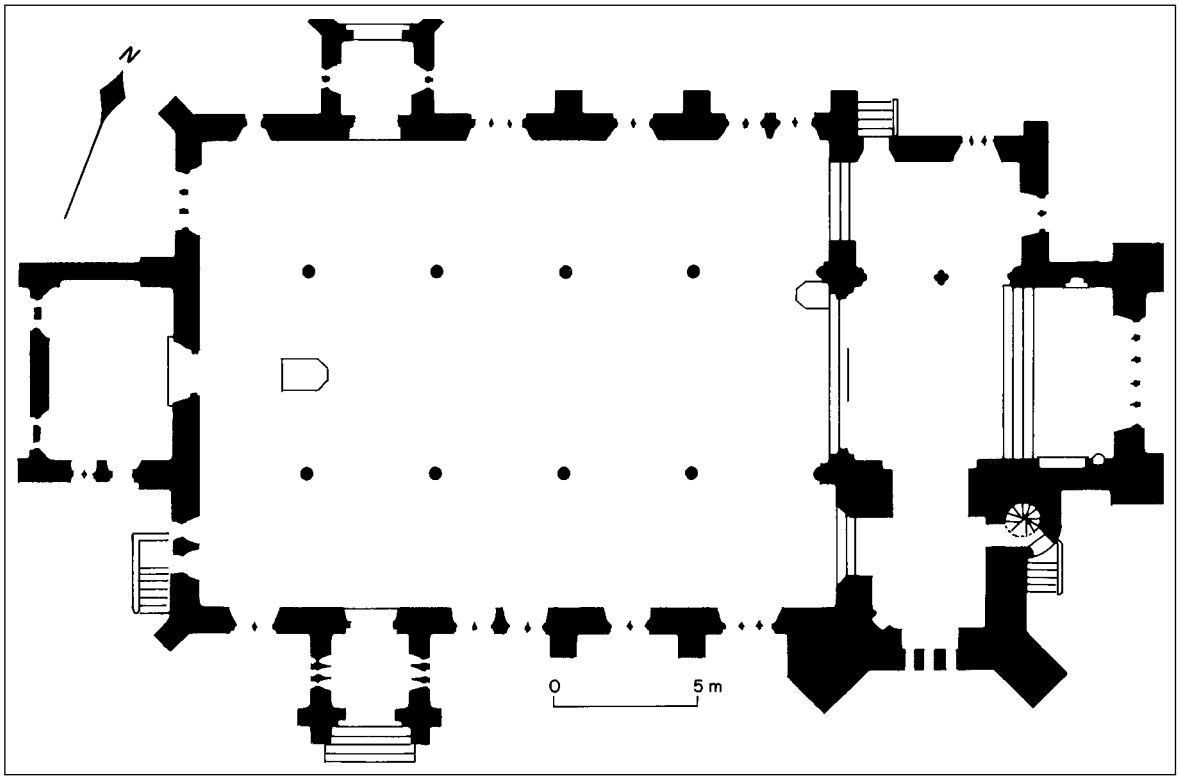

Fig. 2: Plan of St Mary the Virgin, as prepared for the addition in 1896 of a new vestry at the west end of the nave

Fig. 3: The interior of the church looking toward the chancel. [Photograph: J. Watkins.]

a pent roof and external entrance. Bizarrely, two flying buttresses support the western wall of the nave, but their visual effect is now somewhat diminished by the presence of the rebuilt vestry into which their lower parts are incorporated. The chancel, also with a pitched roof, is narrow and relatively deep, with poor sight-lines from the aisles. It is reached by steps from the nave with further steps up to the sanctuary. There is a piscina, credence, two-person sedilia and an elaborately decorated reredos by Farmer & Brindley, incorporating a predella of decorative stone and a painting of the Last Supper by O'Connor, the London stained-glass specialist. The windows of the church (Figs. 5, 6) are very varied and in the Geometrical (Early Decorated) style of the late thirteenth–earliest fourteenth century. Those of the clerestory, within curved triangular frames, are best seen from inside the building.

St Mary's is richly and profusely decorated both inside and out with stone carvings on the door and window stops, the capitals of the columns and colonettes, and the corbels and cornices. These were done by James Allen, a London stonecarver, and unusually

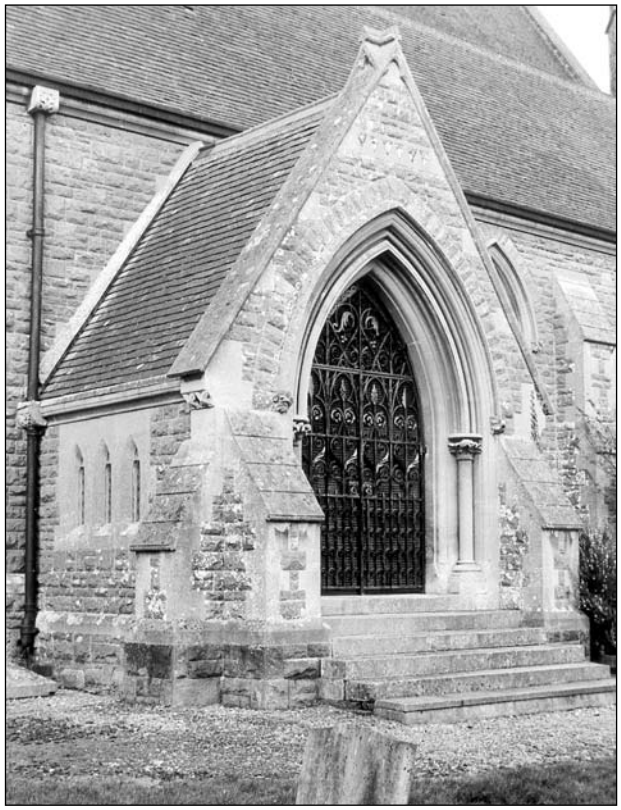

Fig. 4: The south porch from the southwest

are largely naturalistic, illustrating except on the cornices at least 20 taxa of mainly native trees, shrubs, flowers and ferns, many of Christian iconographic meaning, but without animal or human figures. The more frequent among the plants depicted are buttercup, field maple, grape, hawthorn, ivy, primrose and wild strawberry. Cultivated rose (Fig. 7) and lily (Fig. 8), symbolic of the Virgin Mary, are included, and there are depictions of passion flowers (Fig. 9), an icon of Christ's wounds. These carvings are all deeply undercut. One is reminded of the naturalistic botanical carvings chiefly of the latest thirteenth century–earliest fourteenth century which are not uncommon in medieval cathedrals and churches.[10] Conventional stylised decoration in shallow relief was applied to the cornices of the tower and inside and outside the chancel.

The materials, services and costs

Brunel's railway was crucial to the construction of St Mary's. Except what was provided from the Englefield Estate, or by the local blacksmith and coal-merchant, everything that was needed at St Mary's was brought to Mortimer Station from Reading by the Great Western Railway Company. The railway bill totalled £511.

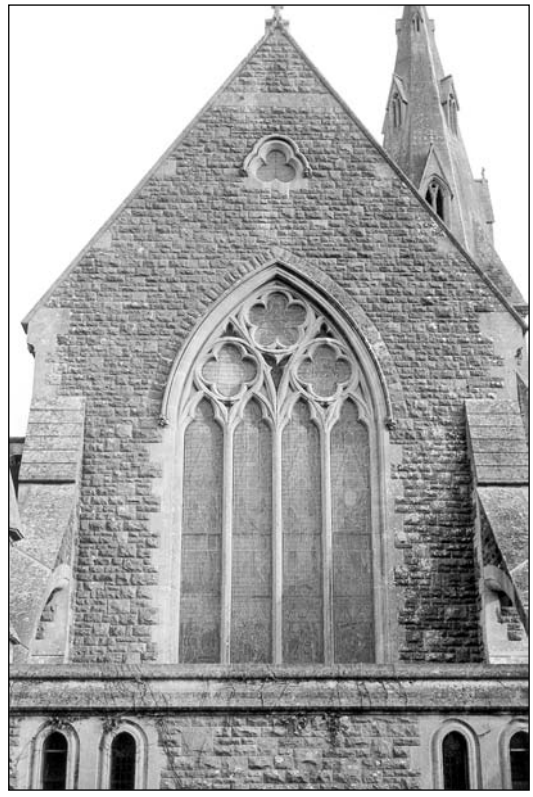

Fig. 5: The west window of the nave viewed from the exterior (the lower part is obscured by the vestry of 1896 but the upper parts of the flying buttresses can be seen)

Rhind himself made frequent use of the railway in making his weekly business trips to Reading and on a few occasions to some of his distant suppliers and his employer. He paid 1*s*. 6*d*. rising to 1*s*. 10*d*. for a third-class return ticket. While in town, Rhind drew cash from the Reading Savings Bank to pay his workers, when necessary renewed his cheque-book and stock of postage stamps, and commissioned a wide range of hardware, chandlery, drysalter's goods and stationery from many different businesses in the town centre. Some had wharfage on the Thames or Kennet and imported items by water before despatching them by rail. Chief among these Reading firms were Margrett Brothers in the Market Place, with whom he spent a total of about £120. Other than these visits, Rhind's dealings with his suppliers were entirely by post.

St Mary's is essentially a stone, brick and tile church. Rhind spent more than £1,250 on stone of various kinds. With the exception of the spire and the door and window dressings, the outside is faced with snecked, rock-faced blocks of Portlandian (Upper Jurassic) calcareous sandstone (Fig. 10), supplied by George Wiltshire from workings in The Quarries district of (Old) Swindon on the main GWR line to the west. The stone came largely as raw material straight from the workings and was cut and

Fig. 6: The east window of the chancel viewed from the exterior

dressed in temporary workshops at the church. Also largely prepared at the site was the internal facing of tooled, half-snecked Bathstone (Box Ground), supplied chiefly by Robert Strong from the Middle Jurassic oolite limestone sequence at Box on the GWR line where it crosses the southern Cotswolds. The dressings and the spire are also of Bathstone (Fig. 10). Shaped columns and colonettes of grey pennant sandstone came from Samuel Pollinger, who appears to have worked the Pennant Measures (Upper Carboniferous) sequence at Bristol. For flooring and steps two Reading suppliers provided small quantities of Upper Jurassic Portland limestone from the Isle of Portland on the Dorset coast. Firms with wharfage in Reading also sold small amounts of broken or shaped Welsh slate to St Mary's. The broken material probably served as spacers. It is not clear how all of the shaped slate was used, but the smaller items can be seen where the porches join the aisles, and the larger ones may underlie the wood-block floors.

Rhind needed cement, chiefly for the foundations, and lime, mainly for making wall-core and for bonding stone and brick. About £80 was spent on Portland cement bought from the London firm of Robins & Co. Ltd, with a works at Northfleet on the southern shores of the Thames Estuary. The much larger sum

Fig. 7: Cultivated rose, south arcade, chancel. [Photograph: J. Watkins.]

of £209 was spent on quicklime from the firms of Chas. Nelson & Co. near Leamington and Messrs Shaw of Bath, both companies exploiting the earliest Jurassic 'Blue Lias' cementstones. The aggregate that was also needed came without direct charge from sand and gravel pits on the Englefield Estate in Stratfield Mortimer. Waste from stone-dressing probably also went into wall-core.

St Mary's consumed large numbers of bricks. With one minor exception, these came without direct charge from nearby yards on the Englefield Estate that exploited chiefly the London Clay. Red, hand-made, and laid in English cross-bond, they are at present mainly visible only in the tower and the mortuary chapel.

Other ceramic building materials feature significantly at St Mary's. The church is roofed with brown tiles supplied at a cost of about £85 from Coalbrookdale by the obscure and short-lived firm of G. W. Lewis, who also carried on a grocery business in the area. Parts of the nave, aisles and chancel are floored with buff, red and black quarry tiles in various patterns at a cost of about £81. These came from the firm of W. Godwin of Hereford,[11] a well-respected and successful enterprise whose distinctive products, commissioned by many leading architects of the time, are widely encountered in churches and public buildings of the period. Godwin's rather than Minton or Jackfield also supplied the buff-on-red encaustic floor tiles seen in the chancel.

The elaborate roof timbers and benches, and some scaffolding planks, were prepared in temporary workshops at St Mary's from 70 Canadian logs – red pine, pitch pine and oak – which reached the site from the Bristol importer F. K. Barnes & Sons. Their cost was £305. From the Englefield Estate's builder's yard in Stratfield Mortimer, Rind obtained without direct charge most of his scaffolding together with large amounts of other builder's equipment, such as shovels, pails and navvy barrows. He also drew

on this yard for many horse-drawn tip-carts with their drivers, used to carry material to and around the building site. At his disposal as well were a stone truck and a new steam traction-engine, supplied through London, a mortar mill and possibly a cement-mixer. The engine was fed with coal from the Forest of Dean, supplied by W. E. Wise the local merchant. John Davis, the nearest to the church of the blacksmiths in Stratfield Mortimer, was kept busy on an almost daily basis sharpening and repairing tools, minor equipment and machinery.

Thus of Rhind's cash costs about 20% is represented by building materials and about 5% by rail transport.

The workers and their progress

More than 340 men, lads and boys identified by name, trade and rate of pay were employed at one time or another in building St Mary's. They worked a nominal six-day week and ten-hour day, and were paid by the day and quarter of a day.[12] Bricklayers (30) were paid up to 4*s*. 2*d*. per day, but most received only about three-quarters of this. Stonewallers (15) got up to 4*s*. 6*d*. and stonemasons (110) as much as 5*s*. 6*d*., although 4*s*. 0*d*. rising to 4*s*. 6*d*. was usual for most of these. Carpenters (59) were quite well paid, receiving up to 4*s*. 6*d*. and in one case 5*s*. 2*d*. The largest group was the labourers (135), who typically had only 2*s*. 0*d*. per day, the cost of a week's lodgings in the locality and not much more than Rhind paid for his railway ticket. All of these groups included untrained or partly-trained lads and boys who were paid little more than a shilling or so or even merely in pence per day. Day-rated labour cost Rind £5,600, that is, about 56% of his cash

Fig. 8: Lliy, sedilia, chancel. [Photograph: J. Watkins.]

Fig. 9: Passion flower, chancel arch. [Photograph: J. Watkins.]

costs. He himself received £2. 10*s*. a week at the beginning of the project, rising to £3. 0*s*. later on, rates comparable to the pay of contemporary London Clerks of Works.

A search of the census returns for 1861 and 1871 reveals something of the origins of these workers and sheds light on aspects of working practices at the time. None of the stonemasons were domiciled in Stratfield Mortimer and neighbouring parishes – not surprisingly, for the Tertiary sediments of south Berkshire and northernmost Hampshire define a brick-belt rather than a stone-belt – and not even half the labourers can be traced in the area, where the main employment in the scattered, small villages was in agriculture and forestry. Most of the employees at St Mary's appear to have been itinerant and 'on the tramp', as depicted in Ford Maddox Brown's almost contemporaneous and well-known painting *Work* (1852–*c.*1865).[13] The stonewallers and stonemasons, for example, may be expected to have come in search of work from quarrying districts in the south of England, such as the Cotswolds, Bristol, Swindon, Oxford, Maidstone and the Dorset coast. The origins of other itinerant workers are less easily suggested.

Rhind paid for the local lodgings of a handful of key employees (2*s*. 0*d*. per week), and some of the better-paid men may have been prepared to lodge in the district. Stratfield Mortimer at the time was a small village, however, and it seems likely that most of the workers fended for themselves in benders and perhaps outbuildings loaned by well-disposed farmers.

Rhind's workforce numbered 20 at the start of building in September 1866, rose to a maximum of 75 in October a year later, and gradually sank, with a minor peak of 58 in November 1868, to just four men at the conclusion of the project in July 1869. The turnover of labour was high. Typically, 40–45 workers were on-site at any one time, increasing the male population of working age in

Stratfield Mortimer by roughly a third. Many of the workers were employed for just a week, while others attended at St Mary's for several months or even in excess of a year without a break. Although influenced by seasonal factors, their general level of productivity was kept fairly high by the presence at the site of temporary workshops for the numerous stonemasons and carpenters. The week actually worked, longest during the months of long daylight hours, typically averaged the equivalent of five to six days, rising once to seven (one individual Stakhanovite put in a week equivalent to seven and three-quarters days!). Time was lost because of frosts during the winter of 1867–8, when two accidents requiring treatment at the Royal Berkshire Hospital occurred, and especially during the harsh winter of 1866–7. The third winter, although also harsh, had less effect, as most of the work was by then taking place under cover. Festivals took a brief toll, especially Christmas to New Year and also Whitsun, when a traditional Revel was held in Stratfield Mortimer. Some workers appear to have taken a week's August holiday.

