



Photo. D. Gwynne.

TEWKESBURY ABBEY, FROM THE EAST. [ToList](#)

THE ABBEY CHURCH OF

TEWKESBURY

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE
PRIORY CHURCH OF

DEERHURST

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

BY

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WITH XLIV

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PREFACE.

My heartiest thanks are here expressed to all who have helped me in any way during the compiling of this book—to Sir Charles Isham, of Lamport, for allowing me the use of his *Registrum Theokusburiae* for several months, and for permission to reproduce two pages from it; to Mr. J.T. Micklethwaite for permission to make use of his paper on *Saxon Churches* published in the Journal of the Archæological Institute, and to the Institute for leave to reproduce the three blocks of Deerhurst; to Mr. W.H. St. John Hope for several suggestions; to Mr. A.H. Hughes, of Llandudno, Dr. Oscar Clark, and Mr. R.W. Dugdale, of Gloucester, for so liberally supplementing my own store of photographs; to Mr. S. Browett, of Tewkesbury, for the loan of the wood block on page 17; and, lastly, to Mr. W.G. Bannister, the sacristan of the Abbey, who placed his thorough knowledge of the building, its records, and its heraldry, together with the whole of his valuable MS. notes on these points, unreservedly at my disposal.

H.J.L.J.M.

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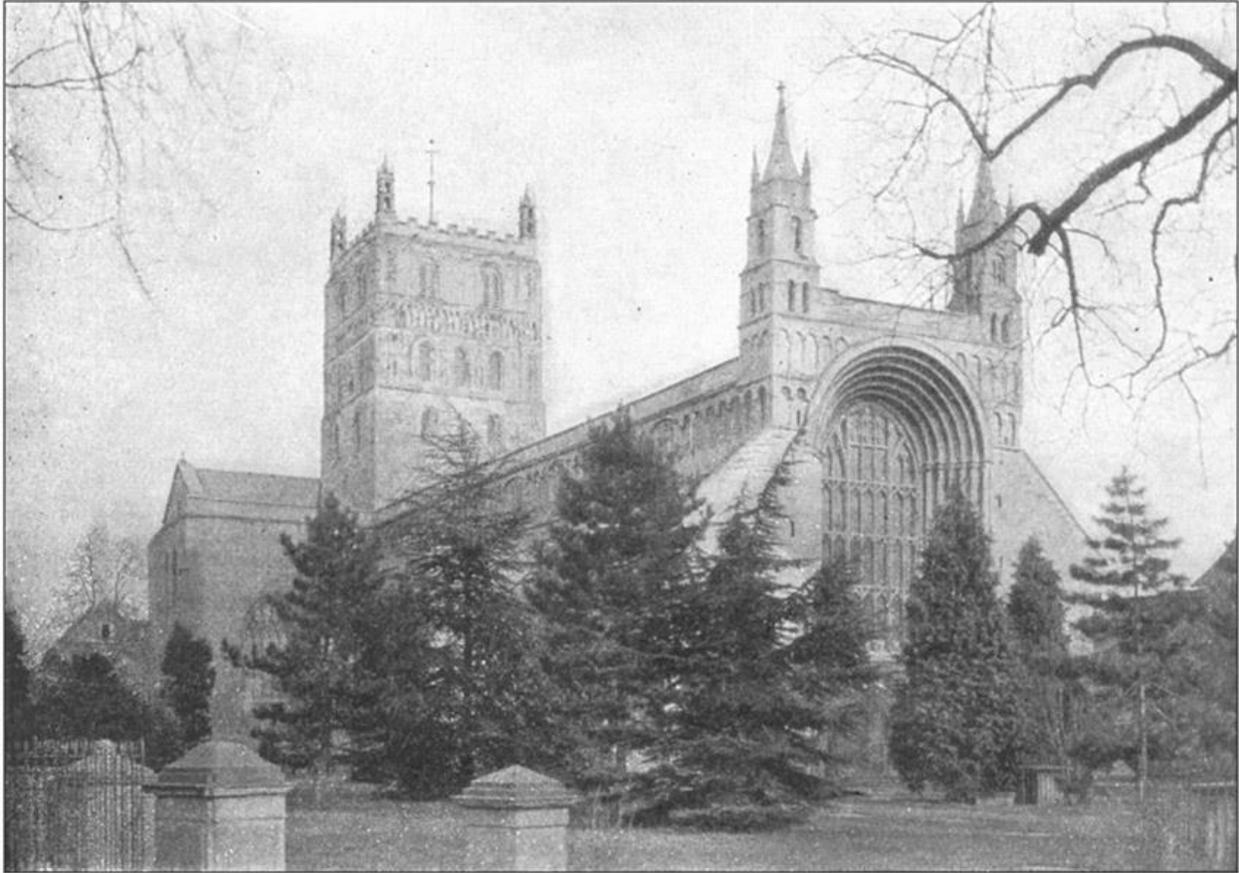
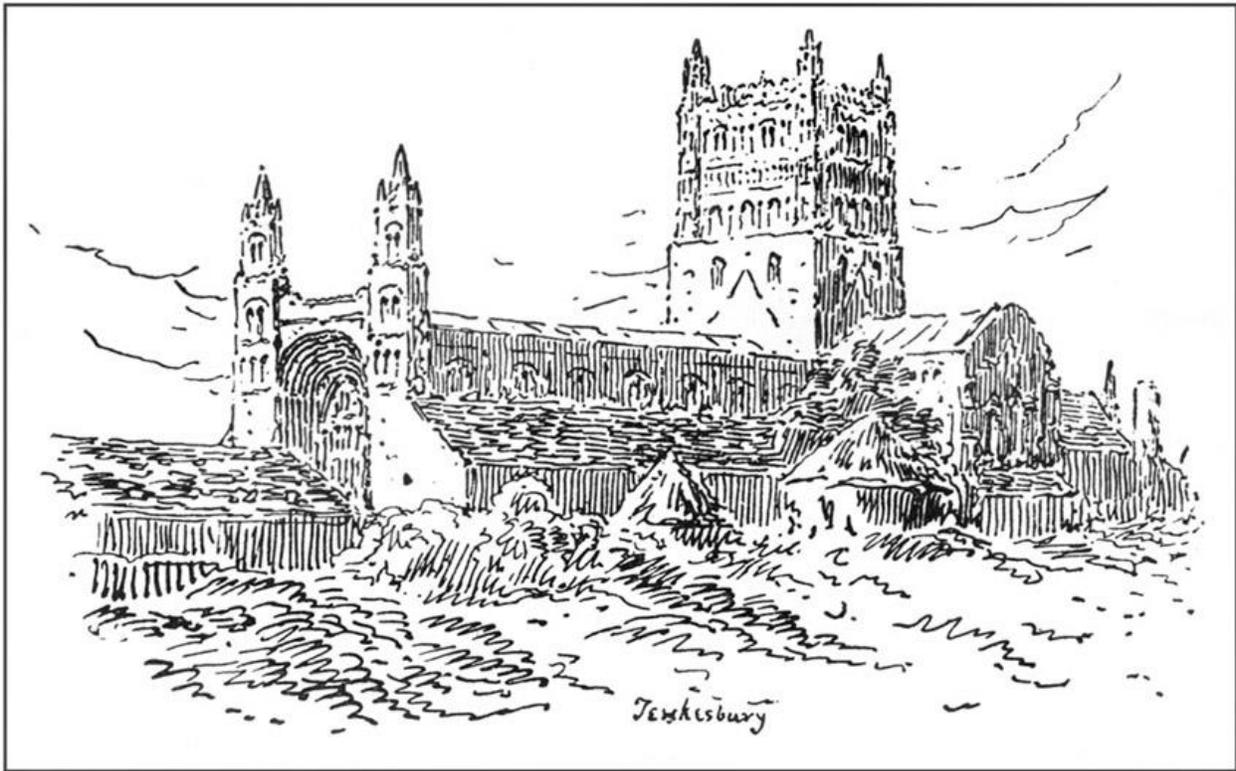


Photo. Dr. Oscar Clark.

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TEWKESBURY ABBEY.

CHAPTER I. [ToC](#)

HISTORY OF THE FOUNDATION AND FABRIC OF THE ABBEY CHURCH, AND SOME ACCOUNT OF ITS BENEFACTORS.

Tradition, originating in the desire to account for the name of the town, would assign the foundation of a cell or chapel to Theoc, or in Latin form Theocus, in or about 655. In support of this theory Camden and others assert that it was called in Anglo-Saxon times Theocsburg or Theotisbyrg. Others would derive the name from the Greek "Theotokos," as the Church is dedicated to St. Mary, and others again refer us back to a very early name, Etocisceu—Latinised as Etocessa. In Domesday Book the town is

called Teodechesberie, and throughout the Chronicles of the Abbey is called Theokusburia.

[4]The Chronicles of the Abbey tell us that the first monastery at Tewkesbury was built by two Saxon nobles, Oddo and Doddo, in or about the year 715, a time when Mercia was flourishing under Ethelred, and later, under Kenred and Ethelbald. It was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and endowed with the manor of Stanway and other lands for the support of the Benedictine monks who, under a Prior, were there installed. Oddo and Doddo died soon afterwards, and were buried in the abbey church of Pershore.

Much has been written about these mythical founders, and confusion in the minds of the chroniclers, and in those of subsequent writers too, has been caused by the similarity between the names of Oddo and Doddo, and Odda and Dodda. It is stated in the old Tewkesbury Chronicle that Oddo and Doddo were brothers, who in 715 founded a small cell at Tewkesbury, and that Doddo built a church at Deerhurst to show his love for a brother who had died some time before. They seem to have been two noble dukes, members of an illustrious family and renowned for their great virtue. Oddo is said to have become a monk, and after his death to have been buried at Pershore Abbey.

As Mr. Butterworth points out in his book on Deerhurst, this seems to be a travesty of what actually happened. There were in the eleventh century two brothers, Odda and Ælfric, with probably a third brother, Dodda, who were related to Edward the Confessor, and were, besides, his friends and followers. Charters are extant bearing their signatures and names, and covering the period 1015-1051. It is this Odda who caused to be built the "aula regia" at Deerhurst in memory of his brother Ælfric, with a stone[1] bearing an inscription of which a copy is now in the Saxon Chapel at Deerhurst. This Odda, with his brother, was buried at Pershore. Odda's existence at this time is further confirmed by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (edited by Ingram), which states that Odda was in 1051 made Earl over Devonshire, Somerset, Dorset, and the Welsh. The same chronicle says that Odda was also called Agelwin. Florence of Worcester says that he was also called Ethelwin.

It is perhaps easy to see how a chronicler writing 250 years later, should be led to assume that Oddo and Doddo [5]were identical with Odda and Dodda. Sir Charles Isham's "Registrum Theokusburiae" gives a full-page illustration of this "*par nobile fratrum*," as Dr. Hayman calls them, in which they are termed "*duo duces Marciorum et primi fundatores Theokusburiae*" i.e., two Earls of the Marches and first founders of Tewkesbury. Each knight is in armour, and bears in his hand a model of a church. Both are supporting a shield (affixed to a pomegranate tree) bearing the arms of the Abbey, which the blazoning on their own coats repeats.

THEOKVSBVRIÆ



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(H.J.L.J.M.)

According to the chronicle, Hugh, a great Earl of the Mercians, caused the body of Berthric or Brictric, King of Wessex, to be buried in the chapel of St. Faith in the church at Tewkesbury, in 799 or 800, and Hugh himself was buried at Tewkesbury in 812. Of this fact confirmation is given by Leland, who said that Hugh's tomb was there in his time, on the north side of the nave.

The Priory suffered terribly at the hands of the invading Danes—in fact, it was in the centre of the theatre of war in which, under Alfred, the decisive struggle was fought to an end at Boddington Field, where a spot called the Barrow still marks the site. In consequence of the continued ravages the Priory was so reduced in 980 that it became a cell dependent on the Abbey at Cranbourn, in Dorset, a Benedictine foundation of which Haylward de Meaux, Hayward Snow, [6] or Hayward de Meawe as the Isham MS. Chronicle spells it, was the founder and patron. He and his wife Algiva are depicted in that MS. as sitting on a mound with a cruciform building in their hands. The church has a lofty embattled tower surmounted with a spire. Hayward fell at Essendune in 1016, and was buried at Cranbourn. Tewkesbury Priory continued to be dependent on Cranbourn for about one hundred years.

Hayward's son, Earl Algar, inherited the patronage of Cranbourn and Tewkesbury, and on his death it passed to his son Berthric, or, according to the Isham MS., Britricus Meawe. This Britric, while on an embassy in Flanders, refused the hand of the Earl's daughter Matilda, who was subsequently the wife of William Duke of Normandy, the conqueror of England. When the lady became Queen of England she had Britric's manors confiscated, and he died in prison at Winchester. Thus Tewkesbury passed into the hands of the Normans.

At the time of the Domesday Survey the priory was possessed of 24½ hides (or 3,000 acres) of land, which in Edward the Confessor's reign had been valued at £1 per hide.

In 1087 William Rufus bestowed the honour of Gloucester, together with the patronage of the Priory of Tewkesbury, upon his second cousin once removed, Robert Fitz-Hamon, or, to give him his full titles as recorded in the Charters, "Sir Robert Fitz-Hamon, Earl of Corboile, Baron of Thorigny and Granville, Lord of Gloucester, Bristol, Tewkesbury and Cardiff, Conqueror of Wales, near kinsman of the King, and General of his Highness' army in France."

Robert Fitz-Hamon is the reputed founder of the present structure, but the credit of the founding, or rather refounding, is due to Giraldus, Abbot of Cranbourn. Like Abbot Serlo of Gloucester fame, he had originally come over from De Brienne, in Normandy, the ancestral home of the De Clare family, and a town closely connected with Tewkesbury at a later date. Giraldus had been chaplain to Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, and subsequently to Walkelyn, Bishop of Winchester. He was appointed Abbot of Cranbourn by William Rufus, who acted on the advice of Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, and St. Osmund, Bishop of Salisbury. Giraldus then secured the assistance

of Fitz-Hamon, and the munificent [7]endowments of the latter supplied the means for building the noble foundation at Tewkesbury. Fitz-Hamon is said to have been inspired by a wish to make atonement for the wanton destruction of Bayeux Cathedral by Henry I.

By the year 1102 Giraldus and the members of St. Bartholomew's Abbey at Cranbourn removed to Tewkesbury, which was by that time ready to receive them; and the establishment at Cranbourn, under the rule of a Prior and two monks, became in its turn (after 120 years) a cell dependent on the new Abbey of Tewkesbury. After a few years Giraldus, "having neither the inclination nor the ability to satiate the King's avarice (Henry I.) with gifts," was obliged to leave Tewkesbury and returned to Winchester, where he died in 1110.

Fitz-Hamon had died in 1107 from the effects of a wound received at the siege of Falaise, and was buried temporarily in the Chapter House, which stood on the south side of the building.

In 1123 the Abbey was complete, and was consecrated on November 20th, with much ceremony, by Theulf, Bishop of Worcester, assisted by the Bishops of Llandaff, Hereford, Dublin, and another whose name is unknown.

The main part of the church, as it now stands, is usually assigned to about 1123, and substantially is as strong now as it was then.

In the following year, 1124, Abbot Robert died, and soon afterwards Theulf, the old Bishop of Worcester, also passed away.

Of Fitz-Hamon's four daughters two became abbesses, another was married to the Earl of Brittany, and Mabel was given to Robert, one of the many illegitimate sons of Henry I. She seems to have been a business-like lady, and to have hesitated at the proposed union with a nameless lord, unless a title could be made to go with him. As Robert of Gloucester writes:

"The Kyng understood that the mayde seyde non outrage
And that Gloucestre was chief of hyre eritage.
'Damozel,' he seyde, 'thy lord shall have a name
For hym and for hys eyrs, fayr wyth out blame,
For Robert of Gloucestre hys name shall be and is:
For he shall be Erl of Gloucestre and his eyres, I wis."

[8]This Robert Fitzroy, thus made the first Earl of Gloucester, was a great benefactor to the Abbey. To him are due the completion of the church and the greater part of the tower. According to Leland, the stone was brought over from Caen, but some seems to have been local stone from Prestbury and Cheltenham. He was as prominent in the arts of peace as he was afterwards in those of war, inheriting his taste for the former from his scholarly father. It is to him that the chronicler William of Malmesbury dedicated his work.

Robert Fitzroy died in Gloucester in 1147, but was buried at St. James' Priory, Bristol, another foundation which was indebted to his munificence. His successor was William Fitzcount, the second Earl of Gloucester.

In 1178 the monastery was partly burnt down, the church fortunately suffering but little. There are some slight traces of fire on the exterior walls of the south and west faces of the tower, and on the interior of the south transept. The Annals of Winton say, "*Combusta est et redacta in pulverem Ecclesia de Theokesberia*"—an untenable hypothesis; but the Tewkesbury Chronicles merely mention that the monastery and the offices were destroyed. John, Earl of Cornwall, better known as King John, was entertained in the monastery soon afterwards, so that the damage cannot have been quite so overwhelming as the Winchester Chronicles allege it to have been. The fire might have been much more serious than it was, and it seems that only the fact of the wind being north-east saved the church. Judging by the marks of calcination on the outside of the tower, and the chief arch of the south transept, the roof must have been seriously damaged, and the roof of the cloister walk abutting on to the south aisle must have been completely burned. In all probability the group of roofing next to the south transept was destroyed.

William Fitzcount, dying in 1183, after a long and successful life, was buried at Keynsham, a magnificent abbey built by him in memory of a son who died young. Earl William's other children were girls, and the lordship of Gloucester was vested in Henry II. for some years. In 1189 the Abbey lands were granted by Richard I. to his brother John (who was afterwards king, 1199 to 1215), the first husband of Isabella, third daughter of William Fitzcount. Being divorced ⁹from John after his accession in 1199, she married Geoffrey de Mandeville, Earl of Essex, who paid 20,000 marks for the honour of Gloucester and the possessions of the Lady Isabel.

The earldom of Gloucester finally passed in 1221 to Amice—sister of the Lady Isabella—great granddaughter of Fitz-Hamon the founder, who had married Richard de Clare, Earl of Hertford. This Richard de Clare was the ancestor of the Tewkesbury De Clares, a family which held the honour of Tewkesbury for nearly a century.

His son, Gilbert de Clare, married Isabelle de Marechal. His name, as also that of his father, is among the signatories of Magna Charta, and he was a strenuous supporter of the barons against the King. Though he died in Brittany, his body was brought home and buried in Tewkesbury, at the foot of the steps leading up to the high altar. In a few months' time his widow, Isabelle, married Richard, Earl of Cornwall, brother of King Henry III. At her death she wished to be buried next to Gilbert de Clare, but as her husband objected to this, she bequeathed her heart to the Abbey, and this was duly interred in Gilbert de Clare's grave. As the Register quaintly says in its rhyming hexameters—

"Postrema voce legavit cor comitissa
Pars melior toto fuit huc pro corpore missa
Hæc se divisit dominum recolendo priorem
Huc cor quod misit verum testatur amorem
His simul ecclesiæ sanctæ suffragia prosint
Ut simul in requie cælesti cum Domino sint."

Gilbert de Clare bequeathed to the Abbey the manor called Mythe, on the hill just outside the town, and Isabelle also left to it many relics, besides vestments, and much valuable church furniture.

On the death of Gilbert de Clare, his son Richard became a ward of the King. Marrying Margaret de Burgh, a daughter of the great Earl of Kent, without permission, he incurred the royal displeasure, and was eventually forced to divorce his young wife in favour of the lady chosen for him. He supported the barons against the King, with whom he had never been in agreement. In 1262 he died, and was buried in the Abbey. One of his wife's sisters married Robert Bruce, competitor for the Scottish Crown and grandfather of King Robert Bruce.

[10] His son Gilbert the second, Rufus or Rubens, *i.e.* Red, is another well-known figure. Like his father, he at first supported the barons, but soon after the battle of Lewes he took the King's side, and fought for him at Evesham. Again from pique he deserted him, returning to his allegiance once more in 1270. He was buried in the Abbey in 1295.

Gilbert de Clare the third, who was born at Tewkesbury in 1291, was perhaps the most famous of the De Clares. Whilst he was still in early manhood, he was twice chosen by Edward II. to serve as Regent of England in his absence, once even before he had attained full age. His promising career was cut short at Bannockburn in 1314, and the last of the De Clares was buried in the Choir in 1314, his widow being placed later by his side.

The lordship of Tewkesbury then passed from the De Clares, who had held it for ninety years, to Eleanor, Gilbert's eldest sister. By her marriage in 1321 to Hugh le Despenser, the lordship came into the hands of the Despensers. This Hugh the younger, or Hugo Secundus as the Register calls him, was too faithful a supporter of Edward II., and he paid for his fidelity with his life in 1326, having been hanged, drawn, and quartered in Hereford about three weeks after his aged father had suffered a similar fate at Bristol. His remains were collected and buried in the tomb at the back of the sedilia, where Abbot John's tomb was placed at a later date.

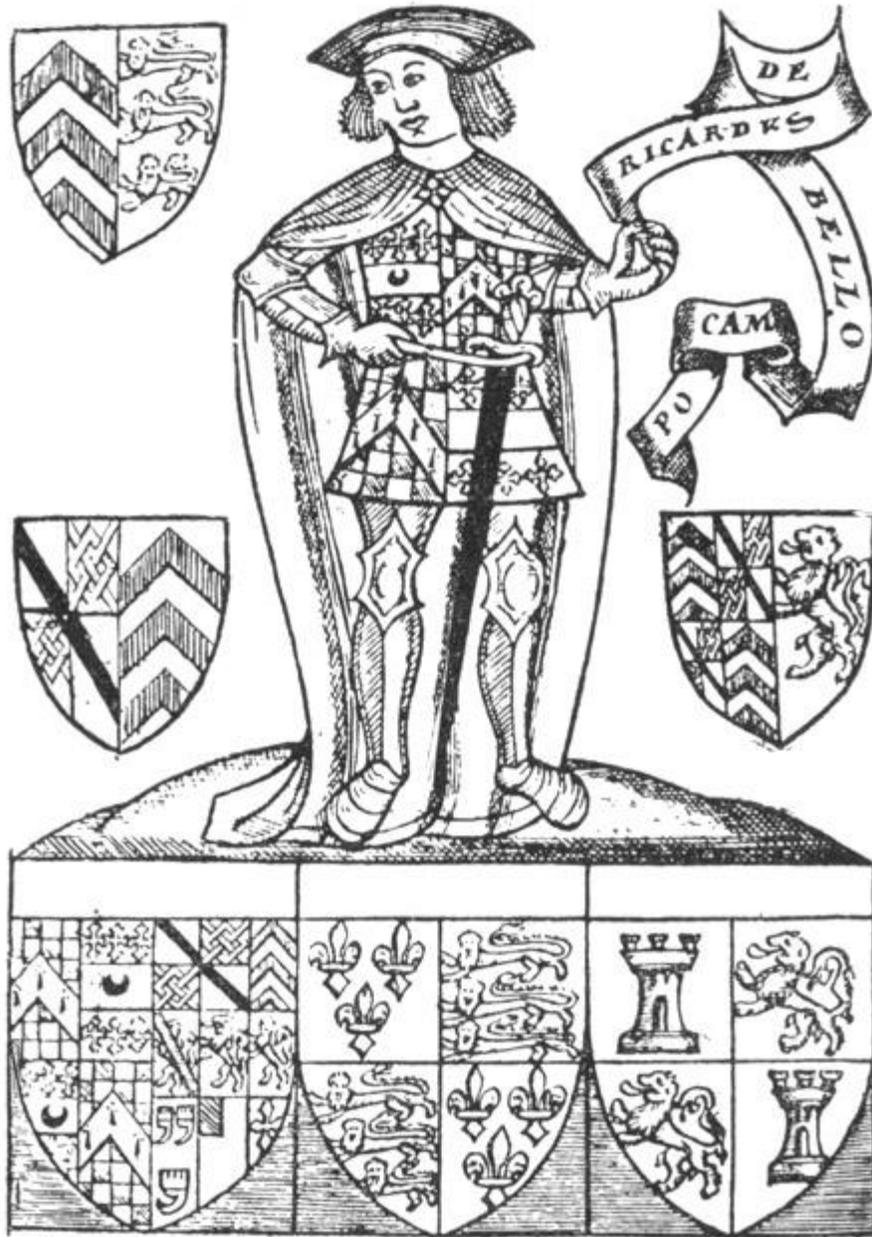
The next lord of Tewkesbury was Hugh, the son of Hugh the younger and Eleanor de Clare. His tomb is to be seen on the north side of the high altar, with his effigy upon it, together with that of his wife, the Lady Elizabeth, who, though thrice married, preferred to be buried with him. She retained the manor of Tewkesbury after her marriage to Sir Guy de Brien, and on her death in 1359 it passed to her nephew, Edward le Despenser.

This Edward le Despenser took part in the battle of Poitiers, and was one of the first Knights of the Garter. On his death at Cardiff in 1375 his body was brought to

Tewkesbury, and his effigy is to be seen on the roof of the Trinity Chapel on the south side of the high altar. He was buried close to the presbytery, and his wife was, in 1409, buried next to him.

[11] Thomas le Despenser, the third son of Edward, was for two years only Earl of Gloucester, and being attainted, was executed at Bristol in 1400. No trace remains of his grave at Tewkesbury.

THEOKYBURIÆ



columnas: *Ubi postea domina Isabella uxor eius ordina-
uit capellam pulchram arte mirifice fabricatam, quam con-
secratam fecit in honorem beate dilectricis dñi nri, Jesu Chri-
sti, Mariæ Magdalene, sanctæ Barbare uirginis, et sac-
ti Leonardi abbatis: que capella dedicata est pridie kat.
Augusti.*

RICHARD BEAUCHAMP, FIRST HUSBAND OF ISABELLE DESPENSER, AND
HIS ARMORIAL CONNECTIONS.

From the *Registrum Theokusburiae*. [ToList](#)

(H.J.L.J.M.)

With the death of his son Richard in 1414, the lordship of the Despensers in the male line, after ninety-three years, became extinct.

Once again the Manor of Tewkesbury passed by the female line, and into the distinguished family of the Beauchamps, with whom Richard le Despenser's sister Isabelle was connected by her marriage with Richard Beauchamp, or Ricardus de Bello Campo as the Register calls him when it does not give his name as Becham. He was killed at the siege of Breaux in France in 1421, and his young widow erected the sumptuous chantry chapel known as the Warwick Chapel over his remains. She then, by special papal dispensation, married her cousin, also a Richard Beauchamp, and from henceforth was generally known by her new title, the Countess of Warwick. On her husband's death at Rouen in 1439, she brought his body to England and had it conveyed to the Beauchamp Chapel at Warwick. The widowed countess died in December of the same year, but elected to be buried at Tewkesbury.

[12] Her young son Henry was a favourite of Henry VI., who bestowed most unusual favours upon him, creating him Duke of Warwick and King of the Isle of Wight, and later King of Jersey and Guernsey. The young Duke, who was married to Cicely Neville, died at the age of twenty-one, and was buried in the choir of the Abbey. As he left no children, the manor passed in 1449 to his sister Anne, the wife of Richard Neville the "King-maker." All the "King-maker's" estates were confiscated to the Crown after he fell at Barnet in 1471, but were eventually shared between his two daughters Isabelle and Anne. Isabelle married George, Duke of Clarence, Earl of Warwick and Salisbury, who in 1477, a few days after Isabelle's supposed death by poison at Warwick, was put to death in the Tower. Both were buried at Tewkesbury (*vide* [p. 62](#)).

The young Edward, son of the Duke of Clarence, was imprisoned in the Tower till his execution in 1499.

The Manor of Tewkesbury, as a possession of the Warwicks, passed into the hands of Lord Seymour of Sudeley, the husband of Catharine Parr, until his attainder, when they once more came into the hands of the Crown. James I. sold the manor to the Corporation in 1609. During the present century the lordship of the manor again passed by sale into private hands.

In the chronicles of the Abbey the following facts are recorded:—

In 1218 the dormitory roof fell down upon the monks when they returned from an early service, and Gilbert, a monk, had a thigh broken and his head injured, while the Prior Gunfrey escaped unhurt.

In 1224, Robert Travers, Bishop of Kildelo (*i.e.* Killaloe), in the winter dedicated two large bells in the tower.

In 1234 the principal gate of the monastery and two stables were burnt down.

In 1237, Hervey de Sipton, the then Prior, pulled down and rebuilt the chapel dedicated to St. Nicholas. Nothing can be said definitely as to its size, owing to the later work done in this part. The chronicle, however, distinctly states that divine service was first held in Prior Sipton's new chapel dedicated to St. Nicholas, on St. Nicholas' Day.^[2]

^[13]The roof bears the arms of the Clares and Despensers, and this would give the date of the bosses as 1321-1337, *i.e.*, about a century later than the date of the chapel.

The two chapels which are now usually known as those of St. James and St. Nicholas were, at one time, supposed, without authority, to have been the chapter-house of the monastery. They were so described as recently as 1881, in the plan used by the members of the Architectural Association for their excursion to Tewkesbury. For many years they were in use as a grammar school, and were walled off from the rest of the church.

In 1239 a grand altar was dedicated to the honour of the Virgin, "gloriosæ Virginis Mariæ." This is by some supposed to refer to the present altar-stone of Purbeck marble.

In 1241, Oct. 25, the body of Fitz-Hamon, the founder of the existing fabric, was brought in from the Chapter House and placed on the site of the Founder's Chapel built later.

In 1243 the dormitory, which had been rebuilt (chiefly by Abbot Peter), was reopened for use.

In 1246 the Prior, Henry de Banbury, built an Early English Chapel, dedicated to St. Eustachius. It seems probable that this was erected on the site of the apsidal Norman chapel, and the space (6 feet) between it and the Early English chapel. The vaulting corbels are all that remain.

In 1259 the Chapter-House was newly paved at the expense of the Convent.

The chronicles, as reprinted in "Annales Monastici" stop short in 1263, and from that time onwards there is a dearth of direct information as to the Abbey and its history.