It took almost three years to build St Mary's (Fig. 11). The medieval church had been largely demolished by the time Rhind took over, and he was left with only the chancel to take down, the task of a week. By December 1866 the main foundations and

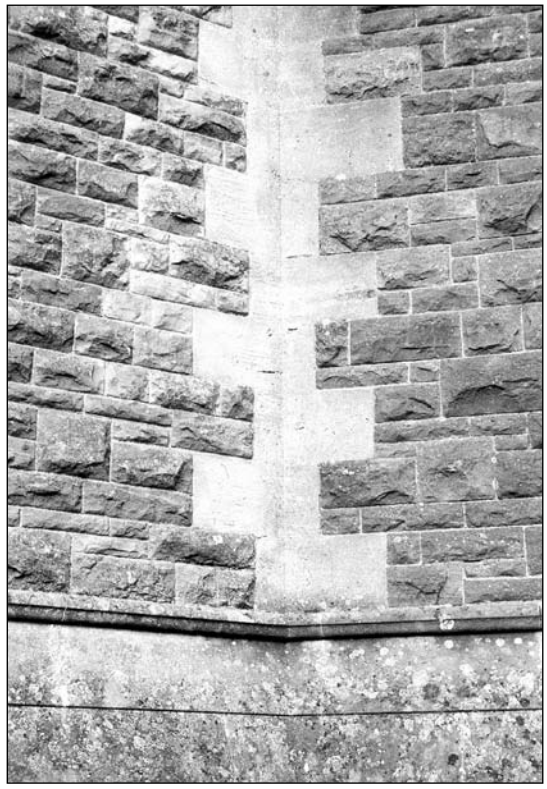

Fig. 10: Masonry of Swindon stone and Bathstone dressings, junction of south wall of tower and south-east tower butress

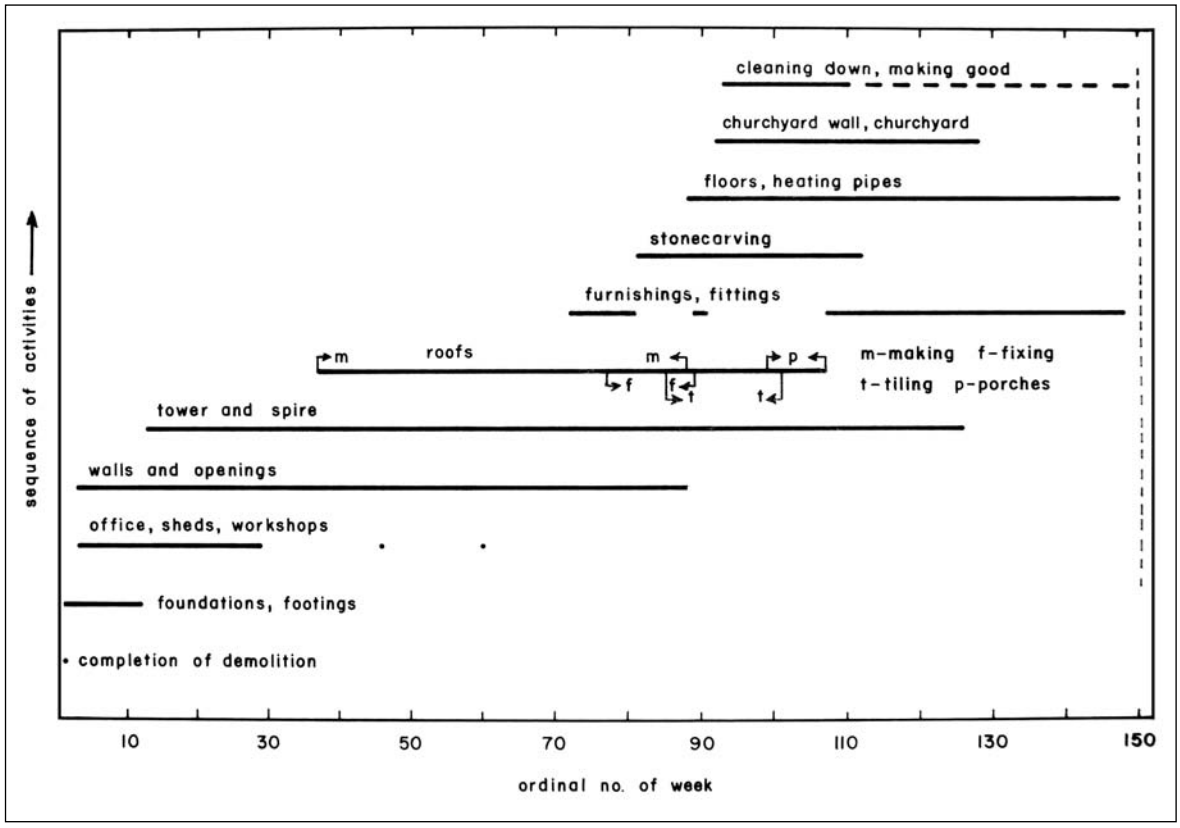

Fig. 11: The main tasks and stages in the construction of St Mary's

footings had been completed in the substrate of London Clay, a formation notorious for its tendency to shrink or swell as the level of moisture in the ground changed. Work on the walls and windows began in September 1866 and finished in May 1868. The tower and spire, however, with their deep foundations and thick lower walls, begun in December 1866, were not completed until February 1869. Meanwhile, between May 1867 and September 1868, the carpenters made and fitted the roof trusses and boarding and the bricklayers tiled the roofs. The benching and various other fittings were made and added from January 1868 onwards. The floors were laid and the heating system (hot-water pipes) inserted beginning in May 1868. Benyon having sold additional land to the Diocese of Oxford, a new wall of Swindon stone with moulded Bathstone coping was built around the enlarged churchyard between June 1868 and February 1869. Large quantities of gravel were brought to the site in an attempt to make this sloping area more level. James Allen, the London stonecarver, was present fairly continuously at St Mary's over a period of 32 weeks, beginning in June 1868. The new church and churchyard were consecrated by Samuel Wilberforce, the High Anglican Bishop of Oxford, on 25 July, 1869.

Reflections

St Mary's was erected at the height of the nineteenth-century church-building boom in Berkshire and, indeed, in Britain as a whole. In pitching the estimated cash cost at £10,000, and in making available in addition the considerable resources of the Englefield Estate, Richard Benyon gave his architect great financial latitude within which to create a building of more than usual quality. What Richard Armstrong gave him in return was a High Victorian structure, conspicuous in the landscape, in the Geometrical (Early Decorated) style which Pevsner was later moved to call 'stately'.[14] The external stonework is now badly discoloured, but at the time of building would have been a bright off-white, a feature that must have added prominence to the church in its valley-side setting. The tower is massive and, with its very few loops near ground level, has an almost fortified aspect. Internally, the tooled Bathstone facing, which remains unpainted and without monuments, gives the church a light but austere aspect. The church is in a single style and, conservatively repeating the general design of its medieval predecessor, would have met in its internal arrangements the desires of most High Anglican churchmen.

Exploiting the existence of the recently-created national railway network – Brunel's earliest lines were not more than 25 years old at the time[15] – Armstrong experimented with building materials sourced well outside the immediate locality. Some local brick was used, to be sure, but the Swindon stone of the exterior, the Bathstone facing of the interior, and the pennant sandstone columns of the arcades and some windows came from far to the west. Visible flint, the only building stone used that was indigenous to Berkshire, was limited to a few, inconspicuous, decorative bands in the gables of the porches and below the lucarnes in the spire. In having temporary workshops in which the stonework and timberwork were prepared largely from the raw materials – even the various wood treatments were made up on the spot from basic ingredients – the builder's yard at St Mary's was far more self-sufficient than is typically the case at building-sites today.

Because of Rhind's careful documentation of the process of building, St Mary's is exceptional in bringing us almost face to face with ordinary working people of the 1860s, the group of men, lads and boys who, mostly away from home, worked with their hands to create the church. Such workers almost invariably go unknown and usually unsung. Quantification is difficult, but there can be little doubt that the village of Stratfield Mortimer gained substantial economic benefit from their lengthy and conspicuous presence and from Benyon's enterprise as a whole.

Taking all factors into account, the gain could have amounted to at least £15,000–20,000 in today's money. Whether their presence brought social problems to the village, however, is an issue yet to be explored, but it would be naïve to suppose that the record enjoyed by the largely itinerant workers was entirely unblemished.

The main factor behind Benyon's decision to replace St Mary's seems to have been population growth in the mid-nineteenth century, although the Englefield Estate was also at the time doing well in a period of Victorian economic boom (1851–73).[16] Over the nineteenth century the population of Great Britain increased almost four-fold at an accelerating pace. Growth at Stratfield Mortimer, by contrast, was fitful. Up to 1861 there was a gradual increase, but at only about half the national rate, followed by a period of stagnation that coincided with the actual building and the following decade. The last two decades of the century saw a very rapid expansion, however, at higher than the national rate, but at the same time the population shifted away from St Mary's to the western part of the parish, where a new church, St John's (1882, 1896), arose at Mortimer Common. Thus the completion of St Mary's did not wholly realise Richard Benyon's seeming intention of improving church accommodation for the villagers. Today the church, while a sound construction, is only in occasional use and the future of this significant building, like so many others of its kind, is uncertain.[17]

Acknowledgements

My greatest debts are to the Revd Paul Chaplin, Vicar of Mortimer, and to the staffs of the Berkshire Record Office, the Herefordshire Record Office, Oxfordshire Record Office, Shropshire Archives, Berkshire Family History Society, Berkshire Medical Heritage Centre, Centre for Oxfordshire Studies, Ironbridge Gorge Museum, the Meteorological Office, the Museum of English Rural Life (University of Reading), Reading Central Library (Local Studies Centre) and Swindon Central Library. I am indebted for help and advice to many individuals, but especially to Dr Marshall Barr, Dr Petra Dark, Graham Jones, Kenneth McDiarmid, John Pritchard, James Watkins and David Wessex.

Notes

1 J. R. L. Allen, *Late Churches and Chapels in Berkshire. A Geological Perspective from the Late Eighteenth Century to the First World War* (Oxford, British Archaeology Reports British Series No. 432, 2007).

2 Rosemary Hill, *God's Architect: Pugin and the Building of Romantic England* (Allen Lane. London, 2007); J. E. White, *The Cambridge Movement* (Cambridge, 1962); C. Webster and J. Elliott, *A Church as it Should Be: the Cambridge Camden Society and its Influence* (Stamford, 2000). See also Rosemary Hill 'Pugin & the Cambridge Camden Society', *Ecclesiology Today* 30 (2003), 55–56; J. Barnard, *The Decorative Tradition* (London, 1973); R. W. Brunskill, *Brick Building in Britain* (London, 1990).

3 D. Gwyn, 'Engines of change', *British Archaeology* 65 (2002), 17–20.

4 Berkshire Record Office D/EBy/Q19.

5 R. Allen Brown, H. M. Colvin and A. J. Taylor, *A History of the King's Works*, Vols. I, II (London, 1963); D. Woodward, 'The accounts of the building of Trinity House, Hull, 1465–1476', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* (1990) 62, 153–170; J. W. P. Campbell, *Building St Paul's* (London, 2008). The documentation relating to St Mary's, however, allows the building process to be reconstructed in much more detail than is possible from the various sources which underpin these other accounts.

6 J. R. L. Allen, *Building a Victorian Country Church. An Historical Archaeology of St Mary the Virgin, Stratfield Mortimer, Berkshire* (Oxford, British Archaeology Reports British Series No. 457, 2008). This monograph gives full details and references relating to the building and context of St Mary's. Only a critical selection of sources are otherwise cited in the present article.

7 M. H. Port, *600 New Churches. The Church Building Commission, 1818–1856* (Spire Books, Reading, 2006), attributes St Luke's (1853), Silverdale, Staffs., to the son of the same name, also an architect, rather than to the father as the building date would suggest.

8 W. Page and P. H. Ditchfield, *The Victoria History of the County of Berkshire*, *Vol. III* (London, 1923); Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England, Berkshire* (London, 1966).

9 Berkshire Record Office D/EBy/Q20.

10 For examples, although not all of the Early Decorated period, see J. K. Colling, *English Medieval Foliage* (London, 1874), F. Bond, *Gothic Architecture in England* (London, 1906) and *English Church Architecture* Vol. II (Oxford, 1913); S. Gardiner, *English Gothic Foliage Sculpture* (Cambridge, 1927); Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Leaves of Southwell* (London and New York, 1945); E. C. Nelson and R. A. Stalley, 'Medieval naturalism and the botanical carvings of Corcomroe Abbey (County Clare)', *Gesta*, 28 (1989), 165–174; M. Rose and J. Hedgecoe, *Stories in Stone. The Medieval Roof Carvings of Norwich Cathedral* (London, 1997). Naturalistic representations of plants are also common carved in wooden church fittings, especially misericords, as recorded for example by G. L. Remnant, *Catalogue of Misericords in Great Britain* (Oxford, 1969). A few naturalistic plant carvings are occasionally to be found in nineteenth-century churches elsewhere in England. As regards secular buildings of this period, Oxford University's Natural History Museum is exceptional for a profusion of magnificent examples (F. O'Dwyer, *The Architecture of Deane and Woodward* (Cork, 1997)).

11 E Davey and R. Roseff, *Herefordshire Bricks & Brickmakers* (Almeley, Herefordshire, 2007).

12 These conditions of employment are essentially the same as those normal for building workers in Early Modern England (D. Woodward, *Men at Work, Labourers and Building Craftsmen in the Towns of Northern England, 1450–1750* (Cambridge, 1995)).

13 Working away from home 'on the tramp' was very common if not the norm for building craftsmen and many building labourers in Early Modern and nineteenth-century Britain (G. C. Powell, *An Economic History of the Building Industry* (London,

1980); D. Woodward, *Men at Work, Labourers and Building Craftsmen in the Towns of Northern England, 1450–1750* (Cambridge, 1995)).

14 Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England. Berkshire* (London, 1966).

15 E. T. McDermot, *History of the Great Western Railway, Vols. I and II* (London, 1964).

16 P. Gregg, *A Social and Economic History of Britain 1760–1972*, 7th ed. (London, 1973). See also Gregg's data and comments on population growth.

17 T. Cooper, *How Do We Keep Our Parish Churches?* (Ecclesiological Society, London, 2004); R. Strong, *A Little History of the English Country Church* (London, 2007).

VIEWPOINT: Reordering reoriented

Paul Walker

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IN THE LAST ISSUE of *Ecclesiology Today*, both Peter Howell ('Reordering the reordering') and Paul Velluet ('Revisiting the position of the altar in contemporary liturgical practice') raised important questions about liturgical reorderings in historic churches.[1]

Both articles have much in common, although I wondered whether the reordering of the church outside Vienna recommended by Paul Velluet would be one that Peter Howell would approve of. For me, its 'counterpoint' principle, setting off the simplicity of the new liturgical foci against the ornate Baroque setting, using a sympathetic scale and choice of materials, appeals more than what one might term the 'counterfeit' principle of designs which are slavishly quotational in deference to their setting. Such schemes seem to be pretending 'how it has always been', and impressive craftsmanship only compounds the illusion.[2]

Yet with such schemes as that for St Joseph's Chapel, Brompton Oratory, discussed in the same issue,[3] I am hard put to suggest it should have been done otherwise; just amazed that it should have been done at all. But maybe that is because it is not a 'reordering' as I understand the term (*i.e.* a significant change in locational relationship and emphasis of the key foci and spaces of Christian worship, as informed by a theological understanding of 'Church', its cultus and culture). A term whose original, and now widespread, use in this context would benefit from some sustained investigation. Even so, it is clear that it is to do with change, so even to pretend there has been no change, when there has, is significant.[4]

Over forty years ago, when Vatican II was taking place, Modernism might well have been the dominant architectural design aesthetic. While it was not envisaged that a different ordering was best expressed in a preferred aesthetic, there was frequent reference to the Zeitgeist. How then should what the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (1969/70) first stated, and its 2005 revision for England & Wales now repeats, be interpreted, *viz*: that, as with churches, the Church 'is intent on preserving the works of art and treasures handed down from past centuries and insofar as necessary, on adapting them to new needs', while striving also 'to promote new works of art that are in harmony with the character of each successive age'?[5] What now are the new needs and character of this present age? What the aesthetic in harmony with it; modernist or historicist, 'counterpoint' or 'counterfeit'; 'continuity' or 'discontinuity'? Which applies to what? When modernist churches come to be reordered, would

'counterpoint' require the introduction of some historicist elements? Would a modernist, eastward-oriented high altar, complete with tabernacle, Exposition throne, gradines, reredos and triple-stepped predella, be 'counterfeit'? Or has a concern for 'Zeitgeist' become a maligned principle for a 'reformed' architecture of 'der Geist der Liturgie'?[6]

Concerns relating to reordering seem often to concentrate on the altar. In Velluet's critique, referred to earlier, the ambo and font are mentioned only in passing, with the Paschal candle and processional cross. There is no mention of the locus of Reservation, nor of the presider's chair; nor of how the constituent elements are ordered to each other (or to any existing provision) in both their architectural and ritual contexts. And while Howell in his essay does touch upon other concerns, notably the loss of pulpits and altar rails, even so, his main concern is really the abuse and fate of original altars (or select later replacements) in reorderings of Victorian churches.[7] Here I simply wish to sketch a reminder of the contextual sequence of liturgical change in the Catholic Church, and some of its implications.

The post-conciliar context

Howell's criticism that directives which may have been fine for new church designs were much less so for existing buildings, has some justification. Reorderings, and even reorderings of reorderings, can be painful to see; but the way the whole enterprise was understood and first implemented over forty years ago may now seem inadequate.

Despite many notable developments in twentieth-century church architecture in Europe before the 1939-45 World War, and the need to deal with issues arising from reconstruction and new-build afterwards, Catholic Britain seems to have been quite unprepared for the fundamental changes to the dynamics of liturgy and the form and ordering of their architectural foci following Vatican II. There were enlightened individuals, and their understandings came through in some of the new church architecture.[8] But when change came to existing churches, there seems to have been little of the concern we have today. Most Catholic churches in Britain were then less than a hundred years old; many were Victorian. Very few were listed, or the subject of systematic record and study. Inside and outside the Catholic Church there was little sense of their having any architectural value. But then, most Victorian Anglican churches were similarly considered. Certainly, the meeting-houses and chapels of Dissenters and Nonconformists were. Latterly, much has changed

Fig 1: St Anne's Cathedral, Leeds, photograph of 1964 (J.H. Eastwood, 1904; reordered Weightman & Bullen, 1963). The new tabernacle on the free-standing altar was later removed. (Reproduced by permission of Leeds Diocesan Archives.)

Fig 2: Westminster Cathedral. Experimental reordering with temporary altar and canopy on movable base, from front. (Williams & Winkley, 1964). (Photo: Alfred Lammer)

in the national recognition of this heritage, and of the nascent heritage of other faiths.

The first liturgical changes were being made even before the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* was published by Vatican II, and certainly before the Council ended in December 1965.[9] Almost immediately, without prohibition, free-standing, temporary altars were being hastily erected, and Mass celebrated *versus populum*. In new churches the plan became all-important as architects sought to embody the (implied rather than explicitly required) new dynamics of 'gathering around' rather than 'assembling before' the altar. In England, the greatest example of anticipation of that change was Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, whose construction started the same month the Council opened, October 1962. Some existing buildings, keen to show that they, too, were in the vanguard of change, detached the high altar proper from its retable and set it forward. At Leeds, the reordering (Fig. 1) of the Cathedral was consecrated in December 1963, the month the *Liturgy Constitution* was published. (For another, more experimental example, at Westminster Cathedral, see Figures 2-4.)

Such early implementations of liturgical changes were much too fast for such a huge undertaking. It was some nine months after the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* was issued that the *Instruction* on implementing it was published to provide clarification and guidance,[10] though revision of the rites had

Fig 3: Westminster Cathedral. Experimental reordering from rear, showing temporary movable altar with canopy in use. (Williams & Winkley, 1964). (Photo: Alfred Lammer)

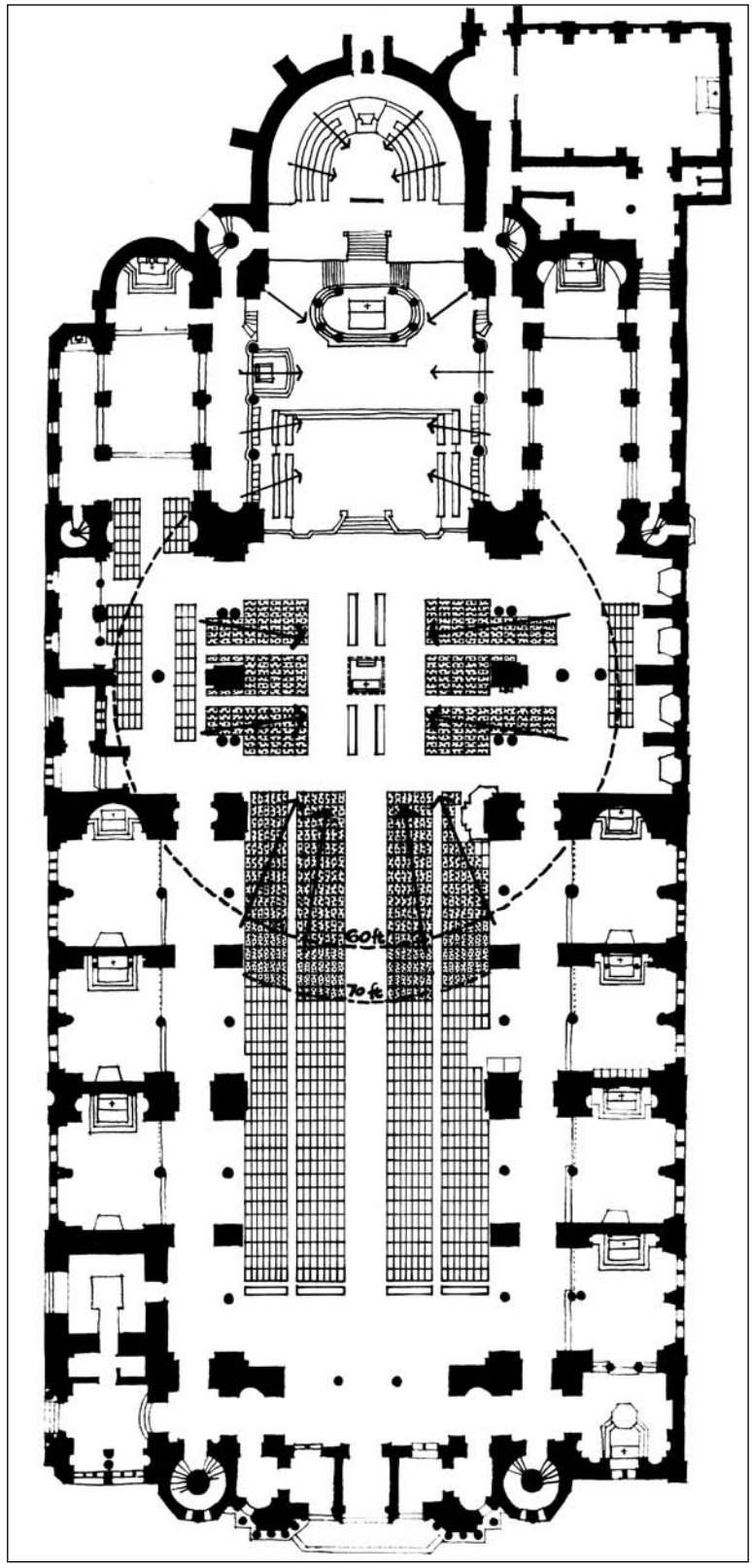
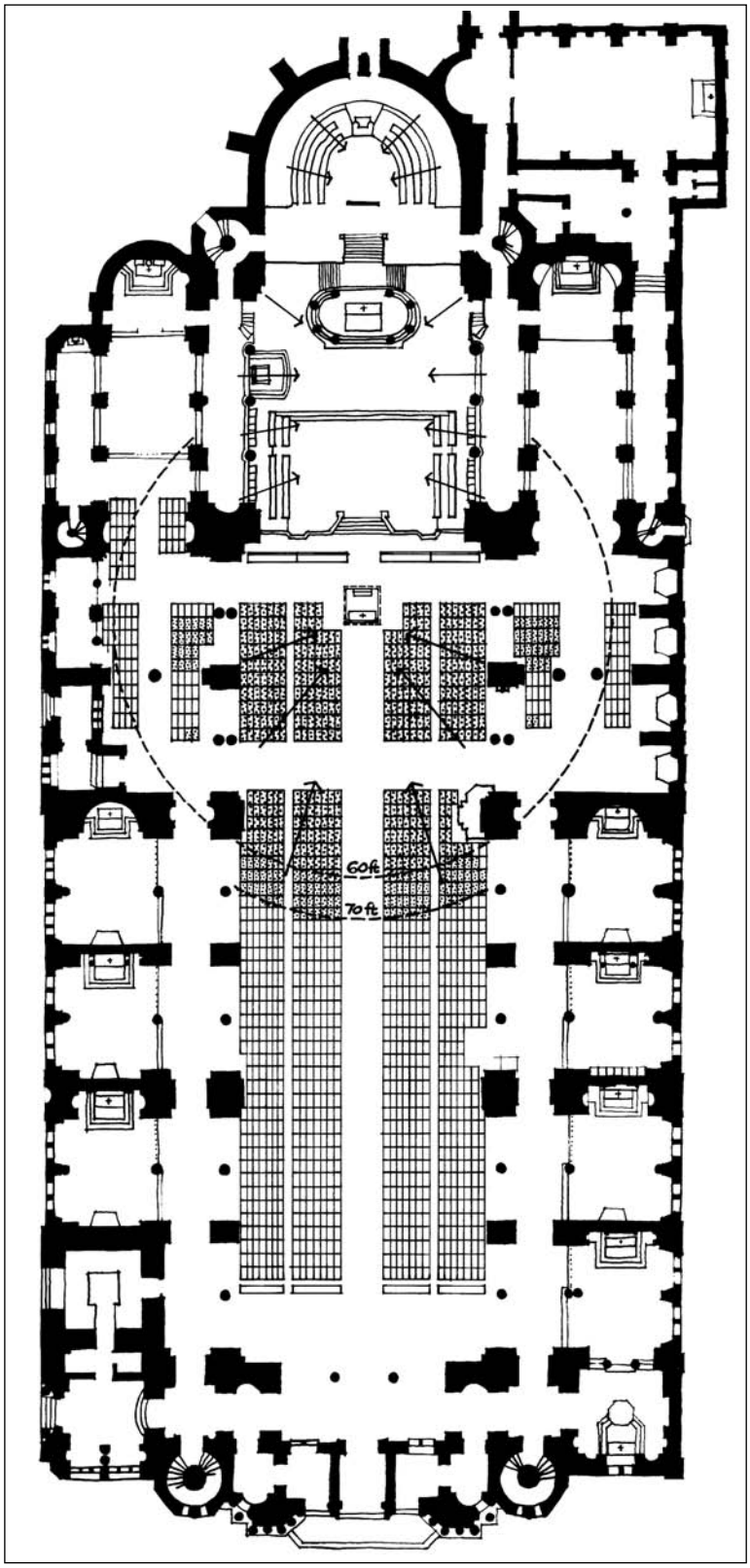


Fig 4: Westminster Cathedral. Plan of experimental reordering. Left: as proposed. Right: as implemented (Williams & Winkley, 1964). (copyright: Austin Winkley)


60ft
70ft

hardly begun (the *Rite of Dedication of a Church and an Altar* not being completed until 1977). By 1970 the *Third Instruction* was pressing for completion of implementation.[11] Barely ready, the new Missal was published the same year, but (as with its recent revision) the accompanying *General Instruction* did not, and does not, cover all aspects of what is required in the architectural setting. For example, it said, (and still says) nothing about what the provision should be for baptism, even though baptisms now ideally take place during Mass (the Easter Vigil Mass, for adults, especially). Even when the revised and innovative new baptismal rites were published (in 1969 for infants, and 1972 for adults), little was indicated.

Much was left to commentators and Bishops' Conferences to put together their understandings of what was required. Hence the several guideline documents referred to by Peter Howell, especially *The Parish Church*. It was intended to complement two other publications, *The Parish Mass* and *Music in the Parish Mass*, both of 1981, and supersede the much slighter *Pastoral Directory for Church Building* published in 1968.[12] The Conference's Liturgical Commission had early established Departments for Pastoral Liturgy, and Music, but it was not until 1976 that I was invited to advise on forming a Department for Art and Architecture, of which Peter Howell was a member. Contrary to what his article might suggest, it was never within its remit to consider individual cases. That was, and remains, the responsibility of dioceses.

By 1976, many churches had already been reordered. In retrospect, I doubt if the full implication of what all the revised rites required architecturally was anywhere near being fully understood in England and Wales before the 1980s, especially with regard to taking conservation into account in the reordering of historic churches.

Later implications and reactions

By the 1980s, reordering was meaning much more than just moving an existing altar forward. It increasingly meant a new altar being set up forward of the old one, or where it once was, and the effect of that on levels in the sanctuary, including changes to their number, area and configuration, with possible consequences for the retention of communion rails and side chapel screens. There were also implications arising from retention of the old high altar, especially if it was still used for Reservation; or if there was a worthy new locus on the sanctuary or adjacent to it, if it was not.

Additionally there was the introduction of an entirely new element, the ambo, initially often a lectern, but later an

architecturally constructed plinth, complementing the altar in design, focal to the Liturgy of the Word in the first part of the more explicitly structured Rite of Mass, to which the altar was focal in the following Liturgy of the Eucharist; a relationship that can still pose a design conundrum.

Further implications arose from relocating the celebrant's sedilia at the side facing across the sanctuary, to a chair placed centrally behind the altar, or close by, facing forward, and from which (not the pulpit) the homily was preached; from the need to relocate the font in the body of the church from one of several possible closed-off loci in, off or near the church entrance or west end, if the newly allowed celebration of baptism during Mass were to be realised, including making additional provision for the immersion of adults; and from making changes to confessionals to accommodate face-to-face meeting provided by the new Rite of Reconciliation. All of which invariably left old confessionals unused, baptisteries empty, sanctuaries without rails, and pulpits removed, as making it possible for all to be closer, see better, have unimpeded access, and be not so hierarchically distinguished, became the new desiderata.[13]

Looking at just the cathedrals of the twenty-two Catholic dioceses of England and Wales can reveal much about the post-conciliar changes, and changes to the changes. In *Ecclesiology Today* 38, I briefly listed these,[14] and there was also a detailed critique of the thorough-going second re-ordering of Leeds cathedral in 2007, by Ken Powell.[15] Leeds is exactly contemporary with Westminster. While it, like others, has been reordered more than once, Westminster is the only cathedral not to have been permanently reordered, and still using a temporary forward altar.[16] Instead of being exemplary, it seems it dare not strip the temporary altar completely on Holy Thursday, as it would expose its ad hoc construction.[17] Such a failure offers little defence against criticisms of the paucity of post-conciliar reorderings promoted by those pressing more and more for a 'reform of the reform'.

Conversely, Liverpool, which might have been thought impossible to reorder, has seen not only major structural conservation to both Gibberd's cathedral and Lutyens' crypt, but also changes to the cathedral's original ordering, including the relocation of the archbishop's throne after radical alteration, the addition of a stepped marble ambo, the conversion of the radial choir seating to an antiphonal arrangement on movable podia, and the introduction of two pencil slim tower speakers.[18] Other changes have been, and are, envisaged, while the baptistery remains anachronistically located and closed off, with baptisms

using a portable bowl, or being held in the crypt (all as at Westminster).

Whether the Council or the Consilium prescribed the post-conciliar liturgical changes, especially the reorientation of altars, has become more than a moot point of late,[19] but change there has been, and it needs to be accepted as significant historical fact. Surveys of Catholic churches (whether published or unpublished) should give greater recognition to it, as should listings. Yet only a few months ago, Westminster was congratulated for being so readily suitable for its celebration of what is now termed the 'extraordinary' form of Mass (*i.e.* the pre-conciliar, 1962 Latin rite), because it had not been reordered.[20] Though I share Paul Velluet's view that a worthy, free-standing, forward-located, stone altar is long overdue, and much more preferable to expensively shuffling forward the original altar beneath the baldacchino,[21] I have the feeling that the moment has passed. The Zeitgeist has changed.

Notes

1 Peter Howell, 'Reordering the reordering', and Paul Velluet, 'Revisiting the position of the altar in contemporary liturgical practice', *Ecclesiology Today*, 40 (July 2008), 72–76 and 67–71.