The choir was altered in the time of Abbot Parker, by Elizabeth, the wife, successively, of Lord Badlesmere, of Hugh Lord Despenser, and Sir Guy de Brien. The original Norman clerestory was taken down and the Norman columns of the choir slightly raised, as will be seen from the choir aisle on the side where the original capitals were left unaltered. At the same time the beautiful series of apsidal chapels was ^[14]added; stone vaulting took the place of the earlier wooden roofing and the space between the four piers that support the tower was vaulted. This work contains the arms of Sir Guy and of the Montacutes.

1397. The Founder's Chapel was erected by Abbot Parker.

In 1422 Henry VI. granted the patronage of Deerhurst Priory to Tewkesbury. Much litigation followed with Eton College in consequence, but in 1469 the grant was confirmed and carried out by John Carpenter, Bishop of Worcester.

On May 30, 1471, the Abbey, which had been polluted with blood during the battle of Tewkesbury, and had not been available for divine service for a month, was cleansed with special ceremony by the Bishop of Down and Connor, who was acting as suffragan to the Bishop of Worcester and reconsecrated.

At the Dissolution the whole establishment, which, from the lists of what was to be kept and what was to be destroyed, was of considerable size, was seized by the King's Commissioners. The houses and buildings assigned to remain "undefaced" were "The lodging called the New Warke, leading from the gate to the late Abbot's lodging, with buttery, pantry, cellar, kitching, larder, and pastry thereto adjoining; the late Abbot's lodging; the hostery; the great gate entering into the court, with the lodging over the same; the Abbot's stable, bakehouse, brewhouse and slaughter-house, the almery, barn, dairy-house; the great barn next Avon; the malting-house with the garners in the same, the ox-house in the Barton, the Barton-gate and the lodging over the same." At the same time "the Church, with chapels, cloisters, chapter house, misericord; the two dormitories, infirmary with chapels and lodgings within the same; the workhouse, with another house adjoining to the same; the convent kitchen; the library; the old hostery; the chamberer's lodgings; the new hall; the old parlour adjoining to the Abbot's lodging; the cellarer's lodging; the poulter house: the gardner; the almary, and all other houses and lodgings not otherwise reserved," were "deemed to be superfluous" and were committed to the custody of Sir John Whittington.

The eight bells in the tower were estimated at 146 cwt., and were ordered to be melted down, as was also the lead upon the roofs of the choir, the aisles and the chapels annexed, the ¹⁵cloister, chapter house, frater, St. Michael's Chapel, halls, farmery and gatehouse. The weight of lead was estimated at 180 foddors, *i.e.*, about 190 tons.

The jewels naturally were specially reserved to the use of the King's Majesty, and the two mitres garnished with gilt, rugged pearls, and counterfeit stones, and 1,431 ounces of silver and silver-gilt plate were, together with the vestments, ornaments, and everything else of value, taken away.

The public-spirited inhabitants of Tewkesbury, however, meant to preserve their cherished Abbey from destruction if they could compass it, and after petitioning their "most dread victorious sovereign lord," succeeded in doing so for a consideration, *viz.*, the sum of £453. This sum was arrived at by roughly valuing the lead on the roofs at 5d. a square foot, and the bells at something like 2½d. per lb. They had to pay £200 down, £100 the ensuing Easter, and the balance, £153, at Christmas. It was further stipulated that the said parishioners should "bear and find the reparations of the said church perpetually."

The word "church" in this connection seems to be limited to mean that part of the building other than the nave. The nave seems to have been looked upon as belonging, as was the case elsewhere, to the inhabitants of Tewkesbury, for their use, more or less as a parish church. Mr. Hayman says that "parochial worship was enshrined there side by side with the monastic, far in the past, before its re-foundation in the eleventh century.... This parochial constitution survived the great successive shocks of change which altered or cancelled everything else. The change from Saxon to Norman, the havoc of civil war, the concentration of power in the Tudor crown, the Dissolution itself, and the Reformation which followed, all left this as they found it, or left it stronger still. To this constitution alone the noble church was indebted for its preservation. The King could grasp all else from pinnacle to basement, but the nave was the parishioners', and that he could not touch. The result is a church surviving entire and substantially as its vanished patrons and banished brethren left it. Therefore if this church is a monument of baronial and abbatial power long departed, it is yet more so of the strength of the popular principle, and of the vitality of the parochial system which survives."

[16] In the same way the good people of Great Malvern, or Moche Malverne as it was then termed, clubbed together and bought the Priory Church for £200, to serve as their parish church in place of the older parish church, which then, after two hundred and fifty years' use, was in need of repair. Their Lady Chapel, cloisters, dormitories, Chapter House, &c., were rased to the ground, and all that had a market value was sold.

After the purchase of the church by the good people of Tewkesbury, the nave seems to have been utterly neglected, and only used for purposes of burial and for the occasional performances of stage-plays. Such plays were acted in 1578, 1584, 1585, as is shown by items which appear in the list of "church goods," as "sheepe skins for Christ's garments," "shippe skins for the sinners gear," "eight heads of heare for the Apostles and ten beardes," together with a "face or vizer for the devil."

In 1559, on Easter morning, during divine service, the wooden spire fell down, causing damage to the tower masonry in its fall. This steeple may have been the original one which had been put up by Robert, the first Earl of Gloucester.

In 1576 the two chapels of St. James and St. Nicholas were cut off from the church and turned into a free school.

In 1582 the campanile, which stood on the north side of the church not far from the North Transept, was converted into a House of Correction for half the shire.

In 1593 the Corporation records state that the long roof was taken down, and replaced in the following year. Six years later there is another interesting entry as follows: "The churchwardens after Michaelmas, intending of themselves to build a battlement upon the top of the church tower, offered to do the same without any charge, and for that purpose did set forth three stage-plays, played in the Abbey at Whitsuntide following."

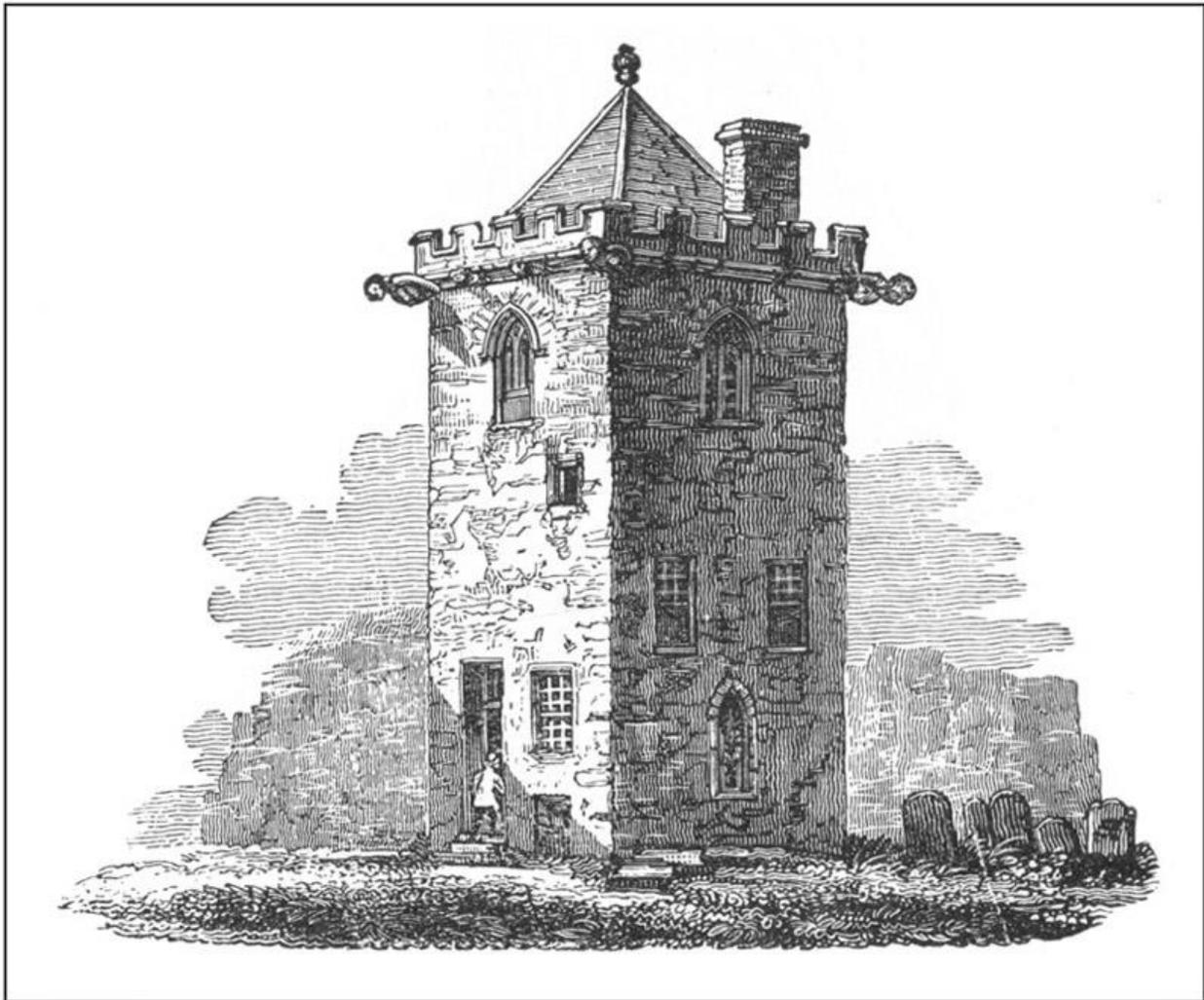
To raise more money they then proposed to hold a Church Ale, but there were difficulties in the way, and the proposal was dropped.

The cost of the battlements was £66. These same churchwardens, with the help of others, "joined in entreating the benevolence of the best disposed of the inhabitants, and thereby finished the free school by glazing the windows, boarding the floors, and making the galleries."

[17] In 1602 the monks' stalls, which had been in the body of the church, were removed into the chancel.

In 1603 "the roof of lead over the chancel was taken down, new framed, laid lower, and covered new," at the expense of the town.

In 1607 a large grey marble slab was discovered buried in the church. It measured 13 feet 8 inches by 3 feet 6 inches, and 7 inches thick. This was placed for some time in the middle of the chancel and was used for a Communion table.



THE DETACHED BELL-TOWER, DEMOLISHED IN 1817.

From Bennett's "Tewkesbury" lent by Mr. S. Browett.[ToList](#)

In 1653-54 there is an interesting entry in the churchwardens' accounts: "Item. Paid the ringers 24th December, my Lord Protector being proclaimed that day—who was the Grand Rebel." (The last few words are by a different hand, perhaps that of the other churchwarden.)

In 1661 the west window was blown in, and was rebuilt in 1686.

In 1720 the external re-roofing of the nave was carried out, and the western gable, occupying the space between the two western turrets, disappeared in the process.

[18]By 1720 the "long roof," repaired in 1593, was again in want of repair, and to raise money a brief was granted by Parker, the Lord Chancellor. During the years 1723-26 the work was carried out and finished. Before this, the eaves of the roof overlapped the side walls of the nave.

In 1726 the "old wall at the East end of the Chancel" was taken down, and foundations were dug upon which an altar-piece was to be erected.

About the same time, the marble Communion table, which Mr. Gough called "the finest Communion table in the kingdom," was moved into the nave. It was then cut longitudinally into two pieces, which were used as seats in the porch.

In 1737 the organ now in the choir was erected over the old screen.

A stone altar-piece, Doric in character, with an elliptical pediment, was set up in 1725, the cost being partly met by private subscriptions. It must have struck most people as incongruous, for it was not liked, and in 1848 it was removed.

A flood in 1770 rose to such a height that service could not be held in the church; and the old feoffee book states that "the graves in the church were shocking to behold, for scarce a stone was to be seen that was not removed from its proper situation. Several parts of this venerable building were materially injured, particularly the large pillar next the seats of the Corporation, and the arch over the same."

In January, 1795, it was agreed at a parish meeting that "the church shall be whitewashed as soon as convenient, and other repairs be done ... that shall appear necessary." The part of the church that was in use was re-pewed, galleries were put up in the two transepts, and in the easternmost bay of the aisles of the nave.

During the years 1824-30, the exterior of the tower, probably untouched from the date of its first completion, was repaired, all decayed stones being made good. The windows which had been partially bricked up were opened, and shelving stones inserted instead. One of the pinnacles was entirely rebuilt, and the three others repaired. The turrets on the west front were also restored.

At this time also the transept walls and the roofs were repaired and strengthened. The interior of the church previous to its colour-washing was scraped and cleaned, and [19]the walls and pillars were repaired, pointed, and cemented. All the tombs were cleaned and most of them restored. The greater part of the nave was paved with Painswick stone, and in the rest of the church the gravestones were relaid.



THE WEST END IN 1840.

By *Rev. J.L. Petit*.[ToList](#)

In 1825 the vicar and churchwardens posted to Worcester, that they might inspect the colouring of the Cathedral and other churches there with a view to decorating the

Abbey. The committee decided in favour of colour-washing the Abbey, and this was done three years later.

[20]1828. The monuments of Sir Hugh le Despenser and Sir Guy de Brien, being very dilapidated, were extensively repaired. Most of the buttresses and pinnacles were entirely renewed. All this restoration involved the outlay of a considerable amount of money, and if more had been forthcoming more would have been undertaken, such as the restoration of all the tombs and chapels, and the old windows in the choir.

The font in 1828 was removed from the nave and placed in the apsidal chapel in the south transept, from which position it was again removed in 1878.

A final restoration was set on foot in 1864, and Sir Gilbert Scott reported that £15,000 was necessary to make good the dilapidation and decay which extended, in his opinion, from the foundations to the roof. The necessary amount was not forthcoming for several years. Then a new committee was appointed, with Sir Edmund Lechmere as its chairman. In 1875 the restoration began, the choir being undertaken first. For this purpose the church was divided into two parts by means of a hoarding. When the pavement in the choir was removed, the graves there were all carefully examined and their identification verified where possible. Many fragments of historic stonework were found, and these have been grouped together in the south-east chapel, which forms a kind of museum.

After the work in the choir was advanced enough, the nave was undertaken and thoroughly done; the floor was relaid on a foundation of cement, all open graves being filled up.

On September 23, 1879, the building was re-dedicated with a service modelled somewhat on the lines of the original dedication service in 1123.

During the last twenty years little has been done to the fabric. Windows and other decoration have been lavished upon the interior, the money expended amounting to several thousands of pounds, a sum which might have been spent with more benefit to the fabric, upon purchasing the precincts, and on repairing the timber-work which supports the roof.