2 For example see the new altar and ambo at St Wilfrid's, York (William Goldie, 1864) by Matthias Garn (2007) architect Stephen Parry of Potts, Parry, Ives & Young in 'Jude Howarth meets master mason and award winning sculptor Matthias Garn', *Church Building*, 113 (Sep/Oct 2008), 64.

3 Roderick O'Donnell, 'Brompton Oratory revisited', *Ecclesiology Today*, 40 (July 2008), 30–35.

4 For example, in 2007, in the A. G. Scott (1924) chapel of the Jesuit-run Mount St Mary's College, Spinkhill, Derbyshire a fibreglass replica was made of the altar and set forward of it. The Spring 2008 College *Newsletter* commented: 'A fibreglass perfect replica of the façade of the Gilbert Scott altar has been made and a new altar constructed around this façade… The original altar has not been touched – it would be wrong (and not permissible) to interfere with such an important piece of church architecture. As can be seen from the photograph, it looks as though nothing has happened. The Mount Chapel appears to be the same as it always was – thus respecting the mind of its famous architect'. In another case, in 1992 a fibreglass replica was made of the altar designed by A.W.N. Pugin at The Immaculate Conception, Farm St, London (J. J. Scoles, 1846), and set forward of it.

5 *Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani, editio typica tertia* (2000/2002), vernacular edition, Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, (2005), n.289.

6 *Der Geist der Liturgie*, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger [Pope Benedict XVI], Herder Verlag, Freibourg, (2000); *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, Ignatius Press, New York, (2000). The book is typical of an increasing number being published, seeking to promote 'the reform of the reform' of Vatican II, as their authors and others believe the Roman rite to be in crisis. The title is deliberately taken from *Vom Geist der Liturgie* by the German theologian Romano Guardini (1885–1968), who greatly influenced Benedict XVI when a seminarian in the 1940s. He also greatly influenced the architect and town-planner Rudolf Schwarz (1897–1961), whose

churches and typological models of church design, published in 1938 as *Vom Bau Der Kirche*, and in 1958 as *The Church Incarnate*, influenced a generation of post-war church architects.

7 These two articles are referenced in note 1.

8 For example, F.X. Velarde, Richard O'Mahony, Gerard Goalen, Jerzy Faczynski, Austin Winkley, Peter Gilby, Derek Walker, Patrick Nuttgens, Kenneth Nugent SJ, Lance Wright. See essays by Nuttgens and Wright in P. Hammond (ed.), *Towards a Church Architecture*, Architectural Press, 1962. Also R. Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone*, OUP (2004), 274.

9 *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, (4 December 1963). The Second Vatican Council lasted from 11 October 1962 to 8 December 1965.

10 *Inter Oecumenici*, 'Instruction on the Proper Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy', Sacred Congregation of Rites, (26 September 1964).

11 *Liturgiae Instaurationes*, 'Third Instruction on the Correct Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy', Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship (5 September 1970).

12 Less than A5 in size and just 28 pages in total, it is a model of brevity. Only Book One was published. Book Two was intended to include 'a briefing guide for priest and architect, work programme and check lists, examples of typical arrangements and current examples of churches', but was never published. The architects Lance Wright (then in editorial roles on *The Architects' Journal* and *The Architectural Review)*, and John Newton were involved. Seemingly, agreement on content could not be reached.

13 With regard to altar rails, just prior to Vatican II the doyen of Roman liturgical law, Canon John O'Connell, stated categorically in what became a universal handbook, *Church Building and Furnishing: The Church's Way* (1955), that there 'is nothing whatever in the rubrics about an altar rail; it is nowhere prescribed. It is purely utilitarian, to protect the chancel from irreverence'. As much as some might wish that was all he said, he also added '…but it has become a necessity for the giving of Holy Communion in large churches', even to it being 'preferable to think of the Communion rail…as a prolongation of the altar'. Nevertheless, he makes it quite clear that it is a customary and not a canonical 'requirement'. As such, seemingly, it requires no Church law to counter it, and can join the other optional *desiderata* of church design, regardless of how many sets of rails may be heritage-protected.

14 Ken Powell, 'Liturgy and architecture: Catholic church building in the Twentieth Century', *Ecclesiology Today*, 38 (May, 2007), 51.

15 See also R. Williams, The Cathedral Church of St. Anne's, Leeds' and P.D. Walker, 'Leeds Cathedral reordering', *Church Building*, 104 (March/April 2007), 26–33, 34–37.

16 For an earlier experiment in reordering at Westminster, see A. S. Winkley, 'Some changes in existing churches: Westminster Cathedral and Waxwell Farm Chapel', *The Clergy Review*, (October 1965), 817–24.

17 It was made for the visit of Pope John Paul II to England & Wales in May/June 1982.

18 The movable wooden *cathedra*, designed by R.D. Russell, was first sited in the northern radial aisle. For the National Pastoral Congress in 1980, it was relocated to the rear of the sanctuary and had its canopy removed. The later redesigning of the choir stalls, the new marble ambo (and, *inter alia*, the quotational Lutyens door to St Columba's chapel) was by the then cathedral architect, R. O'Mahony. New access from the cathedral to the crypt is planned as part of the on-going development that has seen the long-awaited opening up of the western access (see 'Liverpool's new approach', *Church Building*, 89 (September/October 2004), 10–13. The pencil speakers were installed in 2005.

19 See P. Marini, *A Challenging Reform: Realizing the Vision of the Liturgical Renewal*

1963–75, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, USA (2007). Archbishop Marini was Master of Pontifical Liturgical Celebrations, 1987–2007.

20 Pontifical High Mass in the 'extraordinary form' was celebrated by Cardinal Darío Castrillón Hoyos, President of the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*, at the invitation of the Latin Mass Society, to promote the implementation of Pope Benedict XVI's Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum* on the legitimate use of the revised 'Tridentine' liturgy of Pope John XXIII's pre-conciliar Missal of 1962 by those preferring it to the use of the 'ordinary form' of Pope Paul VI's post-conciliar Missal of 1970.

21 P. Velluet, 'Viewpoint: The position of the traditional altar in contemporary liturgical practice', *Ecclesiology Today*, 37 (December 2006), 97.

Ten friends groups in Surrey

Sue Filer

Introduction

FRIENDS GROUPS for individual churches (the 'Friends of St Agatha's Church') are growing in number, and there now more than 900 such groups separately registered with the Charity Commission.[1] There are many others Friends Groups which are not individual charities, but operate under the aegis of the Parochial Church Council (or the appropriate trustee body for non-Anglican churches): their number is not known, but almost certainly runs into many hundreds.

Sue Filer has been interested in churches for 30 years. She was active with NADFAS Church Recorders, and served as its Chairman for three years. Currently she is a Trustee of The Surrey Churches Preservation Trust and a member of the Historic Churches Liaison Group.

Despite their increasing popularity, there is no central support for setting up and running a Friends Group, so it is good news that the National Churches Trust is planning to provide both telephone and on-line support to such groups within the coming year. Currently very little is known about how they operate to support their local church building. The only published research is in Trevor Cooper's book *How do we keep our Parish Churches?*, produced by the Society in 2004, where, amongst other things, he estimated (on page 52) that the typical Friends Group raised a few thousand pounds per year for the church fittings and fabric – a significant proportion of the annual upkeep budget for churches not facing major repairs.

The short report published here is of a survey of ten Friends Groups in Surrey, which I carried out in 2008. The purpose of the survey was to gain a better understanding of the way in which these groups operated, and the contribution they were making to their church buildings. A secondary purpose was to try and establish how easy such a survey might be to carry out on a wider basis, and what questions could usefully be asked. It should be emphasised that this was a part-time exploratory activity, and I make no great claims about its wider applicability.

Carrying out the survey

Given the small size of the planned survey, I decided only to look at Friends groups attached to Anglican churches. To my surprise, I found information on the existence of Friends Groups was rather difficult to discover. In particular, the Diocese had no knowledge of any Groups and in the end it was only with the help of some members of the Surrey Churches Preservation Trust that these ten Groups were discovered. I still do not know how many such Groups there are in Surrey.

Three of the Groups in my sample were in towns (see Table), three in large villages and four in small villages. One of the latter was formed from two small villages joining together.

Table: Ten Friends Groups in Surrey

Group	Location	Years in existence	Number of Friends	Total raised since start £k	Average raised per year★ £k	Annual members subscrip'n	Life members subscrip'n
A	Large village	7	200	106	15	None	None
B	Small village	2	70	30	15	£30	£200★★
C	Large village	20	40	180	9	£5	-
D	Small village	3	120	18	6	£30	-
E	Town	4	-	20	5	-	-
F	Town	12	170	50	4	£10	-
G	Large village	10	100	37	4	£7.50	£100
H	Two small villages	10	None	15	2	-	-
I	Town	8	50	10	1	£10-£15	£100
J	Small village	25	10	<10	<1	£10	-

★ see discussion in text
★★ for ten years membership

I sent a questionnaire to each Group, and followed this up with a phone call to discuss the work of the Group and (if necessary) to chase for the return of the questionnaire. All ten questionnaires were returned. Anyone else carrying out similar research should use a mix of questionnaires and phone calls to achieve a reasonable response rate.

Starting a new Group

The Groups from the small villages started by circulating leaflets on the church, its history, place in the community and its maintenance needs. These were easily distributed to the whole population. Larger villages had leaflets distributed by friendly local postmen! Adverts were placed in local newspapers and parish magazines. Much work was done by 'word of mouth' at village events and school parents were approached.

Town churches advertised with brochures, not only in the church but in the library, museum and local council offices and through having stalls at the local fête. One church served coffee in a church centre when it was being used for the Autumn 'flu jabs.

As far as I know, none of the groups did a survey of the community first, to discover what level of support would be given. However, I did not ask this question directly, and it may be worth adding to any future survey.

Nor do I know whether the villages and towns which have Friends Groups are different in some way from those which do not, so my study does not help tell us how widely Friends Groups could be rolled out. This might deserve investigation.

Organisation

Nine of the ten Groups had charitable status (the exception was Group J, which was too small).

In all cases except one (discussed later), Trustees were drawn from both the community and the church and all included either the church warden and/or incumbent. Other Trustees came from a wide range of the community and included chairmen of local amenity societies, local schools, local business men (or their wives!). One church (church F) was supported by the local Catholic church and Synagogue.

Typical objectives were 'to support the maintenance and improvement of the internal and external fabric of the church for both the worshipping congregation and the secular community at large' or 'to support the building as a building' or 'to preserve and conserve the building'. One Group (Group F) was 'an Association of local people who help to maintain, preserve, repair or restore the building'. One other Group's aim was 'to help towards the physical maintenance costs only and not to anything connected to the church services or ministry costs'.

I encountered one case (Church I) where there had been a problem with the church fabric committee, where there seemed to have been a conflict of interest. We know from anecdotal evidence that such occasions do arise, but we do not at present know how common they are, nor (more importantly) how they may be avoided – another area for future research, perhaps.

Membership

Annual subscriptions vary widely. The two most recently-founded groups charged the highest annual subscription (£30). One of the oldest groups, founded twenty years ago, charges just £5 per year. Groups founded between eight and twelve years ago charge between £7.50 and £15.00. This pattern may indicate that older groups are sometimes slow to raise subscriptions in line with inflation, or that there has been increasing confidence in what people are willing to pay to support their local church building. But the sample is too small to be sure, and further research on subscriptions is needed. There is, incidentally, no indication that a higher subscription makes it harder to recruit members.

In the towns and large villages all Groups had annual membership and most had life and joint membership schemes. Some had ten-year membership arrangements. The use of Direct Debit and Gift Aid was encouraged. One exception to the general pattern was Church A, which asked people to register their interest as a Friend without paying a fee, and then to support the fund raising events.

Regarding membership, there seems to be a difference between these larger communities and the smaller villages (though this may simply be a result of the small number of

churches I looked at – perhaps my smaller villages were unusual in some way; this may be worth exploring further). The small villages with populations of less than 250 people had more difficulty relying on local membership, and this seems to have forced them to be creative in the way they approached their members. For example, Group B relied on support both from within and from outside the community by maintaining contact with people who had moved away, or people who had used the church for christenings, weddings and funerals. Group D had a scheme to 'sponsor a day in the life of St D' scheme. The upkeep of the church ('St D') was £30 per day, so for that figure someone could sponsor one day. A book was placed in the back of the church with the name of each sponsor.

Fund raising

Most Groups published a newsletter twice a year. Many Groups had their own websites. Some Groups advertised events in the local newspaper and on local radio and had literature designed professionally. One Group paid for publicity advice.

The most successful of the town Groups raised small amounts on many occasions and covered a wide spread of the community At each event new members were encouraged to join with the enticement of a bottle of wine. There was children's event with a magician, a scrabble tea, a quiz night, a biennial jazz concert, a Welsh supper with entertainment by a local Male Voice Choir and a series of talks on art.

Another town church had concerts, an art exhibition with commission from the sales of local artists' work, talks by knowledgeable local people on trips out to places of interest, safari suppers, stalls at local fêtes and Christmas card sales.

The third town church Group was more heavily church-based and thus had less *structural* contact with other bodies and influencers in the wider community; it appears to have found it more difficult to raise money. This is an area that deserves further research. This Group organised a classical concert and sold Christmas cards in a shop and museum.

Larger village Groups tended to have some big events such as musical evenings with professional musicians, horse racing evenings and black-tie Balls. Local sponsorship for programmes, advertising and prizes was found from businesses like builders, accountants and solicitors. One Group packed bags in the local supermarket for publicity and to raise money. There were also coach outings and Christmas parties, always with raffles.

Small village Groups tended to have flower festivals, talks on holidays, suppers, barn dances, Dutch Auctions and craft fairs, Desert Island Discs and barbecues.

However, the three small villages raised some money from big events by going beyond the confines of their communities. For example Group D organised two big money-making events, a concert using local contacts with the entertainment industry. They also ran a charity golf day with corporate golf teams from local businesses. Group H (two villages) also raised a lot of money from a concert. Much advertising was done for the event with the help of local business sponsorship and all music groups and schools were contacted. Local contacts provided a concert pianist and other professionals.

Whatever the size of the community, many of the Groups raised money from grant giving bodies such as the Landfill Communities Fund and from what one person described as 'connections outside the community', and local charities. Raising money from Heritage weekends was popular with all villages, large and small, as were musical historical dramas performed with the local school.

I obtained the impression that a good number of these Groups were valuable to the community in their own right, providing ways for people to get together in a social setting and enjoy themselves. The emphasis of my study was on the value of Friends to the church buildings, but it would be interesting to know more about the value of Friends to their community.

Amount of money raised

Many of the groups have raised substantial sums of money (and had fun in the process!). The figures are shown in the table.

I have calculated the average amount raised per year, and this is also shown. This figure needs to be treated with caution. First, it is an average, and therefore hides the fact that the amount raised each year will vary – for example, we do not know whether fund-raising is very lumpy, with occasional big events, or smooth and continuous. Secondly, it is possible that new Groups start with a bang, so that younger groups might have some tendency to show a higher average annual amount. Finally, my calculations of the amount raised per year takes no account of inflation – amounts raised in earlier years are worth more, so the figure shown in this column understates the true value raised, particularly for longer-lived groups.

With all these caveats, the figures indicate a range from about £15,000 per year to less than £1,000 per year. Seven of the ten groups raise £4,000 or more per year, on average. The median is about £5,000 per year – half of the groups raise more than this, half less. The average is around £6,000 per year, but this includes the extreme cases. However, if we ignore the two smallest and the

two largest figures, then the remaining set of six 'typical' Groups are raising on average about £5,000 per year, not so very different. These figures are in line with, though a little higher than, those previously suggested (see the first paragraph above).

This is a small sample of Groups, and wider investigation is needed before any firm conclusions can be drawn about what is happening elsewhere. For this set of Friends Groups, however, we can say that the majority are raising an average £4,000 or more per year, and some much more than this, providing a substantial input to the cost of looking after a church building.

I can see no particular relationship between the age of a Group and my calculation of the amount it raises per year. That is, there is no real sign of any falling off over time. This may show that Friend Groups can continue to operate successfully over the longer term, and do not necessarily rely on the enthusiasm of the initial founders. Certainly, many of the Groups I contacted stressed that Trustees should serve for a specific length of time. However, I only looked at Friends Groups still in existence, so I do not know how many Friends Groups have failed. Questions of long-term sustainability need to be investigated further.

Summary and conclusion

More research is needed, but this survey supports the view that, despite the gradual decline in the levels of church going, some communities at least still identify enough with their local church building to make fund raising viable through ongoing methods rather than a single one-off emergency appeal. As far as we can tell from this data, the model is sustainable over the longer term. This form of fund raising contributes to community life.

All this would explain the rapid rise in the number of such Groups over the last two decades. Put simply, they work.

I am grateful to Trevor Cooper for discussion of an earlier draft of this report. If anyone wishes to carry out a similar survey in future, I would be happy to describe my methodology in more detail, and provide a copy of the questionnaire. I can be contacted via the Ecclesiological Society.

Note

1. The figure of 900 is from English Heritage (personal communication), for whom the Charity Commission provided in January 2009 a list of all registered charities which contained the words 'Friend' and 'Church' in their description. The list contained 912 entries. A quick check of their names indicates that most if not all are probably the type of Friends Group being considered here. This search by the Charity Commission may have missed some cases of Friends Groups who do not use the word 'Friends' or 'Church' in their description . The number found is in line with previous estimates, published and unpublished, made by Trevor Cooper.

Recent enquiries

The following enquiries have been received. The Society will forward any responses to the enquiror. Please use the contact details given on the back page (top of the right hand column).

St Michael's Church and College, Tenbury Wells

John Austin writes: I am doing research for a book entitled *Ouseley, Woodyer and St Michael's College: A Tractarian Dream*. The Revd Sir F A G Ouseley commissioned Henry Woodyer to build St Michael's Church and College, the High Church choir school near Tenbury Wells on the Worcestershire / Herefordshire border (Figs. 1 & 2). The church was dedicated in 1856 and the school opened in 1857; before these dates they were called Old Wood Church and Old Wood College.

I am looking for Woodyer's architectural plans and drawings and the building specifications. I am also interested in any correspondence between Woodyer and Ouseley, or Woodyer and William Chick, his Hereford Clerk of Works, and similar material.

I have arranged for searches of the Woodyer files at the CCB Library at Church House, Westminster and also the Worcestershire

Fig. 1: St Michael's church, near Tenbury Wells, a recent photograph from the south-west.

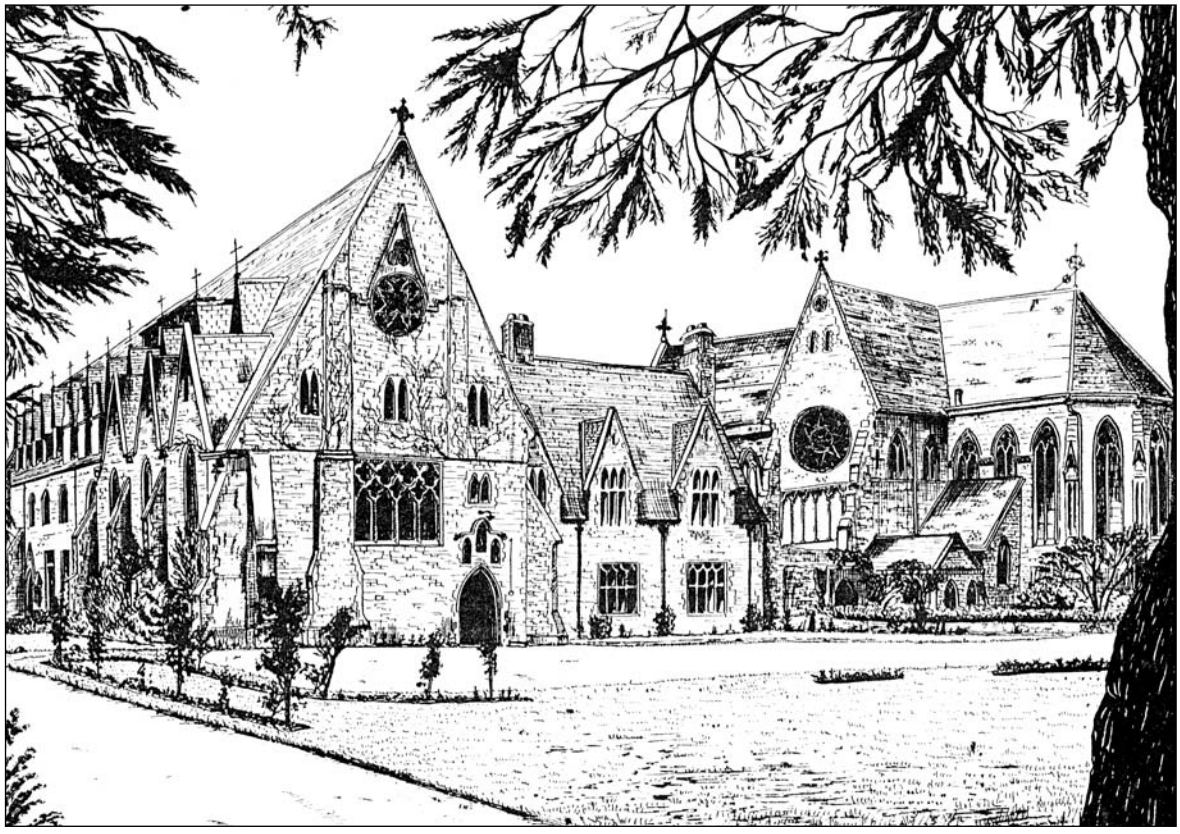


Fig. 2: St Michael's church and College, near Tenbury Wells.

and Herefordshire County Records and at both the Diocesan Offices. I have seen some letters at Hereford Cathedral Library.

I would be grateful for suggestions of where else I should search.

St Walstan and St Bliba

Carol Twinch is updating her Gazetteer of references to St Walstan in parish churches. These include images, dedications, references in wills, and so forth.

St Walstan's shrine at Bawburgh in Norfolk was a popular place of pilgrimage in medieval times. Walstan was of royal parentage, but foreswore wealth, and became a saintly farm labourer. In illustrations he normally carries a scythe (sometimes a spade), and is sometimes crowned (Fig. 3). He may be shown with oxen at his feet, a reminder of his final journey to his resting place at Bawburgh drawn by his own oxen. Another saint, St Blida, often taken to be his mother, occasionally appears with him, crowned and holding a book.

Carol Twinch's most recent book on the saint, *Saint with the Silver Shoes: the Continuing Search for St Walstan* (Lavenham, 2004)

Fig. 3: Medieval screen panel paintings of St Walstan, both from Norfolk. Left, at Sparham, St Mary; right, at Litcham, All Saints. Images from www.norfolkchurches.co.uk. Copyright © Simon Knott.

provides an extended gazetteer of examples of all dates from medieval to modern. Since that book was published, four further images have been found (at Foulden (Norfolk), Outwell (straddling Norfolk and Cambridgdeshire), Bingham (Nottinghamshire) and Thorganby (Lincolnshire)).

Carol Twinch would be interested to know of additional examples not yet recorded by her. These can be of any date. It is suggested that in the first instance a short note is sent to her, which she can then follow up if it turns out to be one of which she was previously unaware.

St Luke's ('The Old Brick Church'), Newport, Isle of Wight County, Virginia

Trevor Cooper writes: I recently attended a family wedding at St Luke's Church (formerly 'The Old Brick Church'), which is the parish church of Newport, Isle of Wight County, Virginia. My query, detailed in the final paragraph below, relates to the patron and builders.

St Luke's is a gothic-survival Anglican church (Fig. 4), probably built between the 1660s and1690s, though some have claimed a date of 1632. The tower and body of the church were probably part of a single building campaign.[1] It is built of brick, with Y-tracery windows in the north and south walls, a priest's door (!), stepped buttresses, a rather odd great east window, and a massive west tower, the whole building having the aisleless plan of a typical single-cell English village church (except for the west end entrance). Inside the church, the builders placed a wooden screen (long gone) to separate the east end with its communion table from the body of the church.

This and other early Virginian churches have been much discussed, and attempts made to identify English precedents. Similarities can certainly be found: brick churches occur in East Anglia; the three stage tower has similarities with that at All Saints, North Runcton, Norfolk (1703–13); crow-stepped gables can be found on many Essex porches; and internal arrangements similar to those at Newport were used, for example, in the 1662 church at Foremark, Derbyshire.[2]

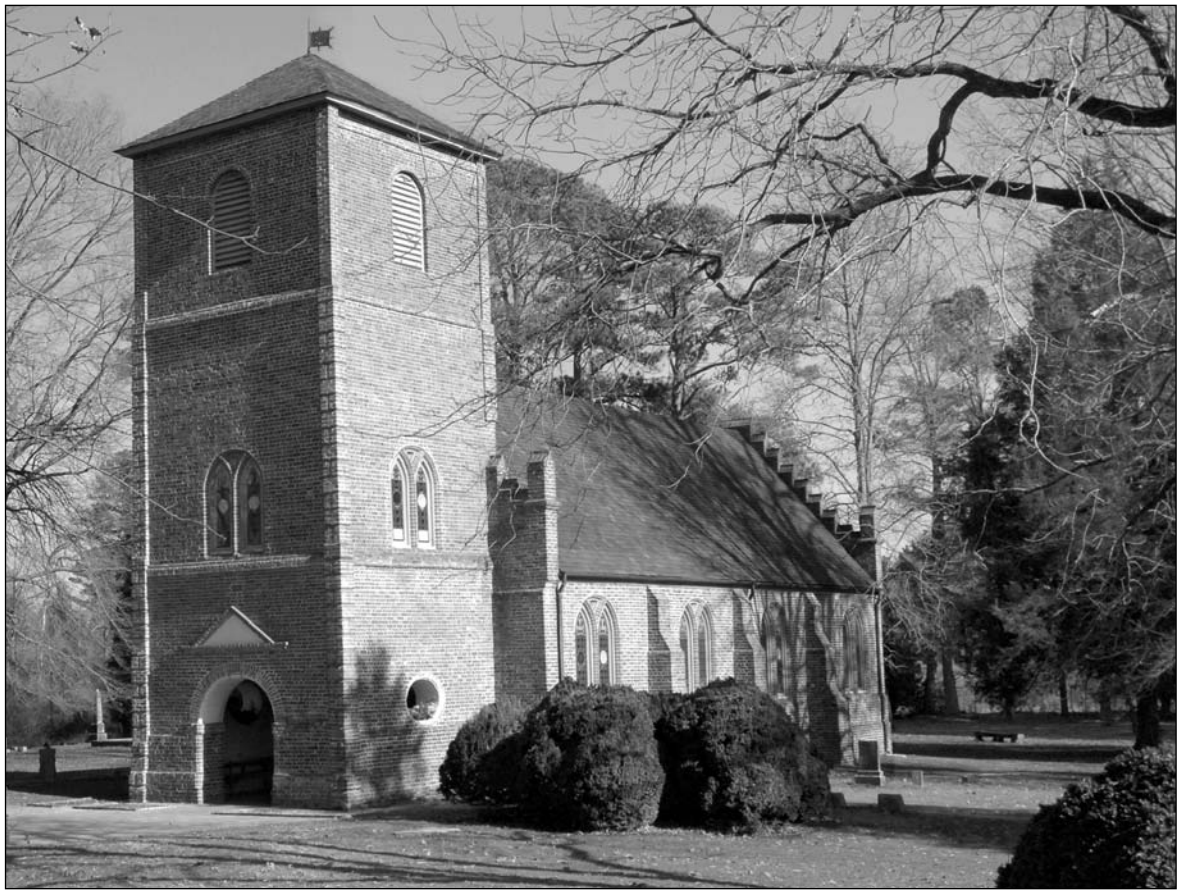


Fig. 4: St Luke's church, Newport, Isle of Wight County, Virginia, from the south-west.

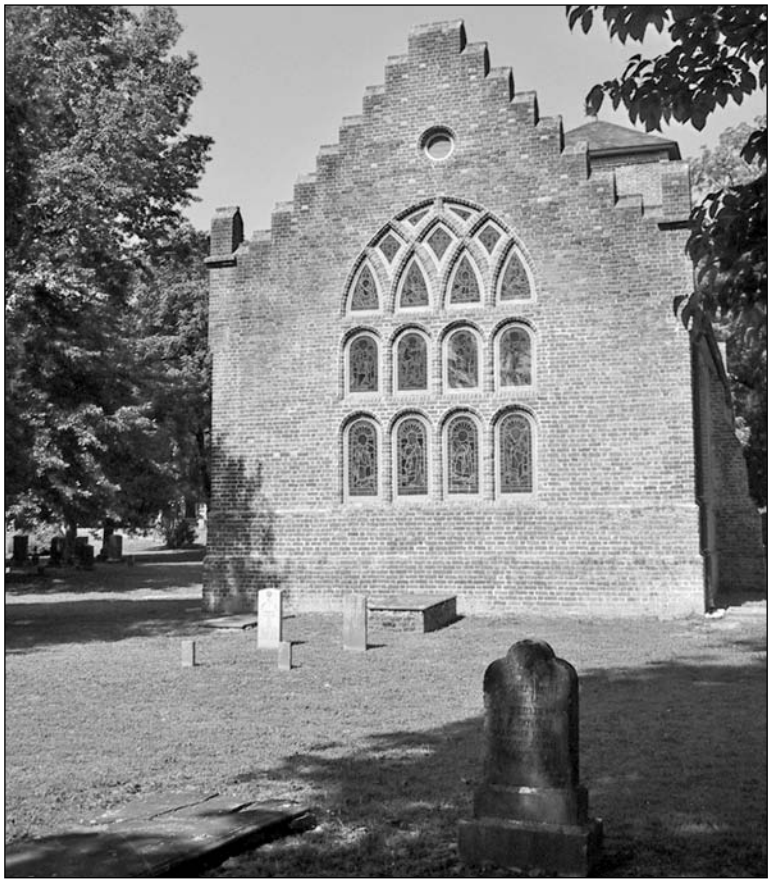


Fig. 5: The east end of St Luke's.

The tower at Newport was almost certainly built by Charles and Thomas Driver. The Driver family were probably brought over to Virginia in the mid-seventeenth century by their patron Joseph Bridger, who was from a prominent Gloucestershire family. I would be interested in any information about the Driver or Bridger families from English records, particularly of any building activities they undertook in England. I would also be interested in English precedents for the form and style of the somewhat ungainly brick east window (Fig. 5) – the only precedent I have seen suggested is at Sandon, Essex.

Notes

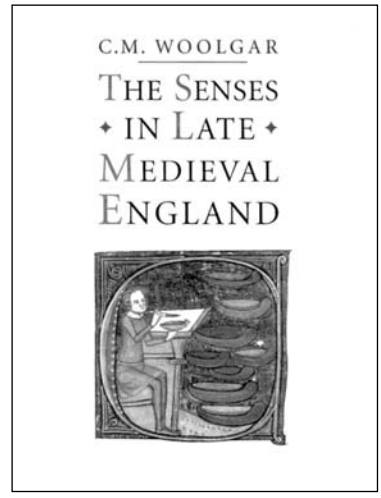
1. James Bettley (personal communication) has queried whether the tower may be a later build than the church. J S Rawlings in his *Virginia Colonial Churches: an Architectural Guide* (Richmond, VA, 1963), p. 31, states that the tower is engaged, implying a single build. However, *post hoc* examination of my wedding photographs shows that the stepped gable on the south of the church is certainly not engaged with the tower, the courses being out of alignment; below this level the coursing is true, and there are signs that the brickwork on the west wall of the nave (on the south side, at least) is laid in a way which anticipates and respects the

return needed at the junction with the tower, implying that the tower wall was built at the same time as the nave west wall (alternatively, that it anticipates meeting an existing tower – but the historical context makes this seem an unlikely hypothesis). It may simply be that the stepped gable is later repair work, but the point deserves further examination.

2. For the most recent comparative analysis of early Virginian churches, see Dell Upton, *Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia* (Yale, 1997). This has a full bibliography. For a recent overview of Anglican building in the region, see Carl Lounsbury, 'Anglican Church Design in the Chesaspeake: English Inheritances and Regional Interpretations', in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, Vol. 9: Constructing Image, Identity, and Place*, (2003), pp. 22–38, available at http://www.jstor.org/stable/3514423 (accessed 29 Nov 2008).

Book reviews

C M Woolgar, ***The Senses in Late Medieval England.*** Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2006, xi + 372pp., 86 illustrations, £25 hdbk, ISBN 0 300 11871 6



To the medieval mind, the five senses, often supplemented by a sixth, speech, contained a moral dimension as well as the physical and physiological ones we recognise. *The Senses in Late Medieval England* deploys an array of written sources, especially the financial accounts of high status households and moralising literature (such as miracle collections and sermons), to elucidate how medieval people perceived the senses and how the senses were excited and used in a variety of contexts. It does not set out to be comprehensive: in particular, apart from accounts of miracles at shrines, there is surprisingly little reference to sensory experiences in churches, not even to the use of incense.