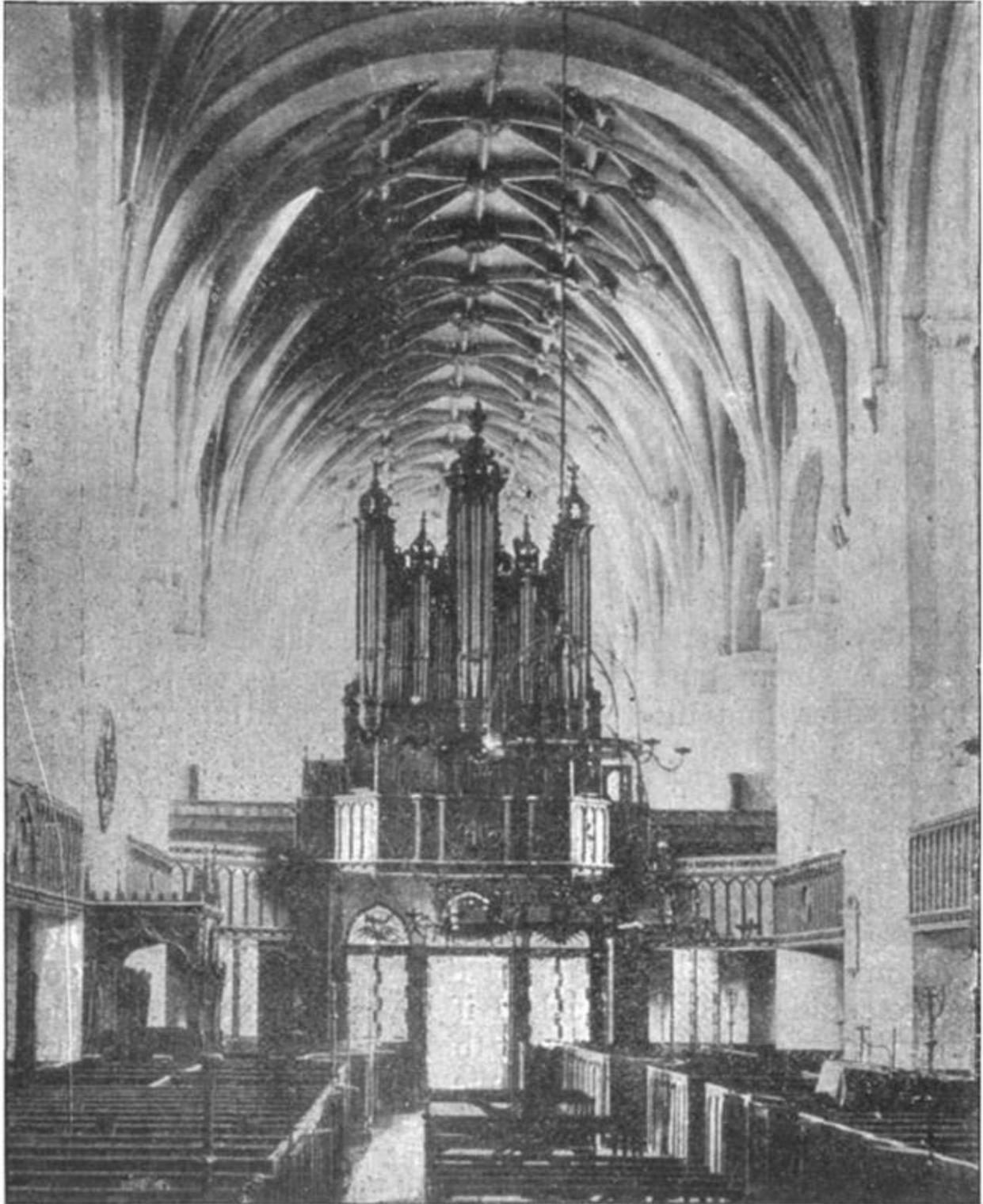
Interesting though the general question of the "restoration" of ancient buildings is, and interesting though Tewkesbury is as a particular case, this is not the place to go into it, but it may be well to quote from Mackail's "Life of William Morris," [21]vol. i., p. 340, a letter which William Morris wrote to the *Athenæum* about the restorations proposed at Tewkesbury.

"My eye just now caught the word 'restoration' in the morning paper, and, on looking closer, I saw that this time it is nothing less than the Minster of Tewkesbury that is to be destroyed by Sir Gilbert Scott. Is it altogether too late to do something to save it—it and whatever else of beautiful and historical is still left us on the sites of the ancient

buildings we were once so famous for? Would it not be of some use once for all, and with the least delay possible, to set on foot an association for the purpose of watching over and protecting these relics, which, scanty as they are now become, are still wonderful treasures, all the more priceless in this age of the world, when the newly-invented study of living history is the chief joy of so many of our lives? Your paper has so steadily and courageously opposed itself to these acts of barbarism which the modern architect, parson, and squire call 'restoration,' that it would be waste of words to enlarge here on the ruin that has been wrought by their hands; but, for the saving of what is left, I think I may write a word of encouragement, and say that you by no means stand alone in the matter, and that there are many thoughtful people who would be glad to sacrifice time, money, and comfort in defence of those ancient monuments; besides, though I admit that the architects are, with very few exceptions, hopeless, because interest, habit, and ignorance bind them, and that the clergy are hopeless, because their order, habit, and an ignorance yet grosser, bind them; still there must be many people whose ignorance is accidental rather than inveterate, whose good sense could surely be touched if it were clearly put to them that they were destroying what they, or, more surely still, their sons and sons' sons, would one day fervently long for, and which no wealth or energy could ever buy again for them.

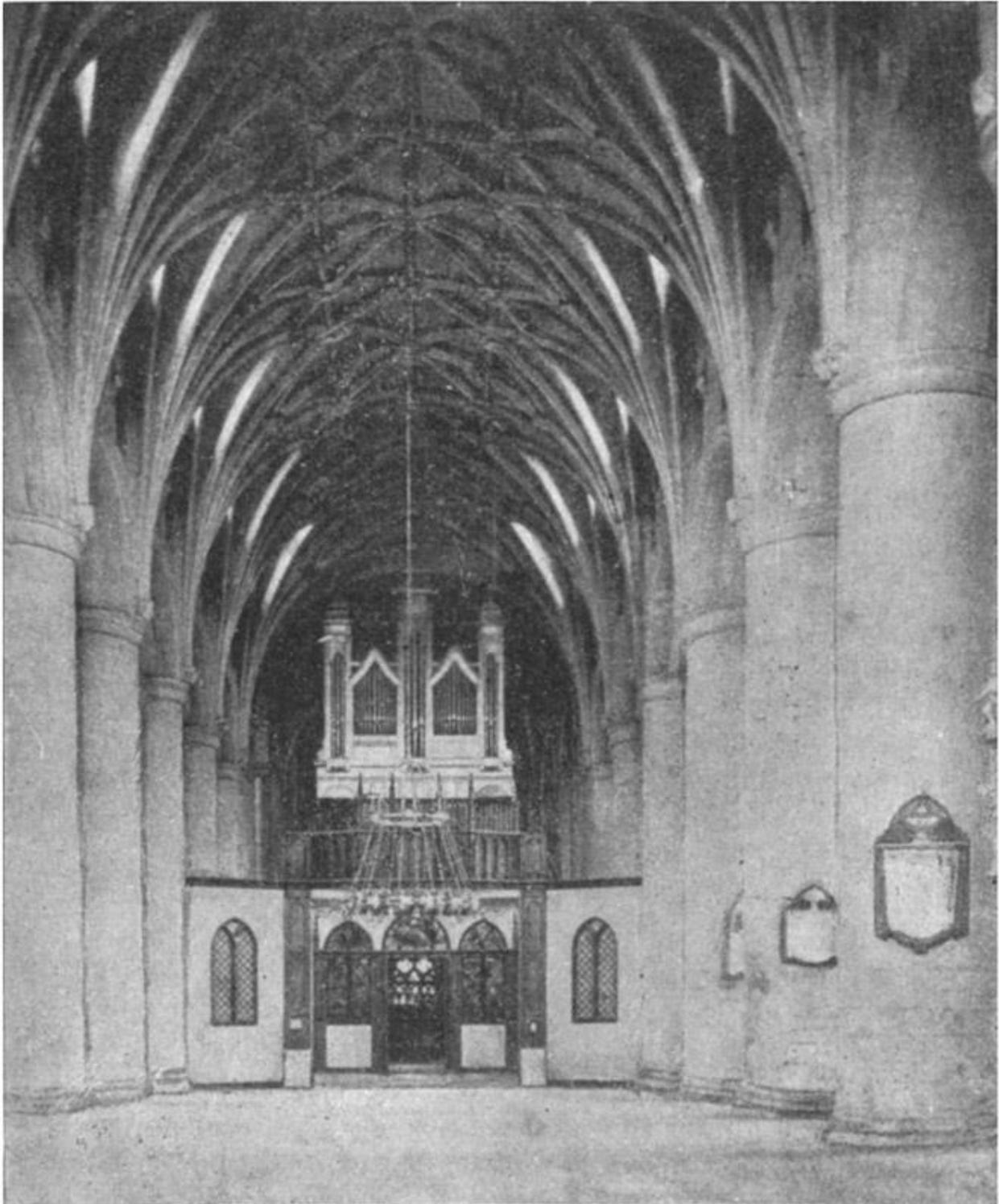
"What I wish for, therefore, is that an association shall be set on foot to keep a watch on old monuments, to protest against all 'restoration' that means more than keeping out wind and weather, and, by all means, literary and other, to awaken a feeling that our ancient buildings are not mere ecclesiastical toys, but sacred monuments of the nation's growth and hope."

The interest of the quotation lies in the fact that the Society ^[22]for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings was formed, with Morris as its first secretary—a very practical outcome to such a very forcibly expressed letter.



THE CHOIR BEFORE RESTORATION.

From an old photograph. [ToList](#)



THE NAVE BEFORE RESTORATION.

From an old photograph. [To List](#)

A chance presented itself in 1883 of re-purchasing the Abbey House, a building which stood in its own grounds on lands embracing the site of the whole of the original monastic buildings. Subscriptions poured in, and at the auction, held [24] in the town, the Abbey House Estate was bought for £10,500, and became once more, after 344 years, the property of the church. This estate included the Abbey House, the Abbey Gateway, three cottages, and about nine acres of land. A portion of the latter, viz., that which comprised the Cloister Walk, was added to the churchyard. The Abbey House comprises portions of the infirmary and perhaps of the misericord, which survived destruction at the time of the suppression of the monastery. Part of the original wall remains on the north side, between the gateway and the church. It is a pity that the inscription under the bay window is illegible.

At the sale there was a curious lot (Lot 2) put up for sale, but it was withdrawn, and eventually given to the church. This lot was known as the *Vaulted Chamber*, and formed a portion of the south aisle of the nave which had been cut off from the rest of the building, and to which access was given by a stone staircase outside the church and a doorway in the wall by the nave.

Very few traces of the old monastic buildings are to be found, for when the neighbouring ground has been levelled at various times large quantities of stone have been dug up from the old foundations, and utilised partly in constructing boundary walls, partly in repairs to the building. The Abbey Gateway, which is well worth inspection, is Perpendicular work, and is in surprisingly good repair, mainly owing to the fact that for many years it was in private hands. It stands very solid and square, and looks formidable with its battlements, but the view through the open doorway is very fine—the foliage on the trees beyond showing up the stonework. The work in the arches is good, and the gargoyles are worthy of notice. The gateway was restored in 1849-50, and the gates are of about the same date.

In the cloister there are traces at the west of the outer parlour of the monks, and the size of the cloisters is clearly seen to have been eighty feet.

Of the place of this glorious Abbey in our own English history much might be written, and in fact it has been a difficult task to steer a course which, while avoiding too much history, should show that the history is there. In all the great events of history down to the end of the fifteenth [25] century Tewkesbury Abbey has its place, and like the Abbey of St. Peter at Westminster and the Cathedrals at Canterbury and at Winchester, is in every respect a representative structure. "It represents all the greatest influences in our social development, it directly embodies in its memories both the Crown, at the time when the Crown was a *primum mobile* in politics, and all the estates of the realm. It shows the Church as the keystone in which the various thrusts of those contending masses met and balanced each other. It exhibits in the Church patron the official link between things spiritual and temporal. Its great lay potentates, Saxon or Norman, either deduce their lineage from royal blood, or at once mix their own with it, and renew again

and again their touch of royalty by fresh inter-marriages until the pedigree is absorbed into that of the [26]reigning or rival sovereign. The House, after blazoning a leading name, often *the* leading name of each successive period, after scoring repeated Plantagenet affinities, at length shares the internecine havoc of the York and Lancaster factions, and its last scions which survived that havoc are cut off on the scaffold for the crime of being too near the throne. But the almost princely rank of these founders, patrons, and benefactors is their least claim to historical remembrance. They are always to be found grouped in the very focus where the light of history falls strongest, men of the foremost mark for high trust and safe counsel for foreign strife, or civil broil" (*Hayman*).



Photo. R.W. Dugdale.

THE ABBEY GATEWAY. [To List](#)

Thus in the four centuries after the Conquest we find Fitz-Hamon, the second founder, connected by marriage with the great Norman soldier. In the civil wars of Stephen,

Robert Earl of Gloucester and Lord of Tewkesbury, and his half-sister, Maud or Matilda, played the parts we know so well. Again, Gilbert de Clare, who is buried in the Abbey, was one of the chief signatories of Magna Charta. The last of the three Gilberts de Clare fell at Bannockburn in 1314, at the age of twenty-three. The heiress of the latter married a Despenser, a family closely connected with Tewkesbury, two prominent members of which, viz., the favoured ministers of Edward II., will be remembered as by-words in history. Sir Guy de Brien, the valiant standard-bearer of Edward III., was the second husband of the widow of the fifth Lord Despenser, and, with her, helped to rebuild the choir, in the ambulatory of which his splendid monument is still to be seen. The Despensers in turn passed away, the last heiress marrying in succession two cousins, each named Richard Beauchamp. Of her second marriage were born two children—a son, who married the sister of Warwick the king-maker, and a daughter, who became the wife of the Earl of Warwick himself. The king-maker's two daughters were unfortunate in their husbands, one of them having been married to the luckless Duke of Clarence, and the other to the young Prince Edward, who fell in 1471 at the battle of Tewkesbury. Of these noble patrons of the Abbey from the first Tewkesbury De Clare to the time of the ill-fated Duke of Clarence, all save two, *i.e.*, the second Richard Beauchamp and the great king-maker, Richard Neville, who [27] are both buried at Warwick, found their last resting-place in Tewkesbury.



TILE SHOWING THE ARMS OF FITZ-HAMON AND THE ABBEY
IMPALED. [To List](#)



Photo. D. Gwynne.

TEWKESBURY ABBEY, FROM THE NORTH. [To List](#)

FOOTNOTES:

[1]The original stone is in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford.

[2]Mr. Blunt, in his "Tewkesbury and its Associations," assigns the northernmost chapel to St. James, and the one between it and the choir aisle to St. Nicholas, but in his plan he reverses them. The plan in the *Builder* of December, 1894, follows Mr. Blunt's plan in so naming the two chapels. Some have thought the present Northern Chapel to be that dedicated to St. Eustachius.

CHAPTER II.
THE EXTERIOR.

One of the most characteristic views of the exterior is to be got from the iron gates which give admission to the churchyard. The view thus obtained presents to us, with the exception of the windows and the pinnacles on the tower, features almost entirely Norman.

As it is impossible to make a complete circuit of the church, it is as well to begin at the north transept. Here a wall will be found projecting from the north-east corner, of which the western face is in a very dilapidated condition. This wall contains a good Early English pointed arch, which is now filled up with stonework and contains a modern window. At the sides of the arch are Purbeck marble shafts with a central shaft of the same, which divides it into two subordinate arches, with an opening in the spandril between them. The base of the dividing shaft is a block of marble, curiously carved, representing four cats playing round the column. Each of the cats has in its mouth the tail of the cat immediately in front.

On each side are the remains of a smaller recessed arch, and the only portion of the north wall which is still standing contains one bay of a trefoil-headed arcading which formerly was carried round the walls of this chapel.

On the north wall of the transept the four bays of the vaulted roof are discernible, and a fine Early English doorway in the wall (lately restored) used to give admission to the main building. Originally, when the church was perfect, this was an open arch. At the last restoration a wall was built up inside, so that the arch might be left clear. This chapel can hardly have been the one mentioned on p. 13, which was dedicated [30] to St. Eustachius, and was consecrated in 1246 by Prior Henry de Banbury. It is much more likely to have been the nave of the Early English Lady Chapel, of which the enclosed chapel to the east was the choir. Bristol Cathedral has its elder Lady Chapel in a similar position, though it was no doubt originally quite detached from the main building. The corner buttress at the north-west angle of the north transept was erected about the year 1720, and there is a corresponding support to the south transept at its south-west angle.

The clerestory on this north side of the nave has a Norman arcade, supported on short shafts, which extends from the tower to the west front. The insertion of the later windows, which presumably were enlarged when the nave was vaulted, has destroyed the regularity of the arcading.

A flying buttress of very slight proportions will be seen on the north side between the north transept and the north porch.

North Porch.—For a porch of Norman construction this is of unusual dimensions, measuring 24 feet by 20 feet and 39 feet high. It is extremely simple in character inside and out. The roof is a plain barrel vault of stone.

Both the internal and the external doorway have a circular arch composed of a series of mouldings supported by shafting, just as in the arch of the great west window.

Over the outside door of the porch stood an image of the Virgin Mary with the infant Christ, typical of the Incarnation, but it has suffered much at the hands of would-be zealots. Over the porch is a room or parvise, very difficult of access and badly lighted.

This north porch was in all probability built on to the church soon after the completion of the rest of the Norman building, and this may account for the difficult means of access.

Between the porch and the west end there are traces of some earlier building, abutting on to the north wall of the church.

The iron gates at the main entrance to the churchyard near the "Bell Hotel" were formerly mounted in the external doorway of the porch. They were given to the church by Lord Gage in 1750.

The Tower.—This is generally considered to be one of the finest and most perfect Norman towers in existence. Its massive size (each side measuring 46 feet) takes off from its actual height. It stands well, and is impressive from its proportions and the simplicity of its ornament. It is 132 feet high from the ground to the battlements inclusive, and 148 to the top of the pinnacles. The pinnacles and battlements were added in 1660, as the inscription on the north-west pinnacle testifies. They were restored in 1825.



Photo. D. Gwynne.

THE ABBEY, FROM THE SOUTH.[ToList](#)

[32]As to what was there before 1660 one can only conjecture, but it had been undoubtedly damaged by the fall of the wooden spire covered with lead, which event occurred on Easter Day, 1559.

From whichever point of the compass it be studied, there is ever a different charm displayed, and the charm varies according to the light that plays upon the time-honoured handiwork of the Norman builders. The tower looks equally well from the north-west end of the churchyard, seen through the trees, from the extreme west, and from the open ground to the south-east, where the eye can also take in the graceful battlementing of the choir. Perhaps the best view of the tower and the building generally is that obtainable from the Gloucester road, just as one turns the last corner coming into Tewkesbury.

The tower is supported by four piers, which, as will be seen from an inspection of the plan, are very massive. The two easternmost piers are in plan very similar to the two corresponding piers in Gloucester Cathedral.

There are two windows in each side of the lower storey or base, immediately over the roofs of the nave and transepts, and between the windows is the stone ridge or wall-

plate which indicates the pitch of the earlier roof. On three sides of the tower the dripstone is almost perfect.

The next stage or storey has an arcade with two lights in each side of the tower. The third stage has a narrower intersecting arcade of great beauty and delicacy, with a curious effect produced by the warm colouring of some of the stones.^[3]

In the topmost stage there is another range of arcades and columns.

The West Front.—The chief feature in this front is the noble recessed arch, 65 feet high and 34 feet wide. There are seven columns on each side of the arch, one being partially ^[33]concealed by the masonry of the Debased Perpendicular window which was inserted originally to give light to the nave. Portions of the seventh shaft have been, however, exposed for inspection.

There is one slight defect in this unique west front as it now is, viz., that apart from the window, the arch is on too large a scale for the size of the front, or, as Dean Spence puts it (he himself is quoting from some other writer), "As this noble arch stands at present, it is extremely beautiful in itself, but it has an incomplete appearance, seeming to want a *raison d'être*, and being too large a jewel for its setting."^[4] Exactly the same may be said of the window, though its excessive size will not be felt so much from the outside as from the inside of the church, where the low vaulting of the nave further accentuates the excessive size of the window.

As was the case at Gloucester, larger western towers were originally contemplated to contain the bells, and there are indications of this in the rough stonework in the clerestory on the south side, evidently designed to carry a tower 22 feet square. The towers in the west front at Southwell are an example of this design carried out. When it was decided to build smaller towers, the bell tower or campanile (which is shown on [p. 17](#)) was built. Later again the lantern or open part of the interior of the tower was vaulted over (*vide* [p. 74](#)), and the bells were hung in the great central tower. The campanile was then diverted to other uses. In later times it was used as a prison for several years, but having become structurally unsafe, was demolished in 1817.

It would be interesting to know the original scheme of windows in this west front. There is a trace of the original Norman doorway inside the present doorway, and it is supposed that the original window was either a large round window, with possibly one or two tiers of round-headed lights below. Later, a larger window, probably of fourteenth century work, was inserted, which lasted till it was blown into the church in 1661. The present window, which was built in 1686, may probably have been an attempt to follow the lines of the previous window. At either side of the large arch is a Decorated window of two lights.

^[34]The stonework of the towers, above the point where the arch springs, is decorated with a Norman arcading in two tiers. They are finished by two partly Norman turrets, with later pinnacles and spires.

The South Side.—This side has a blank appearance owing to the total disappearance of the claustral and conventual buildings, all of which were "deemed to be superfluous." There are traces on the south wall of the "outer parlour," and there is blocked up into it a doorway from the west end of the south aisle of the nave. Traces are there, too, of Norman work on the wall, which prove that the Norman cloisters were of the same extent and size as those of Perpendicular times.

The Cloisters.—These were of two periods of Perpendicular work, and though smaller than those at Gloucester (80 feet as compared with 148 feet) seem to have been enriched with panelling and arcading in every way as fine, judging from the stone which shows the spring of the arches near the cloister door.

The doorway from the cloister to the south aisle is a beautiful piece of fifteenth century work. It consists of a low pointed arch, struck from two centres, in the hollow moulding of which are canopies. Below are pedestals for figures. At the top the arch is embattled, and above it are niches, seven in all, with pedestals and canopies, richly ornamented and carved. On either side, over the canopy is an angel bearing a plain shield. This doorway was filled with stonework up to 1892, and had been so filled for many years, but has since undergone restoration of a very careful kind. The oak door is new, and is an example of very florid work executed with the great mechanical precision which now characterises modern wood-carving. One bay of the cloister has been vaulted to protect the doorway; and the wall arcade has been restored, at the expense of the Freemasons of the county.

On the south front of the south transept there are to be seen traces of a building of the same width, through which there were means of communication with the church. The wall of this south transept has been considerably strengthened since the Dissolution.

Separated from the south transept by a slype or passage, was the Chapter House, of which nothing is known beyond ^[35]the fact that it was repaved in 1259, and destroyed at the Dissolution with other buildings on this side. Over the Chapter House there was a dormitory, also with an entrance to the church. This entrance has been walled up. There were stairs giving access to a room built over the apsidal chapel in the south transept, and also to the transept itself.

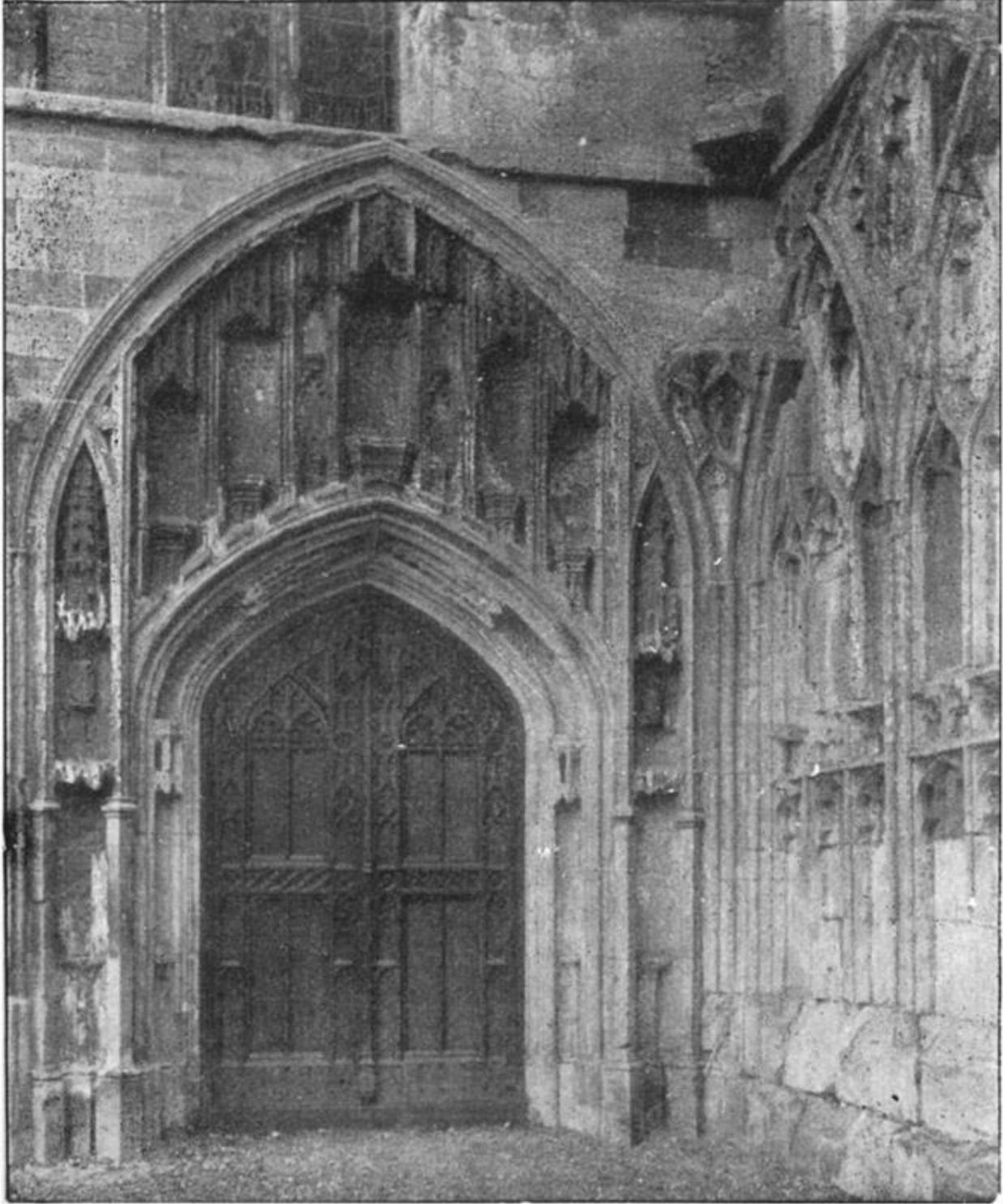


Photo. R.W. Dugdale.

THE CLOISTER DOORWAY. [ToList](#)

[36]To the east of the south transept a very good view of the choir and its chapels is to be obtained. The westernmost chapel is the Norman apsidal chapel, and here the original Norman work comes to an end as far as the exterior is concerned.

The Norman arcading on the east and west walls will be noticed, but it has been lately restored.

The chapel (marked Vestry in the plan) has an upper chamber with two commonplace modern windows in it, the mullions having been destroyed. There is a massive buttress attached to the wall of this chapel, much larger than any of the other exterior buttresses. It is quite hollow, and is entered from the interior of the chapel, which is now used as the clergy vestry.

The windows of the choir are elaborately decorated with a crocketed gable.

The east end of the church[5] and the exterior of the chapels on the north side of the church are in private gardens, which unfortunately extend up to the very wall of the church, and prevent access.

The actual east end now consists of an arch which was formerly the entrance to the destroyed Lady Chapel, of which nothing remains but the modern masonry in the arch, now walled up, and containing a modern window of three lights; and above this is the original west wall above the vestibule of the Lady Chapel, with a restored window of four lights.

The parapet of open work which runs round the summit of the apse is another beautiful feature of the exterior of the eastern part of the church. It seems to be formed of stalks from a thorn tree intertwining in such a way as to form triangular openings. This parapet or coronet is as much like lacework as it is possible for stonework to be, and gives to the building a peculiarly delicate and subtle finish.

A very good exterior view of this east end can be obtained from the battlement of St. Faith's Chapel. The pitch of [37]the roof and the character of the mouldings can thus be seen.

The Lady Chapel.—Nothing is left but the partly concealed mouldings of the arch in the east wall of the ambulatory of the choir. On the outside of the east end may be seen portions of the lofty vaulting—just where it sprang from the walls—which would indicate that the masonry was very beautiful and delicate work.

Much uncertainty exists as to the size of the Lady Chapel, though traces of the foundations have been found for some distance to the eastward of the present building. Unfortunately the ground in which the foundations are hidden is private property, and the chance of a thorough investigation of the site very remote. Traditionally, the Lady Chapel is said to have been 100 feet long, or about a third of the length of the building. There is no documentary evidence to support this tradition, and in the absence of such confirmation Mr. Blunt supposes that there was no large Lady Chapel,[6] but that a

chapel somewhat similar to those still surviving, and specifically referred to as "Capella Beatæ Mariæ Ecclesiæ Conventualis," was destroyed not long before the Dissolution for the purpose of making room for a larger and more splendid chapel. This chapel, Mr. Blunt adds, was never completed, the plans of the builders being upset by the general dissolution of the monasteries.

The Capella Ecclesiæ Conventualis above mentioned would rather imply the existence of another Capella Mariæ to which the parishioners had ordinary access, and this reference to it tends to strengthen the theory that on the north side of the north transept there was a detached Lady Chapel as at Bristol.

On the other hand, the orders of Henry VIII.'s Commissioners expressly mention the Lady Chapel as a part of the building to be pulled down, as being superfluous. This is a matter of exact history, and we have either to accept the conclusion that the Commissioners ordered the chapel to be [38]destroyed, and that it was done, or else that they ordered the destruction of a building which did not exist. To support the former alternative we have the tradition, and it is nothing more, that the Lady Chapel was destroyed because of the delay of the good people of Tewkesbury in buying the choir.

FOOTNOTES:

[3]Some of the stone in the tower is undoubtedly Caen stone, brought from Normandy for the work.