The first, longer, section of the book discusses ideas about the senses in general, and then devotes a chapter to each sense in turn. Although parts of the discussion are technical, particularly those relating to the ways in which it was thought that the senses worked, the text is always lucid and readable. As an introduction to its subject, this part of the book works well, and its wealth of detail will make it a useful handbook as well as a book to read systematically. In its second part, three chapters explore the 'sensory environments' and connotations of different kinds of household — those of bishops, queens and aristocrats. While there is much of interest here, this section is less successful than the first. Parts of the text, such as lengthy descriptions of the ceremonial aspect of noble households, are too loosely connected to the main subject, and the internal organisation of the chapters would have benefited from the use of sub-headings. A more serious shortcoming in this section is that discussion depends too heavily on written sources, with insufficient attention to the evidence of extant aristocratic buildings, their plans (how smell, in particular, was managed), and surviving decor and furnishings. These topics, and the effects of decor and furnishings on acoustics, are discussed, but without primary physical evidence the recreation of 'sensory environments' within buildings cannot be other than partial. However, although there remains, as the author acknowledges at the end, much to be done, this book is a useful starting-point.

P S Barnwell, Kellogg College, University of Oxford

Julian M Luxford, ***The Art and Architecture of English Benedictine Monasteries, 1300–1540: A Patronage History.*** Boydell and Brewer, 2005, 321 pp., 45 b&w plates, £45.00, hdbk, ISBN 0955-2480

The subject of this book complements the more heavily researched area of Benedictine patronage of the early and high Middle Ages, and thoroughly trawls through the records of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries to discover whether there is anything distinctive to say about

the period. If the result, generally speaking, is 'not a lot', then that is not to derogate the project in any way, for these unspectacular results testify to why this is, in may ways, a model book. It is a model of careful scholarship, of caution in its conclusions, of thoroughness in its research, in the way it neatly mortars a sturdy brick to the existing architecture of Benedictine scholarship. The reader reaching the final page feels a curious sense of relief – she has been led through every byway of the subject, she has been invited to consider it from every possible angle, she knows that should she wish to return to it (and she does), she only need turn to this book to find out what she wants or to take up a lead to discover still more.

Its structure indicates these qualities. A map on the opening page immediately establishes the geographical parameters of the study – the Benedictine houses of the West of England, followed by a useful discussion of the definition of 'patronage'. Part One deals with sources (the book deals largely with primary sources) divided into documentary and visual sources and then subdivided by type of source e.g. cartularies and heraldry; sepulchral monuments and stained glass. Parts Two and Three consider internal and then external patronage, both introduced by sections on historical context. The vocabulary of the various sub-headings of these sections reflect the symmetry – 'ideological, non-ideological'; and the dialectic approach –'challenge'; 'response' – of the argument. The method is transparent and the discussion tails the sources as closely as a good hunting dog following a scent. Finally the success of the book is tested by the author himself in the form of five questions he sets in the conclusion which ask what Benedictine patronage in the period tells us about the Benedictines themselves and how the picture changed over the two and a half centuries which the book surveys.

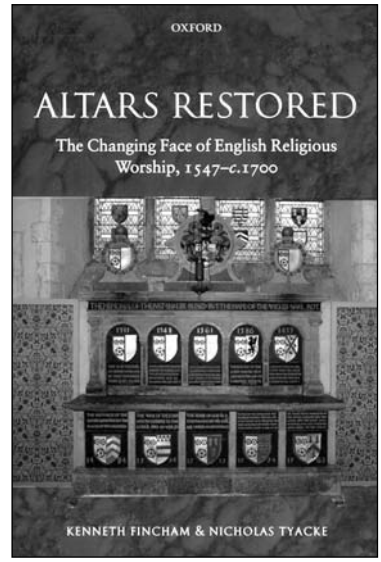
Of course a book of this nature is weighed down with documentary ballast which does not always make it easy to read, despite the many fascinating vignettes within its pages. However, this is not meant to be a narrative. It is really a reference book and, as such, its detailed structure makes it relatively simple to find information. It may be challenging to the non specialist reader and here a glossary of monastic terms and concepts would have been a generous gesture. Even the OED struggled to come up with a definition of the term 'forinsec'. The concentration of the argument on West Country foundations is fair enough and justified in the introduction, but this should perhaps have been indicated in the title or at least included in the questions at the end. Does this portrait of Benedictinism in the Western counties give us a balanced picture of the patrmnage of English Benedictine art and architecture as a whole in the period?

This study represents a very particular kind of art history which focuses on *why* an artefact is produced rather than an analysis, for its own sake, of *what* it turns out to be. As Julian Luxford attractively puts it, it is 'a behavioural study, art historical in a fundamental sense'. There are certainly still many areas of visual culture where such an approach could be profitably applied, though anyone attempting such a project involving examining the motives of people in the past would be wise to turn to this book, note one of the closing sentences – 'We cannot test our images

of the later middle ages against the realities of the period, of course; but we realize, nevertheless, how different this past that we study must have been from that which even the best-informed and most open-minded can imagine' – and proceed with caution.

Catherine Oakes, Kellogg College, University of Oxford

Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke, ***Altars Restored: The Changing Face of English Religious Worship, 1547–c.1700.*** Oxford University Press, 2007, xviii + 396 pp., 24 b&w plates, £65 hdbk, ISBN 978-0-19-820700-9



After the Reformation of the 1540s, the siting, orientation and name of what in Catholic times had been called the altar became a matter of contention and bitter ideological strife for many generations. There has been a good deal of writing about the altar controversies of the seventeenth century in recent years, but this book by two well-established church historians is the first to survey the arguments and parish practices from the beginning of the Reformation through to the settled condition of the Church in 1700. The issues that aroused such protracted acrimony were fairly simple and basic. Where should the communion table be placed? In the chancel or in the nave? What should its orientation be? Should it be movable or fixed? Should it be railed, and if so, in what manner? Was it allowable to call the table an altar? That last question was related to the crucial question about the nature of holy communion in the reformed Church: was it a commemoration or an act of sacrifice? The answers to these questions depended on whether you were a plain Protestant or more inclined to a ceremonial mode of worship that was inevitably reminiscent of pre-Reformation times.

Contingent on the altar controversies were a number of equally divisive problems. What degree of ceremony and ritual was permissible in the Church? Should the church be primarily an oratory or an auditory: should prayer or sermon prevail? Was the sacrament of the eucharist at the centre of worship, or the sermon? Were the schemes of beautification that began to be introduced in the middle of James I's reign an aid to devotion or a covert form of idolatry? All these questions have been persistent problems in the history of English Protestantism, and they do not go away.

Fincham and Tyacke have carried out a vast amount of primary research into parish records and cathedral archives, and have read through a formidable amount of polemical writing and ecclesiastical documents. As one would expect after such detailed and extensive enquiry, their findings are complex and do not result in any easy generalisations. Where ceremonialism gains ground in certain dioceses and among certain social groups, it is countered elsewhere in the country by resolute opposition. From the beginning, there was hesitation about how far reformation should be pushed. Edwardian zeal and iconoclasm did not extend across the whole country. The Calvin- and Zwingli-inspired plainness of the early Elizabethan Church was countered by the semi-reformed practice of the Queen herself in the chapel royal, where the communion table still stood altar-wise at the east end, with a crucifix and candlesticks upon it. The royal peculiar of

Westminster Abbey kept up services of an almost pre-Reformation splendour, with a full choral accompaniment. At the same time, the growth of a new puritan movement in the 1570s encouraged by the preaching and writings of Thomas Cartwright reinforced the tendency to plain services. In these, the communion table was merely a convenient piece of furniture to be moved around the church at the will of the minister. Richard Hooker's books of the 1590s argued for a decorous form of worship, at the centre of which were the sacraments. For Hooker, 'the beauty of holiness' was an ideal that should be realised in the Church of England by formal services and by fine furnishings. In harmony with Hooker's prescriptions, Lancelot Andrewes evolved a ceremonious mode of worship that went together with a liberal, anti-Calvinist theology, and paved the way for a high church revival in England. Andrewes regarded the service at the altar as the centre of worship, when man was 'most near to angelique perfection', and insisted that the communion table should be regarded as an altar, oriented north and south, and reverenced as a holy object by virtue of its association with the eucharist.

Andrewes was King James's favourite preacher, but the king did not embrace the high formality of worship, and preferred sermon-centred services to the sacramentalism that Andrewes wished to promote. The communion table remained a table. It was only in the reign of King Charles that the line of ceremonialist prelates who were inspired by Andrewes came to dominate the Church, and introduced policies in which the table was considered to be an altar and reverenced accordingly. Charles himself had an exalted view of the altar, so his example encouraged the movement to fix altars at the east end of churches and rail them in to prevent sacrilegious usage and to enforce kneeling at communion. The consequence of this policy was to provoke hostility from many Protestants who believed that the Reformation was being undone. These divisions helped to fuel the civil war, a catastrophe that not only brought about the removal and destruction of all altars but also led to the dismantling of the Church of England.

The authors of this book give a most useful account of how the services of the proscribed church were maintained during the Commonwealth years, and then describe how the Laudian dispensation of the 1630s was gradually reintroduced in the decade after the Restoration. At this time there was less hostility to railed altars at the east, and to formal, prayer-book services, because those with opposing views became Dissenters and separated from the Church. The chapel royal again set a precedent, and the rebuilding of the London churches after the Fire established a standard of a railed eastward altar that was followed nationally. There were always exceptions, as Fincham and Tyacke document, but an enduring pattern had been firmly established.

This book must become the definitive account of altars and altar policies in the post-Reformation era. It is highly nuanced, in that it constantly cites cases that do not accord with the prevailing trends, and reminds us that England remained a country of individual practices at parish level, whatever the regional bishop enjoined. Nowhere were parishes more diverse than in London, which receives particularly close

attention in this survey. In this chart of fluctuating attitudes towards altars and their role in worship, we have a major contribution to ecclesiastical history that will not easily be superseded.

Graham Parry, University of York

James Stevens Curl, ***Victorian Architecture: Diversity & Invention***, Spire Books, Reading, 2007, 635pp profusely illustrated in b&w with a number of colour plates, £69.95 hdbk, ISBN 978-1-904965-06-0,

Many years ago in the early 1960s when Victorian architecture was being rediscovered and evaluated on a higher level of seriousness scarcely known beyond the sphere of Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Nikolaus Pevsner, I remember an earnest dinner party given by Charles Handley-Read in which the difficulties of attempting a modern version of Sir Charles Eastlake's *A History of the Gothic Revival* (1872) were discussed in conclusively negative terms. It was considered that the presuppositions behind the movement had vanished so completely, the historic styles of architecture were so irretrievably buried in the past, that it could not be seen any longer on its own terms but only on those of the present. Handley-Read's house in Ladbroke Road, Holland Park, became an unofficial meeting place of a new generation of art and architectural historians and the conversations there brokered influence on the minds of a fresh group with lasting effect. In this the Hegelian interpretation of history was seen as decisive.

This meant that the revival as a whole momentarily came to be regarded in terms of what could be considered original rather then imitative and the term 'High Victorian' came into currency to determine not only the culmination of the revival as a whole in the years between *c*1855-70 but this brief parenthesis was used as a common mean established on those criteria to judge what had preceded and followed it. For forty years this view densely clouded the skies of the Society of Architectural Historians and influenced many who relied for their architectural judgment on *The Buildings of England*. Even Pugin came to be vindicated because elements of High Victorianism were claimed by some in his later work, while architects like Bodley were accused of a failure of confidence that lead to diminishment because of their return to Pugin's Decorated style. Later architectural writers came to see the limitations of this way of looking at the revival and the publication of Gavin Stamp's study of George Gilbert Scott Jnr, *An Architect of Promise*, in 2002 at last broke a logjam by looking at the late Gothic Revival as a subject of serious consideration. In doing so he reverted to the pre-Pevsnerian consensus that the conclusion of the revival marked its fulfilment and represented the best achievement of the movement as a whole.

In those years of ideological debate one that stands independent of the Hegelian ascendancy and the lure of the *zeitgeist* is the architectural writer, James Stevens Curl. In company with the late Roderick Gradidge and David Watkin (men of widely different calibre), Pevsner is not one of his heroes and few opportunities are lost in inveighing against the influence of his intellectual dominance over mid-twentieth-century

British architectural history. This needs to be stated because if this monumental, magisterial work has a weakness it lies in the recurrent parenthetical rejoinders to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortunate that have characterized the polemic of the years since the claims of the Modern Movement have been seen as paramount in the way we look at the past and the continuity of the historic architectural styles.

The battle is over and a more pluralistic understanding of architectural history has emerged which sees value in architectural development on its own terms, rather than in the light of the aims of dogmatic imperatives. This has the result of making *Victorian Architecture* a cross between a polemical period piece and a record of differing attitudes that have done harm to one of the richest periods of architectural history, with international consequences, in these islands. The reader should be urged not to be discouraged by Curl's bombast; it is the final roar of a victor who has scarcely noticed that the enemy has fled, leaving a few adherents tremulously clinging to their memories of an inspired, if misguided, teacher whose subtlety of mind they are reluctant to regard as mistaken.

In twelve lavishly illustrated chapters the entire summary of British nineteenth-century architectural history is set forth, beginning with post-Renaissance Gothic survivalism, eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century Gothic revivalism, the Industrial Revolution, the consequences of designing the New Palace of Westminster in Gothic; Pugin, the Ecclesiologists and the alternative Round-Arched styles. A parenthesis follows in which the eclectic claims of Italianate, neo-Classical, and Egyptian styles; the Tudor, Jacobean and Seventeenth-Century revivals, the Baronial style and, rather out of place, the conflict of taste within the Roman Catholic Church between Gothic and Renaissance. The challenge of structural theory, iron and glass, terracotta, the problems of 'vigour and go', and the legacy of the Great Exhibition follow.

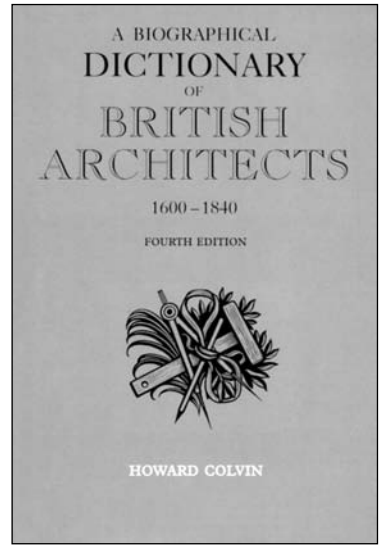
The Gothic Revival after All Saints', Margaret Street, is examined in its stylistic ramifications: French Gothic, Progressive Gothic, the interpretations of different architectural schools, and the revival of English Gothic styles. By now Victorian eclecticism takes control and four further chapters bring in the subjects of Anglo-Catholicism, liturgiology, Arts and Crafts influence; followed by the domestic revival in its wide and selective variety; reform and hygiene (with Ruskin tucked in the middle); more on the domestic revival in the form of philanthropic industrial estates, concluded by an epilogue on building types: public house architecture, clubs, hotels, restaurants, theatres, civic and commercial buildings.

It is difficult to know how to accommodate systematically such varied material within a consistent body of work but each parenthesis illuminates the whole and describes what actually happened during the period under discussion. Rather than reading the book as a continuous narrative it is advisable to select themes and follow them through. One of the many delights is to find illustrations of relatively obscure buildings drawn from all over the British Isles which illuminate the Victorian building achievement in a comprehensive national setting. The standard of photography, whether monochrome or recorded in colour by the lens

of Martin Charles, is faultless and provides one of the best representations of nineteenth-century architecture to be found within hard covers. Seen as a whole, *Victorian Architecture* represents a life-time's reading and research and the contents of Professor Stevens Curl's filing cabinets have been poured into a volume on an unequalled scale of comprehensiveness. If his forcefully expressed opinions occasionally jar they are compensated by the range of his coverage, including many buildings easily overlooked. Stevens Curl has triumphantly surmounted fastidious ideological reservations by presenting the Victorian architectural achievement as it was.

Anthony Symondson, SJ

Howard Colvin, ***A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600–1840.*** Yale UP, 2008, 1334 pp., £75.00 hdbk, ISBN 978-0-300-12508-5



'Reviewing Colvin is rather like writing a reference for the Archangel Gabriel', wrote J Mordaunt Crook of one of the earlier editions of this work, and it would be impossible to disagree; 'It … changed the face of English architectural history' was David Watkin's verdict. For anyone working on the near two and a half centuries encompassed by the book, it is indispensable. Some 2000 architects, from Inigo Jones to William Burn are included, each with a remarkably comprehensive biography – often with an incisive assessment of the quality of the work – list of building projects with sources, as well as all the architectural books published in the period. It is indeed an extraordinary achievement.