[4]Mr. W. St. John Hope suggests that there was to be *one* central western tower, within which this arch would not look out of place.

[5]A good view of the north-east end at close quarters can be obtained from the Abbey Tea Gardens.

[6]There are records of interments in the Lady Chapel: William Lord de la Zouch of Mortimer in 1335, another Lord de la Zouch in 1371, and the widow of the latter in 1408. In 1472 the Bishop of Worcester appropriated the church of Little Compton to the Convent of Tewkesbury to augment the salaries of the priests officiating in the chapel of the Virgin Mary there.

CHAPTER III.[ToC](#)
THE INTERIOR.

THE NAVE.

The Norman nave bears a close resemblance to that at Gloucester, and has the distinguishing feature of the simple cylindrical columns. These massive piers are found at the Priory Church at Great Malvern, and also at Pershore; but those at Gloucester and Tewkesbury are considerably larger than the others.^[7] At Tewkesbury the nave is particularly impressive from the height of the piers, and from the severely formal character of the arches supported by them. The simplicity of the nave as a whole has led some to ascribe the building of it to a date earlier than that of the nave at Gloucester; but if the received accounts go for anything, the building of the two fabrics was contemporaneous. Pershore, Gloucester, and Tewkesbury are by some considered to have been the production of one master-builder. If this be so, it is a matter of regret that his name has not come down to our time.

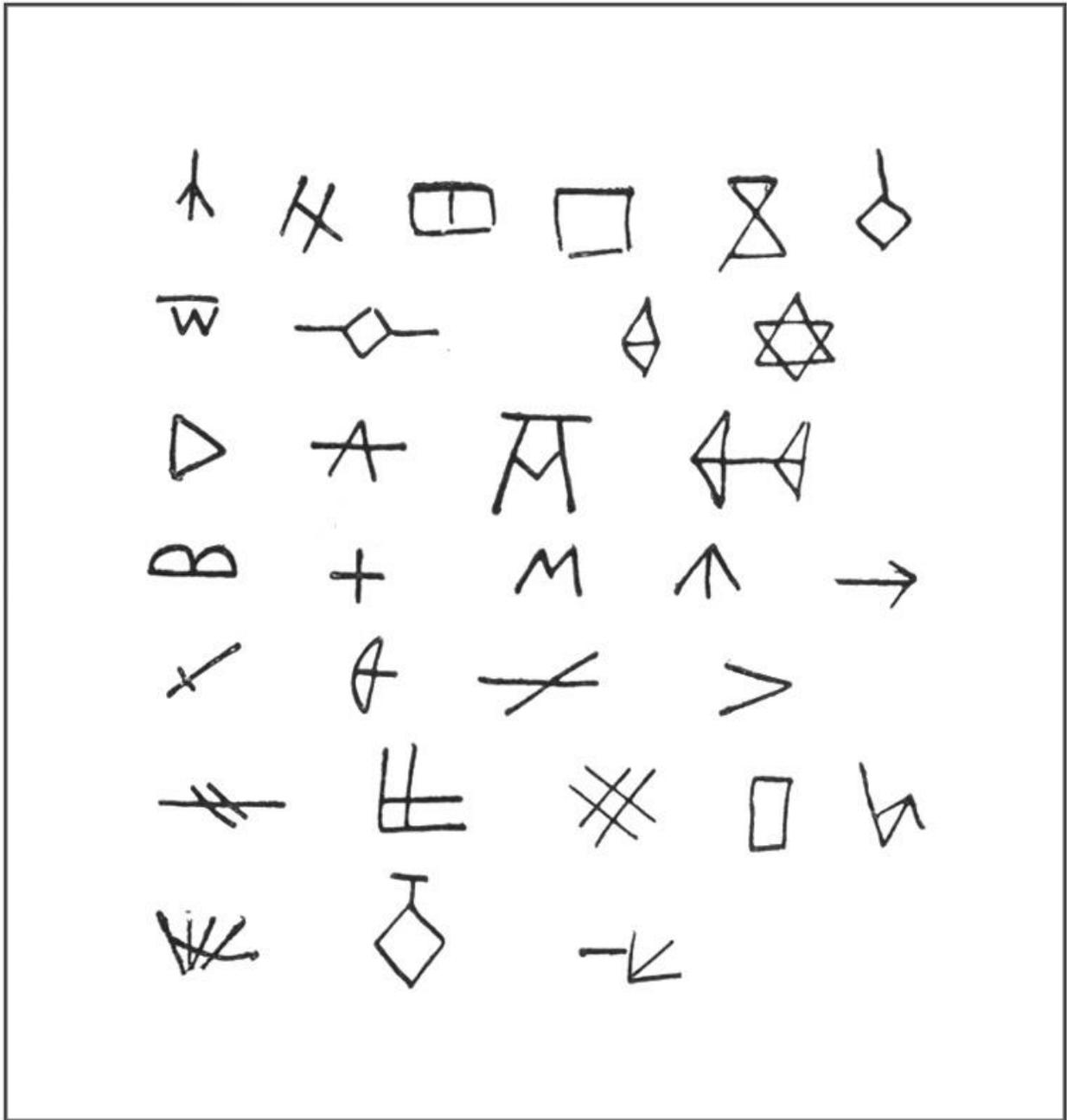
At Gloucester and at Tewkesbury many of the stones bear on their faces the interesting devices incised by the Norman masons. These marks are in many cases the same, but there are some found at Gloucester which are not found at Tewkesbury, and *vice versâ*. One small point may be noticed which may perhaps interest a few, viz., that the same workman set out and worked at the first few courses of the stone work of the staircases, and then was followed by others, possibly less^[40] intelligent, but capable of following the indicated plan. A monk named Alfred was the "Master of the Work," and it would be interesting to know if the stones marked A are marked with his mark.



Photo. A.H. Hughes.

THE NAVE, FROM THE WEST END. [ToList](#)

[41] The nave here was being built in all probability while the great Flambard was busy with Durham (1105-1130), and very soon after he had finished his labours at Twynham or Christchurch, Hants. Gloucester is generally assigned to Serlo, 1089 to 1100, and Norwich was begun in 1096.



MASONS' MARKS. [ToList](#)

Above the arches of the nave are small double round-headed openings into a very narrow triforium walk, which is vaulted, as at Gloucester, with a quadrantal arch.

There is another peculiarity, too, here, in that the vaulting of the roof springs from corbels which rest directly on the capitals of the piers. As a result of this the roof looks low and heavy.

[42]The triforium openings, which are divided by small shafts, similar in character to those in the tower chamber, are 5 feet 6 inches high and 4 feet 10 inches wide. The passage is 26 inches wide and 6½ to 7 feet high.

The two western bays of the triforium are not alike. On the north the openings correspond to those in the other bays, and are not contracted to correspond with the narrowed arch below; whereas on the south side they are so contracted. By this means the square angle of the western pier was continued to the roof. On the north side the western pier ends abruptly at the capital of the respond.

The clerestory windows are partly concealed by the vaulting. Of course the original windows were much smaller, and were removed and the space enlarged when the re-roofing was done in the fourteenth century.

The Roof.—Originally, no doubt, as at Peterborough, where it remains, the inner roof was a flat panelled ceiling of wood, supported by a moulded framing. Whether the wooden roof decayed or was destroyed by fire, it was found necessary in the early part of the fourteenth century to re-roof the nave, and the present vaulting was then constructed. Beautiful though it is architecturally, it has the effect of dwarfing the nave, as it springs directly from the tops of the piers in the nave. In character it is a simple pointed vaulting, and the ribs at their many points of intersection are lavishly decorated with bosses.

Originally the vaulting was painted and gilded, but owing to the idiosyncrasies of those who fancied they were having things done "decently and in order," it was colour-washed in the early part of this century. The present scheme of colour decoration was carried out by Mr. T. Gambier Parry. Its chief merit is that it throws out the bosses in very strong relief. The bosses can be studied with an opera-glass, but it is less fatiguing to examine them with the help of a pocket mirror. There is a tradition that the bosses were carved by a monk who was not held in much esteem by his companions, and was a butt for their gibes and witticisms. Whether this was so or not, he knew how to carve rudely and effectively in stone, and long may his work remain with us. They represent in a highly pictorial manner the life of our Lord. Beginning at the west end, the central bosses depict: (1) The Nativity. (2) The [43]Shepherds rendering homage. (3) The Magi on their journey. (4) The Magi in adoration. (5) The finding of Christ in the Temple. (6) The triumphal entry into Jerusalem. (7) The Last Supper.[8] (8) The Betrayal. (9) The Flagellation. (10) The Crucifixion. (11) The Resurrection. (12) The Ascension. (13) The Day of Pentecost. (14) The Coronation of the Virgin. (15) The Last Judgment.

The other bosses contain angels bearing musical instruments of every known kind, and alternating, more or less regularly, with angels censuring and angels bearing emblems of the Passion.

On the south side: (1) Angels with pipe and tambourine. (2) Angels with cymbals and bagpipes. (3) Angels with hurdy-gurdy and harp. (4) Angels with dulcimer and organ.

(5 and 6) Angels censuring. (7) St. Matthew and St. John with their emblems, a scroll and an eagle. (8) Angel with a violin; others with emblems of the Passion, *i.e.*, posts, spear, and scourges.

On the north side are to be found: (1) Angel with pipe and tabor; another censuring. (2) Angel with harp; another censuring. (3) Angels with rebeck and zither. (4) Angels with tabor and zither. (5 and 6) Angels censuring. (7) St. Luke and St. Mark, with their emblems, a winged ox, and a winged lion. (8) Angel with a harp; others with emblems of the Passion, *i.e.*, a crown of thorns, a sponge, a cross, and a scourge.

Mr. Gambier Parry, who personally supervised, where he did not personally execute, the decoration of the roof, termed it "a marvellous specimen of English carving," and says that "together with the cathedrals of Gloucester and Norwich, it combined some of the finest features of mediæval sculpture." Further he adds that though "fine details must not be looked for, yet it exhibited a vigour of conception and a charm of inspiration which quite atoned for any faults."

At the west end of the building are two half-figures, male and female, like the figure-heads of ships, which serve as corbels for the vaulting of the roof. They have been thought by some to represent Adam and Eve, and by others to represent the founder, Fitz-Hamon, and Sibylla his wife.

The Font (p. 40).—With the exception of the shaft, which ^[44]has some good hall-flower ornament,^[9] and the Purbeck marble base, this is entirely new work, dating only from the restoration carried out 1875-79. Formerly the old font, of which portions remain in the church, stood in the apsidal chapel in the south transept, and the choice of position for the new one is not quite happy. The canopy is very fine work, but the font as a whole is as much too high as the choir screen is too low. It is also placed at far too great a height above the surrounding floor to be comfortable for a party of sponsors, and from its height it interferes with the beautiful vista of the nave as viewed from the outside of the open west door on a fine day in summer. There is no reason for placing the font in this position, and a Baptistry could have well been made in the north-west corner of the nave.

The Lectern, also a gift from Rev. C.W. Grove in memory of his wife, was presented in 1878. Formerly it blocked up the central passage up the nave, but was removed to counterbalance the pulpit.

The Pulpit was given to the church by Mrs. Glynn, of Tewkesbury, in memory of her husband. In style it is Perpendicular. The shape is octagonal, and it is supported by seven shafts of Purbeck marble, springing from a base of the same, polished; the bases and capitals of the octagonal shafts being of stone. Of the seven panels, four are of pierced work, and three are sculptured representing our Lord blessing little children; preaching on the Mount; giving His charge to the Apostle Peter. Below the panels is a brattice of Purbeck marble—from this at the angles rise octagonal columns supporting

angels, which again support a canopy of elaborate work. The pulpit rests on a base of Purbeck marble.

The nave must have terminated in the same way as the nave at Gloucester, viz., with an altar and with two side chapels—one in each aisle. In the handbook to Gloucester, page 44, will be found the illustration of the altar and chapels redrawn by Mr. Waller from the drawing given in Browne Willis' "Survey of Gloucester Cathedral," published in 1727. This arrangement no doubt obtained at Tewkesbury, which, like Gloucester, was a Benedictine foundation.

The space thus given up to the altar and chapels is indicated ^[45]by the step which comes in the nave near the second pillar, counting westward from the western tower piers. In each of these, on the aisle side are to be seen the ascending spiral made by the recently inserted pieces of stone which show the exact position of the staircase that led up to the rood-screen overhead.^[10] This step no doubt marks the site of the original western termination of the ritual choir. It seems strange that, after undergoing so many vicissitudes as a whole, the survival of so interesting a point should have been permitted. Gloucester Cathedral was repaved in 1720, and no doubt the corresponding step disappeared in the process in the levelling-up of the nave to a height nearly ten inches higher than the original floor level. This step was restored by Sir Gilbert Scott when the floor of the nave was lowered.

On the face of the pillars here some traces of fresco-painting are in some lights still to be seen.

A screen of most uninteresting work separated the choir from the nave up to the time of the restoration work that was begun in 1875, and upon this stood the organ. In front of the organ was hung a huge and unsightly gas corona, portions of which are still lying in the north transept.

Two bays of either aisle were also disfigured with low galleries, as were also the transepts. These erections, with the screen and the screens across the aisles, have fortunately disappeared. As Bennett wrote, "These additions, however much they may add to the convenience and comfort of those who attend divine service, little harmonise with the general character of the building."

The Screen.—This dates from the restoration of 1892, and was erected in memory of Mrs. Glynn, by Archdeacon Robeson and Mr. E.F. Glynn. The screen is of carved oak, and consists of a central door, with wrought-iron gates, and on either side four openings. At the top, which is seventeen feet above the floor level, is an overhanging cornice with elaborate cresting of carved work on both sides. The cross in the centre is richly ornamented on the stem and the arms. These latter are terminated with pateræ, with pierced and carved work. The centre of the cross is ^[46]composed of a quatrefoil in which is carved the Agnus Dei. Flanking the cross are two figures, one representing St.

John, and the other the Virgin Mary. These figures are well carved (by Boulton, of Cheltenham), but, like the cross, look too small on the top of the screen.

The side sections of the screen terminate in ogee arches, elaborately cusped and crocketed, with perpendicular tracery in the spandrils. The separating shafts terminate with pinnacles.

In the central section there are two arches, one being semi-circular with very delicate foliated tracery; the other is an ogee trefoil supported from brackets which take the form of angels.

The lowest stage of the screen is solid panel work and calls for no special mention.

The gates were made by Clarke, of Brackley, and were designed by Mr. J.O. Scott for the donor, Rev. W.R.F. Hepworth. Intricate in their design, and cleverly wrought as they are, they seem slightly incongruous in this wooden screen. The shields bear the correct arms of the Abbey, and round the shields are intertwining iron rods. Scrolls with leaves and other devices are also introduced. Across the top of the gates is a band of square panels with varied design in pierced work, and on the top is an elaborate cresting.

On the inside of the gates, on the shields are the texts, "*Serve the Lord with fear.*"; and "*Rejoice unto Him with reverence.*"

The whole screen looks too low for its position, whether it be viewed from the west end or from the triforium of the choir at the east end. The workmanship will not bear any minute comparison with the loving hand-craftsmanship of mediæval times; much of it is more skilful as church furniture of a very mechanical kind than beautiful as real carver's work.