Perhaps the real value of the book is only revealed to those whose research straddles the 1840 cut-off. Seek a detail about some aspect of the life or work of (say) Charles Barry and it will almost certainly be there, or at least the reader will be directed to a likely source; try to do the same for one of Barry's near contemporaries whose longevity puts them just beyond Colvin's net – for instance, Anthony Salvin – and what is there in the way of an accessible reference work? The British Architectural Library's *Dictionary of British Architects 1834–1900* is a very poor relation.

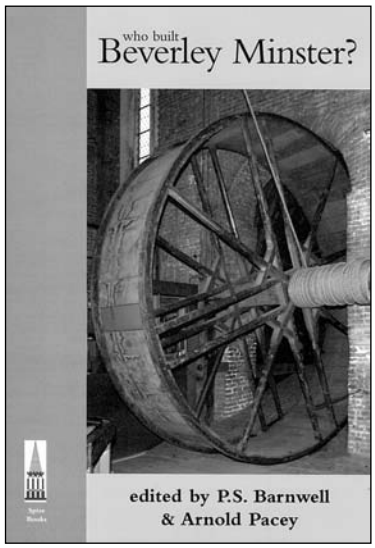
The first edition appeared in 1954 with new, expanded, ones in 1978 and 1995. Despite Colvin's earlier thoroughness, the latest edition is still able to boast 62 newly identified architects and about 700 additional buildings. Very usefully, it also adds new references to many commissions listed in earlier editions.

For those researching the churches of Colvin's period, the book represents the best accounts of the prolific ecclesiastical careers of a number of nineteenth century architects who preceded the ecclesiologists, for example, Francis Bedford (1784–1858), Edward Blore (1787–1879), Edward Haycock (1790–1870), Henry William Inwood, (1794–1843). And for those interested in eighteenth-century churches, he provides information of the work of many little known characters like Thomas Johnson (d. 1800) and John Palmer (*c.*1738–1817), as well as the better known Gibbs and Chambers, although there will be scope for many additional entries when the forthcoming definitive book on the

Georgian church, the fruit of Terry Friedman's painstaking research, appears. There is also much new material about the designers of Scottish churches.

For all its remarkable strengths, there is, inevitably, much that remains to be discovered. It is to be hoped that a database of new material will be maintained for a future fifth edition. Sadly, Sir Howard died shortly before the publication of this one, but it is a fitting tribute to an outstanding academic career.

Christopher Webster, formerly at Staffordshire University



P S Barnwell and Arnold Pacey (eds.), ***Who Built Beverley Minster?*** Spire Books, 2008, 170 pp., 50 col. and b&w plates, £14.95, pbk, ISBN 978-1-904965-17-6

The book is a welcome collection of eight essays, (with introduction and an interesting epilogue on recent years by Ian Stewart), originating from a study day organised by the Friends of Beverley Minster in 2007. It complements the excellent *Beverley Minster: an illustrated history*, edited by Rosemary Horrox (2000), also commissioned by the Friends. As the present editors write, their book contains the current state of research on the creation, restoration and maintenance of Beverley Minster

The title is appealing, but it is very difficult to find, as the editors admit (p. 12) 'who built Beverley Minster' – individuals are not clearly identifiable until the eighteenth century. Other questions about the process of building, how construction was organised, sponsored, supervised and funded, are explored. The authors are particularly interested in the interpretation of masons' and carpenters' marks.

Masons' marks are difficult evidence: the problems and possibilities are very well set out in Jennifer Alexander's article. Simple strokes of tools on building materials have been used since the Bronze Age until today, and marks (e.g. the St Andrew's Cross) are repeated in different places and different centuries. There are quarry marks, assembly marks, and banker marks. Stones were not always marked, and some marks are concealed in construction. Carpenters' marks are even more difficult to assign to individuals or teams. Close analysis allows some tentative conclusions to be drawn about working practices and building chronology; the detailed study of marks in this book (so far, for the first 15 ft above the floor level) suggests a revised view of how the nave was built.

This reviewer would have liked more information about the various restorations of the musical carvings, so special to Beverley. There is some discussion of the Bakers' work around 1900. The eighteenth-century chapter concentrates on the early years, but plate 3.7, shows (on the right) what Gwen and Jeremy Montagu (*Early Music*, 6, 1978) believed to be a late eighteenth-century restoration.

The production is lavish: good photographs, and many of them. There are clear diagrams; text, plates and figures work well together. The index is a little zany, every text entry ending with a comma; it contains errors and omissions (e.g. the reference to 'North Bar' p. 130, is to James Elwell's house in North Bar Without. Another reference to North Bar

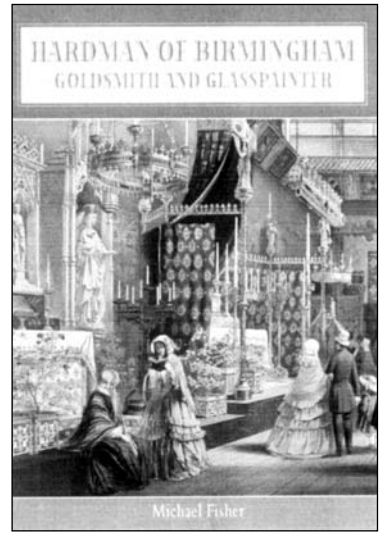
should be p. 95 not p. 94. Beverley Beck is mentioned on p. 120, not p. 121. Isabella Queen, is not a helpful entry – which queen? 'Grovell' [presumably Grovehill] is not indexed at all.) The idea of using an index heading 'craftswomen' for people like Mrs Thornton seems a little strange, perhaps driven by political correctness: Mrs Thornton and her sisters would not be wielding chisels, rather (as widows) running the business. The endnotes are professionally assembled.

The editors needed to take a firmer line on medieval 'surnames'. On p. 82 we have John of Cransewick, Oliver de Stainefield (Staynefield), Ralph of Whitby, William de la Mare, William de Malton, and on p. 84, William de Malton of Huggate. On p. 54 he is William of Malton, on p. 56 William of Malton de Huggate, but also William of Malton of Huggate. Is 'de' always to be translated 'of', or only sometimes? Is a recognisable place name to be modernised or not? Indexers need to know. On p. 82 we are told that Robert of Beverley's name shows that he came from the town of Beverley: not necessarily. Surnames such as Cranswick are not used for people who spend their lives in Cranswick, but only when they move away.

Despite minor criticisms, this is a book that all future researchers of Beverley Minster, and of medieval building in England, will find useful. Marks on stone and wood, used with care and alongside the few written sources, have the potential to tell us more about those anonymous people who created our built heritage.

Barbara English, University of Hull

Michael Fisher, ***Hardman of Birmingham: Goldsmith and Glasspainter.*** Landmark Publishing, Ashbourne, 2008, 240 pp., full colour throughout, £25 hdbk, ISBN 978 1843063 62 9



Not many companies remain in existence for over 150 years. Yet Hardman's have been around since the 1830s and what makes this continuity all the more remarkable has been a line of business, rooted in the Gothic revival and centred on the making of stained glass, that went into massive decline in the twentieth century. The survival of the firm has led to the preservation of its vast archives, housed at four locations in Birmingham, including the present Hardman Studio at Lightwoods House, the elegant 1790s house on the western fringes of the city that became home to the firm from 1972. The company is most famously associated with A. W. N. Pugin, and it is through him that Michael Fisher – well-known for his excellent studies of Pugin's work in Staffordshire – began his heroic exploration of the firm's work archives in 1999. He is now archivist to Hardman's and this book is the fruit of his long and intensive research.

James and Lucy Hardman, Roman Catholics from Lancashire, moved to Birmingham in the mid-eighteenth century, attracted by the burgeoning opportunities the town offered. Their only son John (1767–1844), who was joined by his son, also John (1811–67), established a light metalworking business producing items like buttons, buckles and cheap jewellery. There were many such workshops in Birmingham and no doubt the Hardman enterprise would have vanished into commercial

oblivion had it not been for Pugin. The Hardmans and Pugin were co-religionists, and Pugin met and became close friends with John junior in 1837 while furnishing the Oscott seminary, just north of the town.

Pugin's unstoppable drive enthused the Hardmans to add ecclesiastical metalwork to their portfolio. From 1838 a combination of modern manufacturing techniques and Pugin's exquisite designs was producing work of the highest quality. To metalwork was added the provision of vestments and other textile items under the supervision of Lucy Powell, half-sister of Hardman junior, with the firm becoming, what Michael Fisher describes as 'complete church furnishers'.

For stained glass Pugin had worked first with William Warrington, then Thomas Willement, and then William Wailes. But, Pugin confided to the younger Hardman, 'I am scheming a stained glass shop – but this is only between ourselves.' And this bore fruit in a new venture from 1845 with Pugin supplying all the designs for Hardman's during the rest of his brief life. He produced designs in Ramsgate where he was assisted by Hardman's teenage nephew John Hardman Powell (1827–95) who was to marry Pugin's eldest daughter, Anne, thus sealing the close Pugin-Hardman connection. It was Powell who, after Pugin's death, closely followed his master's style.

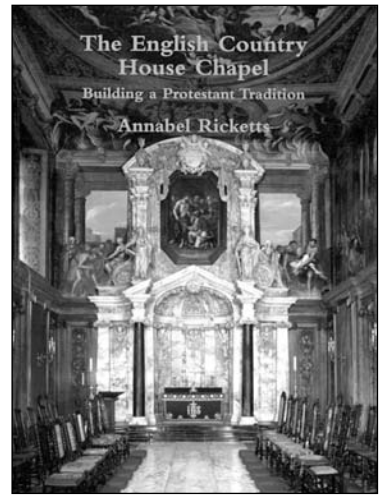
Michael Fisher's book is especially useful in continuing the Hardman story beyond the fairly well-known early years. He charts the continued success of the metalworking and stained glass business after Pugin's death under Powell and the input from Pugin's son Edward Welby (1834–75). He discusses work for some of major patrons, such as William Burges, and introduces us to less well-known figures in the firm, such as Joseph Pippet (1841–1903), whose sons followed him into the company. Fisher has a chapter on the firm's secular work and another on memorials and funeral furnishings. Flourishing at a time when Britain was the workshop of the world, Hardman's had an important export trade and we are shown beautiful and unfamiliar work, especially for the USA. By the mid-twentieth century business had turned down: the early 1970s presented an uncertain future and activity was largely confined to stained glass. Fortunately the firm was purchased by Edgar and Margaret Phillips in 1974 whose son Neil is now in charge. The fortunes of the business have been revived, in part thanks to commissions from the Far East, and metalwork, the original basis of the firm, which has been reintroduced to the repertoire. Long may Hardman's thrive.

From the outset Hardman's business has depended on fine craftsmanship so it is a great pity that Michael Fisher and the firm have not been better served by the publisher. In an attempt, no doubt, to square costs and the modest cover price, we are served up small print and tiny margins which makes reading an endurance test especially for all-text pages and their burden of nearly 800 words. Sub-headings would have helped make the book more usable and reader-friendly. The pictures are generally very good, if at times on the small side. However, they are not numbered and so, frustratingly, there is no cross-referencing between text and pictures. The first paragraph of each chapter is a perverse bit of design – larger, bold type which makes you think it's a summary of what follows but it isn't. The contents list has the wrong

page numbers after chapter 8 while the index is feeble and, unhelpfully, has churches (usually but not always) listed under their dedication. Lack of proof-reading is evident in trivial but sloppy things like the wrong header on p. 39, big endnote numbers on pp. 33–4, inconsistent punctuation in the notes and index while one note (5:2) even still has a note from the author to himself. But at least we now have a detailed study of this remarkable company and Michael Fisher is to be applauded for this achievement.

Geoff Brandwood

Annabel Ricketts, (Simon Ricketts, ed.), ***The English Country House Chapel: Building a Protestant Tradition.*** Spire Books Ltd, 2007, pp. 348, 35 col. pls, 98 b&w pls, £45.00 hdbk, ISBN 978-1-904965-05-3



This is a well written, highly readable, sumptuously illustrated book based on the work of Annabel Ricketts who had made this important topic her own; it is thus a fitting tribute to her life which sadly ended prematurely in 2003. Annabel's husband Simon has based the book on her thesis and split it into six chapters covering the history of the chapels from the Reformation to the end of the seventeenth century. The publishers have quite properly dared to keep extensive and valuable notes to these chapters. Moreover, we are treated to a full gazetteer of some 319 country house chapels that had come to Annabel's notice while writing her PhD, together with lists of some episcopal, college, hospital and Roman Catholic chapels worthy of note. Annabel's focus was the architectural history of these chapels and the volume bristles with lovely plans, drawings and illustrations. She had made excellent use of paintings and descriptions from later periods. The book is commendably direct in approach and never afraid to pose questions to which there are no real answers, largely owing to problems with sources and the low rate of survival of unaltered chapels.

Country house chapels were constructed for a mixture of reasons to do with status, piety and practicality, and in remote regions were really chapels of ease. There was some reticence to build them in the sixteenth century, so one theme of the book discusses how they came into fashion – both high and low church varieties – after the accession of James VI and I, and finally came into their own after the Restoration. The stars of this story are probably Hatfield House, Hardwick Hall, Rug, Staunton Harold, Rycote Park and Chatsworth, but the book is peppered with examples from houses all round the country. Attention is drawn to the potential influence of Bishop Cosin's restoration of his chapel at Bishop Auckland after the Restoration, and the more certain influence of Pembroke College Chapel restored by Wren. In discussing the role of college and royal chapels – particularly with regard to altars – this thesis complements the findings of Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke in their recent monograph *Altars Restored*. The book provokes many questions that will sadly remain unanswered by Annabel. I would have liked to know more about the primary sources behind this exemplary detective work; I would have liked to know more of her views on the

influence of episcopal house chapels; it would have been lovely to engage in banter about the respective influence of Cosin in the north and Morley in the south. This wonderful book shows us what a scholar we have lost, but thanks to Simon and Spire Books, we have a worthy epitaph.

Andrew Foster, University of Southampton

Special offer for members of the Ecclesiological Society.

Annabel Rickett's ***English Country House Chapels*** is available to members direct from Spire Books at a special offer price of £34.00 including postage and packaging, a discount of £11.00. Those interested should make their cheque payable to 'Spire Books Ltd', and post it, with their order, to Spire Books Ltd, PO Box 2336, Reading RG4 5WJ, tel. 01189 471525. Please note the offer ends 30 May 2009.

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Other publications received

Michael Yelton, ***Alfred Hope Patten: His Life and Times in Pictures.*** The Anglo-Catholic History Society, 2007, 98 pp., 52 b&w pls, £12.00 pbk, ISBN 978 0 95507 14 3 0

Alfred Hope Patten was one of the most influential Anglo-Catholic priests of the last century. In the 1920s he re-established the medieval pilgrimage Shrine of the Virgin Mary at Walsingham in Norfolk. The original shrine was destroyed during the Reformation. Today it flourishes and attracts many thousands of pilgrims every year. His efforts stimulated the development of the parallel Roman Catholic shrine nearby. This short book, published to mark the 50th anniversary of Father Hope Patten's death in 1958, presents a summary of his life followed by a series of pictures of him and those associated with him, as well as of Walsingham itself as the shrine building developed. Many of them have not been published before and will be new to most readers.

Paul Jeffery, ***The Collegiate Churches of England and Wales.*** Robert Hale, 2004, 480 pp., 300 b&w pls, £22.00 pbk, ISBN 978-0-7090-8368-9

Collegiate churches are one of the country's lesser-known glories. A collegiate church was the church of a medieval college, which was an important class of religious house, different from but comparable to a monastery. For most of their history these colleges had nothing to do with education, but it is from them that the secular educational colleges of today are descended. Usually the most important, and often the only, part to survive from the college is the church. Collegiate churches were often large and magnificent, and almost 150 remain to the present day, forming a superb body of architecture. The book has two sections. The first traces the development of the colleges from their beginnings in the Anglo-Saxon period to their dramatic decline in the sixteenth century, and deals with their nature, historical evolution, demise and legacy. The

second section comprises an extensive gazetteer, conveniently divided into counties.

Special offer for members of the Ecclesiological Society

The paperback edition of Paul Jeffery's ***Collegiate Churches*** is available to Ecclesiological Society members at a special offer price of £13.00, including postage and packaging, a discount of £9.00. Those interested should write a cheque payable to 'Paul Jeffery' and post it, with their order, to Paul Jeffery, 36 Olivers Battery Road North, Winchester, Hampshire, SO22 4JB. Telephone number: 01962 861300.