The **Great West Window** dates back, as far as the masonry is concerned, to 1686, and was erected then to replace the window blown in by the wind in 1661. The glass was inserted in 1886 by Rev. C.W. Grove in memory of his wife, and represents various scenes in the life of Christ. In the lowest tier is the Annunciation, with the Nativity in the centre, and the Presentation in the Temple on the right. Above is the Baptism by St. John in the Jordan, the Last Supper in the centre, the Agony in the Garden on the right. In the topmost ^[47]tier is the Bearing of the Cross, the Crucifixion, and the appearance of our Lord to Mary after the Resurrection. In the head of the window are angels, those in the two side lights on either side being engaged in censuring. In the central top light is Christ in Majesty, with angels. The glass is by Hardman.

The Aisles.—The aisles of the nave are very much lower in height than the nave, and the vaulting is simpler in character. There are, however, many fine bosses, and, like those in the nave, they have been treated in a tentative way with colour and gold. As a whole, the effect of decorated bosses standing out in such strong relief from the simple, unadorned stonework is rather spotty and distracting. The arms of the Despenser family are to be found on some of the bosses in the south aisle, and it is to the munificence of

that powerful family that the execution of the work is due. The Norman roof of the aisles was a lean-to roof of wood, as is indicated by the half-arch between either aisle and the transept.

The fourteenth century windows in the **North Aisle** were partially blocked up with stonework up to 1825, when they were restored and reglazed. Most of the stained glass was inserted in 1892. The window at the west end is a memorial, inserted in 1869, to Mr. John Terrett and his sister. The subject is the "Adoration by the Magi"; the glass is by Heaton Butler and Bayne. The *first* window east of the porch represents the "Angel appearing to the Shepherds" and "The Star of Bethlehem," and "The Wise Men before Herod," in the lower part. The *second* shows "Christ Disputing with the Doctors," and below are "Eli and Samuel," "David and Samuel," and "Saul at the feet of Gamaliel." The *third* represents the Sermon on the Mount, and below, Christ talking to the Woman at Samaria, Christ with Mary and Martha, and Christ with Nicodemus. The *fourth* represents the Transfiguration; the *fifth* gives the triumphal entry into Jerusalem; beneath, Christ is driving out the money-changers from the Temple and weeping over the city; the *sixth* depicts the removal of Christ from the Cross, and the Entombment.

These windows are more or less attempts to reproduce the style of the old glass in the choir. Four of them contain groups under canopies, with a background of grisaille and a wide border. Owing to the lights being narrower in the fifth the border is omitted, and in the sixth the grisaille work is also [48]omitted. All the windows in the north aisle, with the exception of that in the west wall and that next to it, were presented to the Abbey by Rev. C.W. Grove.

It will be noticed that the windows in the north aisle are slightly longer than those in the south aisle. The curtailment in the latter was due to the fact that the cloisters were built against the outside of the south wall. There is more variety in the tracery of the windows in this north aisle than in those of the south aisle.

In the north aisle near the transept [P][11] is a recessed tomb, much mutilated, with a very graceful arch. On the tomb lies a knight in armour, with his hands clasped and his feet resting upon a lion. The armour is worth noticing, as it is curious. The gorget is of edge-ringed mail, the surcoat is blazoned with a chevron between three leopard's faces. Banded mail, with which the knight is dressed, is rarely met with in monuments, only three other instances being known, viz., Newton Solney, Tolland Royal, and Dodford.

This tomb has usually hitherto been assigned to Lord Wenlock, who was killed by the Duke of Somerset at the fatal battle of Tewkesbury. Against this theory is the fact that the tomb is of much earlier date than that of Lord Wenlock's death, and the fact that Lord Wenlock built a chantry chapel in Luton Church for his wife Elizabeth and himself, to which, according to Leland, he is said to have been removed. The figure is supposed, with considerable probability, to represent Sir John de Burley.

In the north aisle, on a brass plate inserted in a flat stone is a Latin inscription to Amie Wiatt, of Tewkesbury, who died on August 25th, ... Following the inscription is a set of elegiac verses, the initial letters of which form the lady's name.

"A me disce mori, mors est sors omnibus una
Mortis ut esca fui mortis ut esca fores.
In terram ex terra terrestris massa meabis
Et capiet cineres urna parata cinis.
Vivere vis cœlo, terrenam temnito vitam:
Vita piis mors est mors mihi vita piæ.
Iejunes, vigiles, ores, credasque potenti.
Ardua fac: non est mollis ad astra via.
Te scriptura vocat, te sermo, ecclesia, mater;
Te que vocat Sponsus, Spiritus atque Pater."

[49]A punning epitaph, also acrostic in form, but in English, is to be found in the nave, to one Merrett, a barber surgeon, who died in 1669.

"T hough only stone salutes the readers eye,
H ere in deep silence precious dust doth lye,
O bscurly sleeping in Death's mighty store,
M ingled with common earth till time's no more;
A gainst Death's stubborn laws who dares repine,
S ince so much *Merrit* did his life resigne.

M urmurs and tears are useless in the grave,
E lse he, whole vollies at his tomb might have;
R est here in peace, who like a faithful steward
R epaired the church, the poor and needy cured.
E ternall mansions do attend the just,
T o clothe with immortality their dust,
T ainted (whilst under ground) with worms and rust."

In the pillar nearest to the north door in the nave is all that remains of the stoup or bénitier for the holy water. We may probably attribute the wanton damage it has sustained to one of the zealots who ministered here after the Reformation.

South Aisle.—This aisle has five Early Decorated windows. The western four have three lights each; the other, near to the south transept, has four lights, and the tracery in it is slightly more elaborate.

All the stained-glass windows in this aisle were presented to the church by the Rev. C.W. Grove, in 1888, as a memorial to his wife. The windows are by Hardman.

The *first* window, *i.e.*, the westernmost, represents Christ walking on the sea; the *second* represents the cripple at the pool of Bethesda; the *third*, the raising of the widow's son at Nain; the *fourth*, the feeding of the five thousand; the *fifth*, the changing of the water into wine at Cana.

At the west end of the south aisle is a memorial window to Mr. H.P. Moore. This is also by Hardman, and represents the home at Nazareth.

At the easternmost end of this aisle is the door by which access was given the church from the cloisters. The entrance to this door consists of a depressed arch, with a square head over it; the spandrils are pierced with an open quatrefoil. This door stands within

the original Norman doorway, which was filled in, and traces of the supporting shaft with its capital may be seen. Above are seven niches, with brackets and [50]canopies of good carved work. Over the canopy on either side is an angel with a plain shield.

At the restoration of the church this doorway was very carefully dealt with at the cost of the then Mayor, Mr. Thomas Collins. Up to the time of the restoration of the church, 1891-92, this doorway had been walled up with many pieces of broken carved work from other parts of the church. The doors were designed by Mr. J. Oldrid Scott, executed locally, and given by the late Mr. Thomas Collins.

To the east of the cloister door [O] is a tomb with a fine crocketed ogee arch, and with an angel bearing a plain shield in place of a finial. On one of the cusps are to be traced the chevrons of the De Clares, and another bears a lion rampant. Beyond the fact that it was the tomb of a relation of the De Clares nothing definite can be said. Some have thought it to be the tomb of Sir Thomas Morley, the husband of Anne, daughter of Edward, Lord Despenser, and widow of Hugh, Lord Hastings, who died in 1417. It may here be noted that a lion rampant, sable, crowned or, are to be found on one of the shields at Lord Despenser's feet in the Isham register. This tomb is generally known as the Duke of Somerset's tomb, but the arms as they exist show no resemblance to the arms he would be entitled to bear, viz., those of the Beauforts.

In the floor of the south aisle is an interesting stone with an inscription in Norman French, in bold Lombardic capitals running round the border:

† LEGER : DE : PARR : CYT : YCY : DYEVX
DE : SĀ : ĀLME : EN : EYT : MERTY.

i.e., "Leger de Parr lies here. May God have mercy on his soul." According to Bennett, this stone had been moved from some other place in the church.

Up to the time of the restoration the extreme western portion of the south aisle was part and parcel of the Abbey House Estate. In 1883, when the estate was put up for sale, the room thus formed in the church was withdrawn from the auction, and soon afterwards was presented by the then owner [51] to the Abbey, to be in future an absolute part of the building. In the south wall near this Abbey chamber is a blocked-up doorway which gave access to the Outer Parlour of the monks.

TRANSEPTS AND AMBULATORY OF THE CHOIR.

The whole of the nave, as in most cathedrals, is open to the inspection of the visitor free of any charge; but the choir, the tombs, the chapels and transepts, are reserved, and shown to visitors on payment of a small fee. This fee is payable at the verger's desk at

the entrance to the north transept. A further fee is payable by those who wish to photograph in this or in any other part of the building.

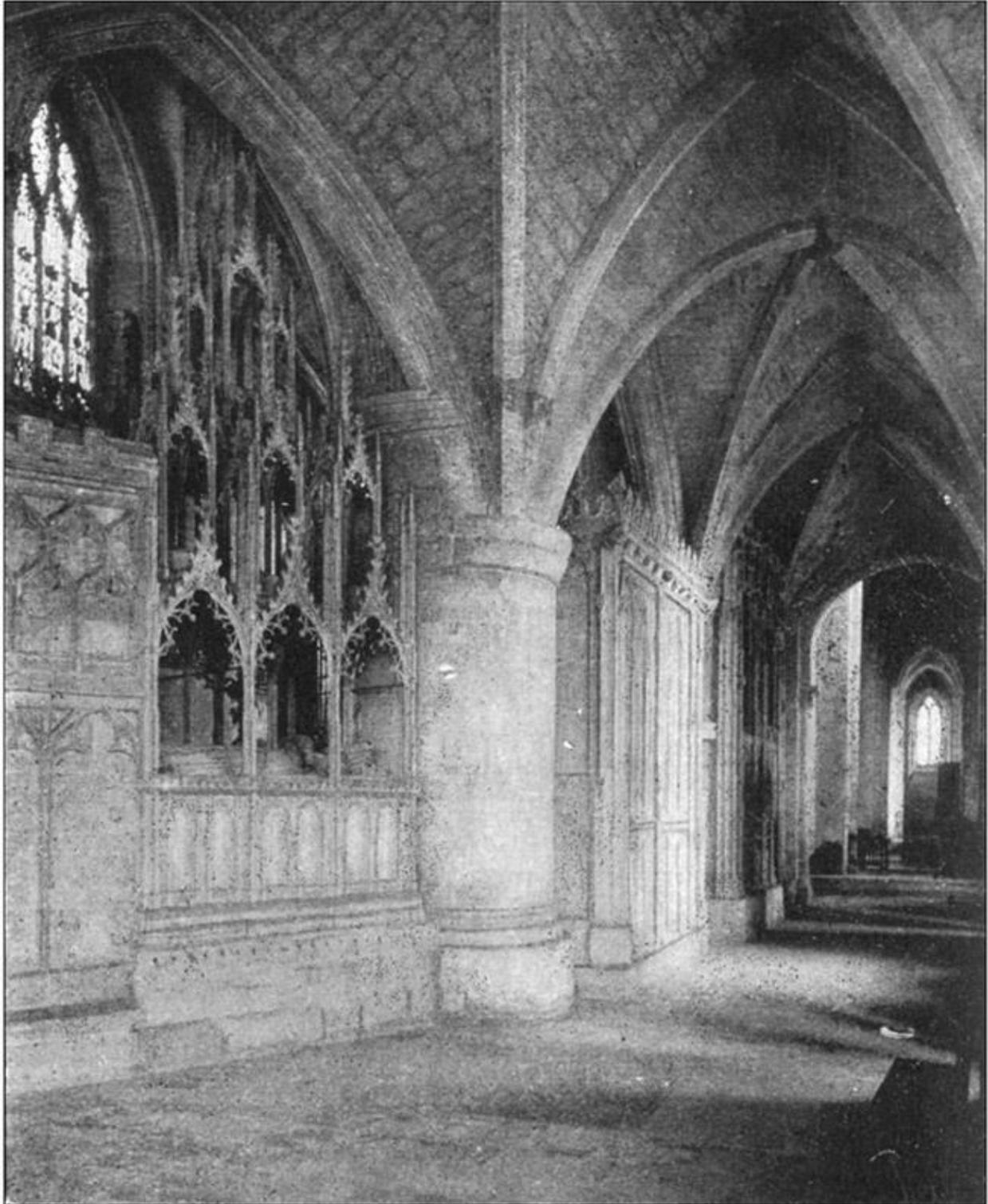
North Transept.^[12]—The whole of this north transept is taken up with the Grove organ, of which an account is given on p. 98. The dimensions of the transept are 40 feet by 34 feet, and 58 feet in height. For the most part this transept consists of original Norman work, very little altered with the exception of the fourteenth century stone vaulting and the insertion of windows of the same period.

On the north wall of the transept is a tablet, in painted alabaster, to John Roberts. It has been neglected, but it is worth deciphering. It runs: "Here resteth what was mortal of John Roberts of Fiddington, gent. Careful he was to maintain tillage, the maintenance of mankind. He feared God, was faithful to his country, friends, good to the poore and common wealth, just to all men. Who left us Jan. 1631, aged 77." The text is, "For Christ is to mee both in life and in death advantage."

The north side has two small pointed windows with geometrical tracery. Below these are recessed Norman arches. On the floor level the masonry is new, having been built up inside the Early English arch.

On the south side are the backs of the choir stalls. On the west side, in the wall is a large Decorated window containing five lights with flowing tracery. This window was blown into the church in 1819, and then rebuilt.

The eastern wall contains two Norman arches, one of which is merely the continuation of the north aisle, through the transept to the north ambulatory. The other is in the north ^[52]wall of the transept, and opens into the choir vestry. Over these two arches were formerly two other open arches. One of these, viz., that over the choir vestry, has been walled up, and the other has a circular or rose window. After undergoing repairs the window was glazed by Hardman, in 1892, as a memorial to Mary Anne Moore. The subject is "The adoration of the Lamb." In the central light is the Agnus Dei; while in the other six encircling quatrefoils are angels censing, and representing Blessing, Glory, Honour, Power, Wisdom and Strength. The glass has been designed to give the effect of older glass, and, so far as that is possible, it may claim to be a success.



(H.J.L.J.M.)

THE NORTH CHOIR AISLE, LOOKING WEST, SHOWING THE BACK OF THE
DESPENSER MONUMENT. [To List](#)

[53] This rose window occupies the space which originally was the west end of the original Norman triforium of the choir, to which access was given by the staircase in the north-east corner of the transept.

The **interior of the tower** for more than three centuries was accessible only from the outside of the church, but is now approached by a staircase in the north-east angle of the north transept. After mounting the first flight, which is somewhat worn, the transept vaulting is crossed by a species of bridge, and at the end of this access is given by a narrow doorway to the first floor of the tower, which contains a large room 33 feet square, with a curiously formed floor. This room has some good Norman work on the walls, and when open to the church, as it was originally, it must have been one of the striking features of the interior from below. That it was open originally may be inferred from the plain treatment of the western side, *i.e.*, the side that would not catch the eye of those using the nave and looking eastwards.