Jane Allen, ***The Wallace Collection.*** Orford Museum, 2009, 142 pp., many col. and b&w plates, £14.50 pbk, ISBN 978 0 9554738 0 7.

From 1872 to 1884 Sir Richard Wallace owned the Sudbourne estate in Suffolk which included most of the village of Orford. On the death of his widow in 1897, the finest items in Sir Richard's collection of paintings, furniture, porcelain and *objets d'art* were left to the nation – the present-day Wallace Collection in London – although many beautiful things, his money and houses, were left to his secretary, John Murray Scott.

Scott's brother, Rev. Edward Scott, had been the Rector of the parish of Sudbourne with Orford since 1877. He masterminded a thorough restoration of the church which lasted from 1894 to 1920. The book tells the story of the restoration – an account that includes much fascinating detail of the building process – and the lives of the Scott family, turned upside down by their massive inheritance and ensuing legal battles.

J A Lane, ***St George's Church, Six Mile Bottom, Cambridgeshire.*** A4 photocopied (some pages colour), numerous illustrations, spiral bound. £6 from J A Lane, 3 Mill Road, Little Wilbraham, Cambridge, CB21 5LG

The church at Six Mile Bottom was built by Seely and Paget, in the early 1930s. John Seely's godmother was the well-off donor of the church, and the full account of its building presented here opens a window on times now past.

AM Digital, various online collections including ***Medieval Travel Writing***, the ***Virginia Company Archives***. Price on application to www.amdigital.co.uk

The internet is opening up the world of research in ways we would hardly have dreamt of twenty years ago. AM Digital are a company specialising in making collections of original material available online to libraries and similar institutions. They now provide twenty such collections, and the number is growing steadily. None of these is directly related to churches, but we looked quickly at the two shown above. The person looking at the collection on Medieval Travel Writing commented that 'it was well constructed, authoritative and easy to work with. I can

see the essays being useful for students, and the facsimiles, which are very well reproduced, will save researchers visits to libraries (for some, though not all purposes) - and thereby save MSS being handled more than they have to be.'

The Virginia Company Archives are, of course, a crucial source for the early history of the colonisation of Virginia. For those interested in church history, they include the Ferrar Papers, a huge collection of letters and other miscellanea including those related to the religious household at Little Gidding. Included in the collection are images of the large collection of prints used by the Ferrars to produce their illustrated biblical harmonies ('concordances').

Metal theft update

I make no apologies for returning to a topic covered before in Church Crawler. Reports as thefts of lead and other metals from churches have continued throughout last year and this now presents a real threat to our churches, especially since *Ecclesiastical,* the insurers of most church buildings, has had to limit the amount claimed by churches per year. Last year it paid out some £1m per month in claims. Each church will now be capped at a £5,000 limit for claims each year, or just £2,500 per year if they do not have any systems in place to try to prevent thieves. Chris Pitt from the insurance group said: 'There is a £5,000 limit to carry out the repairs and another £5,000 available for damage caused from the thefts. What we don't want is to have the same church targeted time and time again and paying out repeatedly. We have provided all the churches with Smart Water technology and information on how to use it and the claim amount will be lowered if this is not used.' The Smart Water is used to cover the lead tiles and piping on the churches. The markings show up under ultraviolet light, making it easier to identify stolen metal. The insurance group has set the cap based on the average claim amount. A spokesman for a church targeted several times by thieves over the past 18 months, said: 'If we put in an insurance claim it puts up the cost of the policy in future, so it's going to cost the church whichever way you look at it, which is just sad.'

These thefts have also revealed tensions between some churches and English Heritage. Culture Minister Barbara Follett has also told Parliament: 'English Heritage is extremely concerned about the theft of metals from churches. A substantial proportion of its grant aid over many years has been given to re-roof parish churches, usually in lead which is the most robust and appropriate material.'

However The Rt Revd Nick Baines, the Bishop of Croydon, said: 'Anglican churches are facing the greatest threat of attack in their history. English Heritage have to give greater attention to the real issues faced by parishes and not just see this simply as a case of preserving museums. Small congregations can't afford to be constantly replacing expensive materials. It's totally unrealistic to expect them to do so.' However, English Heritage guidance recommends 'like for like' replacement, and says that lead is both 'authentic and beautiful'.

Clergy argue that they cannot afford to pay over and over again for lead that is likely to be stripped from the buildings as soon as it is put up, and fear that churches will be damaged if roofs are not properly protected until disputes are settled. The Revd Patrick Hastings, rector of St Mary the Virgin at **Lytchett Matravers**, in Dorset, described English Heritage's demand as 'ridiculous'. He

said that it would cost £30,000 to replace the lead that has been stolen from his church, whereas other materials would cost a third of the price. His plan to use alternative building materials for the twelfth century, Grade II listed church has been supported by the diocese, the Church Buildings Council and the local planning committee, but blocked by

English Heritage. Until they reach an agreement there is only a temporary cover on the roof of the church, which has been attacked seven times since last August. 'We're upset that we're being left in this position with no end in sight to the problem,' the Revd Hastings said.

However the current economic gloom could have an unexpected bonus for our heritage. As a consequence of the collapse in global commodities prices, which has seen the cost of metals plunge to a fraction of their value just several months ago, thefts from church roofs have begun to abate. Now with lead hovering at around 25% of its peak, claims in October 2008 dropped to around £600,000. 'It seems to be slowing down, admittedly from a very high level,' said Chris Pitt. 'We still expect 2008 will be the worst year in history for metal theft from churches, but hopefully if prices stay low it could start to drop further.'

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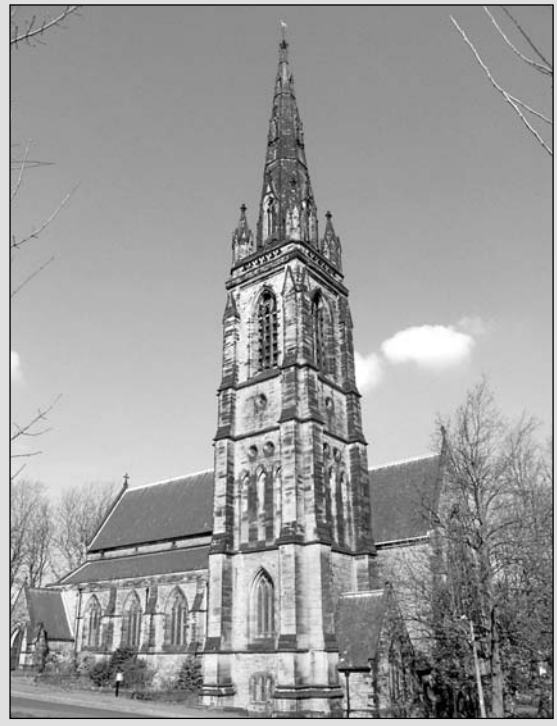
Metal thieves surprised……

Whereas other examples of the theft of lead from church roofs and associated damage through water penetration are too numerous to catalogue here, there is one audacious example which visitors to **Huddersfield** cannot have failed to notice. The church of **St John** in the **Birkby** area of the town is a notable landmark with its 150ft spire. It was built 1852–3 to the designs of William Butterfield. Thieves were stripping lead from the church's roof in the early hours of the morning – the latest in a spate of such thefts from the landmark church – when their attention turned to the copper lightning conductor. The conductor stretched all the way up the huge steeple and, as they tried to pull it off, it loosened the top of the steeple and tons of masonry came crashing down, punching several holes in the roof of the church below. People living opposite the church were woken up by the loud crash at



3.30am and spotted the thieves making a quick getaway. They were in a small silver car and had to stop on the church's drive to shift huge stones that had fallen around before speeding off. Huddersfield Fire Station Manager Graham Earnshaw said: 'The masonry landed on a side aisle with such force it's gone straight through the floor below, damaging several pews and two pianos.'

Sue Clarke, Vicar of Christ Church in Woodhouse and priest-in-charge at St John's, said 'Everything inside the church is covered in dust and debris. The most telling comment came from one of the first workmen inside the church who thought it was a derelict, unused building. That, more than anything, says how bad it is inside. It looks like a bomb site in there. A giant crane was brought in so loose stones at the top of the steeple could be moved safely and then the top was capped. Sheets of tarpaulin were due to be put over the holes in the roof to stop rain getting in and causing further damage.' She added: 'We've had three cranes at the church today –

the first one that came to sort out the steeple was too small so a far bigger, specialist crane was needed which came from Manchester. Another, smaller crane has been needed to sort out the damage to the roof. All this is going to cost tens of thousands of pounds and I just don't like to think about it. The church is insured, but with all the lead thefts at churches, insurance companies are paying out less.'

It's thought the thieves had been on the ground next to the church and had possibly tied the lightning conductor to railings to get more leverage when the whole lot came down. Tim O'Sullivan from Huddersfield CID intelligence unit said: 'This just shows what depths thieves will stoop to steal lead. It has caused massive damage to the church and serious upset to the parishioners who will have to cope with their church being closed for a long time to come.'

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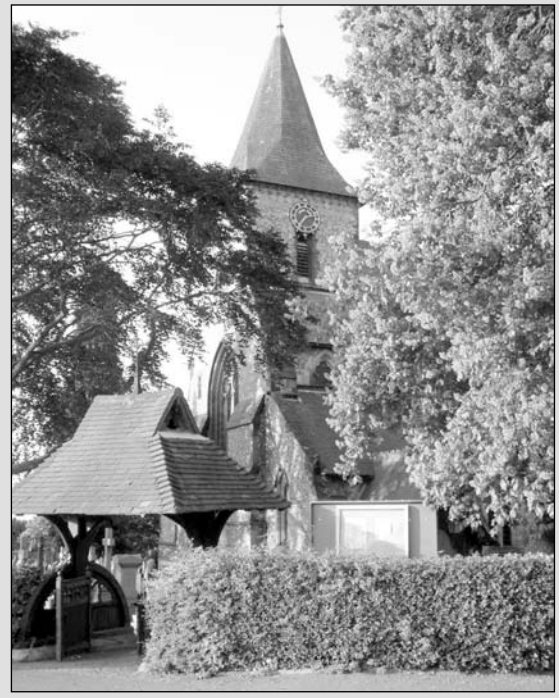
Mob attack on another church spire

Shirley residents are facing regular attacks by a noisy unruly mob on their church spire (see picture from the church website). Parishioners of **St John's Church**, a church designed by Sir G G Scott and consecrated in 1856, have no idea how to stop the invaders – parakeets – pecking holes in the shingle of the wooden spire. They have considered hiring a falconer but were unsure as to whether a hawk would be enough to chase away the birds. Bernard Day, 96, the church secretary said: 'The problem is getting worse and worse and we just don't know what to do. It is no good repairing the spire if the birds are going to do more damage.' One of the church wardens Bernard Maguire, 67, said: 'We had no problem until about a year ago when I noticed the holes appearing. We are concerned that the birds are breaking their way into the spire to nest. At the moment, they roost in the pine trees nearby. They are a real menace. They make a dickens



of a noise and at this time of year strip people's fruit trees bare. We considered hiring a falconer, like at St Paul's Cathedral which uses a hawk to scare the pigeons away, but are not sure a hawk would want to take on a flock of parakeets with their sharp beaks.'

Rose-ringed parakeets are not native to Britain and are common to parts of Africa and Asia. No one knows how they started breeding in London. The most persistent theory is that a whole flock of the birds escaped from Shepperton Studios in Surrey in 1951 from the set of *The African Queen*.

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The cost of drainage

Four water companies – **United Utilities, Northumbrian Water, Yorkshire Water and Severn Trent** – have decided that they will in future charge churches and other charitable buildings (such as Scout Huts) the same as commercial companies for drainage. Previously a lower rate has been charged, in line with their non-commercial status, and very different pattern of use.

Some churches have seen their bills go up 400% or more. The Church of England estimates this will cost about an extra £15m per year. The Scout association estimate that their children will have to find £1.5m extra per year.

This does seem bizarre. Why isn't Ofwat acting, to ensure these companies act in line with the Water Industry Act, 1999 which says 'It would be inappropriate to charge all customers as if they were businesses'? Where is the Consumer Council for Water when it is needed? Why is the government, which has repeatedly says it favours voluntarism and the work of charities and faith groups, sitting on its hands?

A petition to Downing Street has already gathered 40,000 signatures. To find out more details, make your own mind up, and perhaps sign the petition, see **www.DontDrainUs.org**

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Support Officers

English Heritage is putting significant effort into its 'Support Officers for Historic Places of Worship' scheme. The scheme, which has been running in the background for a few years, was relaunched on 12 December 2008 by Andy Burnham, MP, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, who made a very supportive speech. The scheme provides one half of the salary costs of a dedicated person to help congregations care for and realise the potential of their buildings.

New Support Officer posts announced on 12 December were for the Churches Trust for Cumbria and the Diocese of Carlisle, the North West Multi Faith Tourism Association, and the Diocese of Worcester with the Dudley Community Partnership and other local authorities. Others are thought to be in the pipeline. This is in addition to a number of existing posts, for example those in the dioceses of London, Exeter and Manchester.

Further information can be found on English Heritage's website, or at http://tinyurl.com/cph99s

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Other news in brief

Demolition looms for a prominent **Bournemouth** church after it was sold for a sum in excess of £4.5M. The distinctive

Punshon Memorial Methodist Church, opposite the BIC (Conference Centre) in Exeter Road has stood here since 1958, when it was built on the site of two former hotels. The original church of 1886 stood in Richmond Hill but was destroyed in a wartime air raid which killed 77 people. Plans for the site will include an extension to the Hermitage Hotel next door, thus seeing history turn full circle. However things may not be entirely straightforward as some council officials are reported to have said that the church's 1950s style has 'significant architectural merit'

Firefighters tackled a major blaze at St Albans Church on London Road, **Retford**, Nottinghamshire on 7 August 2008.

Eyewitnesses said the church – which had not been used for about four years – was burning fiercely and the roof of the church collapsed in the blaze. One said, 'It's a sorry sight to see really... there was this roaring sound and it just all crashed in. It's quite dramatic, you just think thank God there was nobody inside.' The church was built 1901–3 to the designs of C Hodgson Fowler. (Pevsner lists the church under Ordsall.)

The Prince's Regeneration Trust is holding a 'planning day' at Sir Ninian Comper's fine church of **St Margaret's, Braemar**, Aberdeenshire in early March, at the invitation of the Right Revd Robert Gillies, Bishop of Aberdeen & Orkney. The church is no longer required by the diocese,

and is in a very poor state and needs substantial works; the purpose of the day is to consider how the building might be conserved, restored and brought back into sustainable use providing benefit to the local community. In 2004, an extensive report commissioned by the Scottish Redundant Churches Trust (SRCT) revealed the scale of the repairs needed to the building, which has had no services in it since 1997. Our two pictures are from that report, which can be accessed on their website, www.srct.org.uk.

Plans to convert London's **St Mark, North Audley Street**, a Grade I-listed church in Mayfair, into a health spa have been rejected unanimously by Westminster Council's planning committee. The decision was met with a huge roar of approval from protesters, mostly elderly, who packed the committee room wearing red "Save St Mark's" baseball caps, which they threw in the air. Millionaire George Hammer, who founded The Sanctuary in Covent Garden, struck a deal to buy the church from the Diocese of London, subject to planning permission being granted. Mr Hammer is to appeal. Committee chairman and deputy leader Robert Davis said: 'My committee decided to refuse this application on the grounds that this is one of the most beautiful churches in Mayfair and we believe that a

building of such architectural magnificence should be available for anyone to enjoy.' Holy Trinity Brompton ('HTB') has made an offer to restore St Mark's and will now put forward detailed proposals. Mr Davis said there had been 1,000 objections and only one submission in favour. He said he had been impressed by the strength of local support for the church, which was a 'place of great beauty'. The church was built 1825–8 to the designs of J P Gandy, but the interior was remodelled in 1879 into a Italian Romanesque basilica by Blomfield in contrast to its classical exterior.

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And finally

Thank you to all the readers who send me snippets of information between editions. Although not all of them make it to the final feature, often due to space constraints, they are appreciated and can be discussed on *'ChurchCrawling',* an Email group at Yahoo (details via the Society's website).

The views expressed in the article are not to be taken as those of the Ecclesiological Society itself. I can be contacted at churchcrawler@ blueyonder.co.uk or by conventional means – Phil Draper, 10 Lambley Rd, St George, Bristol BS5 8JQ. Please note that photos or cuttings sent to me can only be returned if accompanied by an SAE.

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