On the floor-level the arcading is practically uniform, with the exception of one column.[13] Above, on the north, south, and east sides is arcading, and still higher in each side are two round-headed window openings.

This spacious apartment owes the form of its curious floor to the vaulting of the lantern-space in the time of Sir Guy de Brien, whose arms are found in the lierne-vaulting which supports the floor. The room was cleared and improved in 1887, when the hanging ringing-chamber was removed, and the floor and ceiling put in good order. The ringing-floor is on the next stage, and the belfry is the floor above.

The clock was erected as a Jubilee memorial in 1887, at a cost of over £200. It is built on the lines of the clocks [54]at Westminster and Worcester Cathedral, and chimes the so-called "Cambridge quarters" as arranged by Dr. Crotch. Small though the clock looks from the level of the churchyard, it must be remembered that it is the massive tower that dwarfs it—the diameter of the face is in reality 8 feet.



(H.J.L.J.M.)

INTERIOR OF THE TOWER ABOVE THE VAULTING.[ToList](#)

Nothing is known of the place of origin of the pre-Reformation bells, but, arguing from the proximity of Gloucester, it may be assumed that out of the eight bells weighing 14,200 lb. or more, some may have been cast by John Sandre, of Gloucester.

The eight bells were bought from the King's Commissioners for £142, *i.e.*, at the rate of 5 lb. for a shilling. They may ^[55] have been bought to sell again, as the number was soon reduced to *four*. In 1612 a fifth bell was added, as a rhyme on the cover of the baptismal register (1607-1629) tells us:

"William Dixon and Thomas Hoare
Made us that bell which wee ring before,
Which men for that good deede praie we they maie thrive,
For we having but four bells, they
made them five;
And out of the grownde this bell they did delve
The 24th of Julie,
Anno Dom. 1612."

Near the arcaded passage in the room in the tower are some memoranda of the changes possible with five bells, rudely engraved in the stonework.

In 1632 the peal was recast and a sixth bell was added, and in 1679 the two newest bells were recast. Two new bells were added in 1696. In 1797 the great or tenor bell was recast. From the time when the bells were overhauled and tuned at Gloucester, in 1837, no further alteration has been made. The present peal is about 500 lb. less in weight than the peal in use at the time of the Dissolution.

From the top of the tower a fine view is to be obtained—Cheltenham, and Gloucester, with its beautiful Cathedral tower, on the south, the Malvern Hills on the west, the Cotswolds on the east and north-east. The Severn and the Avon wind through the landscape, and on the far horizon may be seen the distant hills of Wales.

The old shafting has been chipped away on the west face of the stonework opposite to the north-east tower pier. As one turns round the corner into the north ambulatory or choir aisle, it will be noticed that on the wall is a monument by Flaxman to Lady Clarke; it is small and unobtrusive, but the sculpture is thoroughly good and worthy of a great artist.

On the right hand opposite is the Warwick Chapel ([p. 83](#)), of which the glory in part has departed, viz., the decoration in colour and in gold, and much of the architectural detail.

St. James' Chapel.^[14]—This chapel (dimensions 28 feet by 24 feet), which opens on to the north transept of the north ambulatory, was from 1576 up to 1875 walled off from the rest of the church and used as premises for the "Free ^[56]Grammar School of William Ferrers, citizen and mercer of London." The school ceased to be held here about forty years ago, but the inserted masonry and brickwork was not removed till the restoration of 1875 and following years, when the chapel was restored by the Freemasons of the county. From the time that the chapel ceased to be a school it fell into a bad state of repair, and was open to the sky before the recent restoration, when the present roof of timber, covered with lead—the only wooden roof in the church—was erected and the stonework repaired.

There seems no doubt that this chapel was originally a Norman apse with a vaulted chamber^[15] above, like that in the sister transept, and that it was enlarged in the thirteenth century by Prior Henry Sipton. This is distinctly stated in Annals to have been done in the case of the chapel dedicated to St. Nicholas in 1237. No trace remains of any of the work of Prior Sipton owing to the later works carried out in this chapel. The

nave of a Lady Chapel was built on the north side of the north transept, and its chancel (the existing northern part of the choir vestry) was carried out to the east, this portion of the chapel being quite detached, as the windows (now blocked up) in the upper part of the south wall plainly show. Access for the laity was given by a door in the nave portion, while the monks had an entrance through the adjoining chapel, which may, after its rebuilding in 1237, have contained two altars, one to St. James and another to St. Nicholas. This theory of the two altars in this chapel would account for much of the confusion in the naming of the chapel by subsequent writers. The vaulting of this chapel is at first sight a difficult problem to solve, as the eastern side is divided into two equal parts, while the western side is divided into two unequal parts. A pillar seems to have stood in the centre, if the lists of noblemen buried (after the battle in 1471) in the two chapels are trustworthy. When the fourteenth century Lady Chapel at the east end of the church was built, the *raison d'être* of the Early English Lady Chapel ceased, and the chapel entrances were enlarged to their present form. Any distinctive features that they had in the way of wall decoration were lost either at [57]the Dissolution, when part was pulled down, or during the subsequent use of the eastern chapels as a schoolroom.

Passing through into the adjoining chapel on the north, which was probably the chancel of an **Early English Lady Chapel**, the visitor will note the great contrast between this and the adjacent chapel. It is very much richer in its ornament, and though it has been terribly mutilated, much work of surpassing interest is still left to us. The north wall contains the remains of a trefoil-headed arcade of great beauty, the spandrils of which show richly carved foliage, the effect of which was further heightened by the application of colour. Of the arcading eleven capitals remain, but only three pillars and bases, the rest having been cleared away.



(H.J.L.J.M.)

WALL ARCADE IN EARLY ENGLISH CHAPEL.[ToList](#)

In the wall of the present west end is a window decorated with a moulding consisting of two series of chevrons, completely undercut, pointing laterally in contrary directions.[\[16\]](#) Numerous interesting remains of Early English mason's work [\[58\]](#)are in the chapel, and many have been built into the wall on the east side, the most important being remains of a fine altar-piece in Purbeck marble.

There is a window on the east side containing four lights, the subjects, beginning from the north side, being as follows:—(1) The mythical Saxon founders, Oddo and Doddo, A.D. 715. (2) The Norman founders, *i.e.*, Fitz-Hamon and Sibylla. (3) Earl Robert, 1089-1123. (4) The Countess of Warwick, 1439. The figures are based on the MS. Chronicle of the Abbey, belonging to Sir Charles Isham of Lamport. This window, the tracery of which is new, is by Bourne of Birmingham, and forms a memorial to a former churchwarden, John Garrison, who died in 1876. The tracery contains the red and white roses of the rival houses of Lancaster and York, appropriately enough, seeing that under the floor, in front of the altar to St. James, are interred the remains of Lord Edmund, the Duke of Somerset, Lord Thomas Courtenay, the Earl of Devon, Sir Richard Courtenay, Lord John Somerset, and Sir Humphrey Hadley, who were beheaded after the battle of Tewkesbury. Sir Thomas Tresham, who also was beheaded

at the same time, was buried before a pillar between the altars of St. James and St. Nicholas.

The whole of this part of the chapel was once the choir or chancel of the detached Early English Lady Chapel which was erected early in the thirteenth century. The Annals of Tewkesbury record that in 1239 the *Church* of Tewkesbury with a greater altar was dedicated in honour of the glorious Virgin Mary. The word Church might mean this Early English Lady Chapel, which with its nave and chancel would be a model church, although somewhat small in size; but the words *majore altari* are generally taken to mean the large slab of Purbeck marble now in its place in the choir as an altar slab.

Lady Chapels were not invariably at the east end of the main building. At Bristol there was and is still an elder Lady Chapel which at one time was detached from the main building.

The floor in these chapels is that which was formerly in the choir up to the time of the restoration of the church.

St. Margaret's Chapel.—This is one of the series of the fourteenth century chapels which surrounds the ambulatory of the choir.

[59]An old altar-cloth which was given by Anne, Countess of Coventry, in 1731 to the church was removed to this chapel after the restoration of the building.



Photo. A.H. Hughes.

THE AMBULATORY, LOOKING TOWARDS ST. MARGARET'S CHAPEL. [ToList](#)

A very fine screen of stonework separates this chapel from the ambulatory, the tomb of Sir Guy de Brien (late Decorated—erected in 1390) forming part of the screen.^[17] Sir Guy was the third husband of the Lady Elizabeth Despenser who is buried in the tomb on the other side of the ambulatory. In the panelling are the arms of Sir Guy, who was also Lord Welwyn, and those of his wife, who was by birth a Montacute. This knight served Edward III. as standard-bearer at Crécy in 1346, and was a great benefactor to the Abbey. He is ^[60]credited with the vaulting of the tower, as his arms occur in the bosses there.

The vaulting, which springs from engaged shafts, is excellent work, like that in the other chapels, and the bosses are worth notice. In the central boss in the ceiling the

Coronation of the Virgin is represented, and surrounding it are heads of lions and of men.

An aumbry, lavabo, and piscina are all worthy of study.

St. Edmund's Chapel.—The ground-plan of this chapel is curious, as it is apparently divided into two by a kind of re-entrant pier of masonry, and the easternmost part is screened off from the ambulatory by the curious tomb known by the name of the Wakeman Cenotaph, or the tomb of the starved monk (*vide* [p. 94](#)).

In this chapel is a large aumbry, and a very perfect stone coffin which was dug up in the south ambulatory near the Trinity Chapel. The metallic sound given forth by the coffin when tapped seems to be of more interest than anything else to the ordinary visitor. Various interesting fragments of stonework are in the chapel, one being a portion of a tomb. Portions of the font formerly in the Norman chapel in the south transept are also here. Under the painted window is a piscina, more than half of which is modern work. There were, no doubt, two altars, *i.e.*, one in each part of the chapel, but the dedication of the other part is not known.

At the intersections of the vaulting are some unusually interesting carved bosses. For the most part they have reference to the legend of St. Edmund, King and Martyr, viz:—

The head of the king bearing a crown. The king, bound to a tree, being shot at by Danes. A greyhound watching by the body of Lodbrog in the wood, murdered by the king's huntsman. Christ with a halo of glory, triumphing over Sin personified as a monster. St. Michael destroying the dragon. Other bosses are either floral or heraldic, the latter containing the arms of the Despensers. The boss in the centre of the roof is unique, containing a lion being attacked by various other animals, *e.g.*, a horse, a ram, a monkey, wolves, etc.

There is one painted window in this chapel, which was erected in 1877 to the memory of Rev. C.G. Davies, for ^[61]thirty-one years Vicar of Tewkesbury. The window is by Heaton, Butler and Bayne. In effect it is too kaleidoscopic.



Photo. A.H. Hughes.

THE NORTH CHOIR AISLE AND ST. EDMUND'S CHAPEL. [ToList](#)

Opposite to the Wakeman Cenotaph (*vide* [p. 95](#)) is the iron grating which is the entrance to—

[62] **The Clarence Vault.**—This vault [F] contains the remains of George, Duke of Clarence, Earl of Warwick and Salisbury, and his wife Isabelle, who was the eldest daughter of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, commonly known as the "King-maker." The Duchess died at Warwick in December, 1476, from the effects, it is said, of poison. She was buried in the vault which, as the chronicle says, was made *artificialiter* behind the great altar, in front of the door of the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the opening of the tomb was made opposite the entrance of the chapel of Saint Edmund the Martyr. The young Countess, after lying in the choir in state for thirty-five days, was laid in the vault on February 8th. Ten days later her husband, who had been put to death in the Tower—it matters little whether in the butt of Malmsey wine or not—was buried beside her.

Assuming that the tomb was desecrated and pillaged soon after the Dissolution, and again later on in Commonwealth times, we find that in 1709 the royal remains were displaced to make room for the body of a "periwig-pated alderman" by name Samuel Hawling; and later on, in 1729 and 1753, his wife and son were interred there. The site then was lost till it was identified in 1826. In 1829 the Hawling remains were removed, and since then it has remained the Clarence Vault. In 1876 it was fitted with iron gates, and in the pavement over the vault a brass has been inserted with the inscription, composed by Mr. J.T.D. Niblett:—

"Dominus Georgius Plantagenet dux Clarencius et Domina Isabelle Neville, uxor ejus qui obierunt haec 12 Decembris, A.D. 1476, ille 18 Feb., 1477.

"Macte veni sicut sol in splendore, Mox subito mersus in cruore."

Or in English—

"Lord George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence, and Lady Isabelle Neville, his wife, who died, she on Dec. 12, 1476, he on Feb. 18, 1477.

"I came in my might like a sun in splendour, Soon suddenly bathed in my own blood."

On the brass are engraved two suns in splendour, the badge of the House of York.

[63] The fourteenth century stone screen-work round the choir side of the ambulatory, particularly at the back of the reredos and the north-east portion adjacent to it, is very interesting work. The lower part is panelled with tracery in low relief, with the arches springing from diminutive heads. All the shafting is ornamented with a small ball-like enrichment. Above the panelling is some open tracery of beautiful design. By reference to the plan it will be seen that much of this original screen-work has been set back several feet, possibly to make room for the Clarence vault.

At the east end of the ambulatory is the arch by which entrance was formerly given to the destroyed Lady Chapel. It is now walled up, and in such a way that it is difficult to picture the appearance of the original work. However, from the battlements of the adjoining south-east chapel it is possible to see the remnants of the vaulting of the entrance to the Lady Chapel.

In the modern cast wall is a window of three lights (by Hardman) in memory of Rev. C.W. Grove, who presented most of the modern glass in the church. The subject is the Pharisee and the Publican. It is not known whether the Pharisee is intended to be a portrait of any one, but the Publican's face is said to be an excellent portrait of Mr. Grove, and the portrait of the lady in the top light (she lacks a halo) is deemed to be an equally good picture of Mrs. Grove.

St. Faith's Chapel.—The site of this chapel is not known for certain, though it is supposed to have been one of the two south-east chapels.

The first and easternmost chapel is the largest of the series of chapels built round the ambulatory. It is pentagonal in form and is 28 feet by 24 feet, opening to the aisle with a richly moulded arch. The vaulting, as in all these chapels, is excellent work, but the student of such things will notice that the masons' work on the chapels on the south side is in even courses, and that the stones are better dressed than in the chapels on the north side of the choir. At the intersections of the vaulting there are some good bosses, chiefly foliage with some heads. In this chapel there are three stone coffins.

The central window (by Kempe) is to the memory of ^[64]Benjamin Thomas Moore, for thirty-eight years churchwarden, who died in 1896. Though detail of a most elaborate kind fills the window, yet in appearance it is rather thin, a quality which the clear, strong light that shines upon it as a rule somewhat accentuates. In the central light is St. Faith, to whom this chapel is often ascribed, with St. Agnes on the left and St. Cecilia on the right. There are two other windows, one of four lights and the other of three.

By standing at the entrance to this chapel the visitor will obtain a very fine and interesting set of *coups d'œil* of the different parts of the building. Towards the north there is the view of the work at the back of the altar, and St. Edmund's and St. Margaret's chapels in the background. To the north-west are the tombs at the back of the altar and sedilia; to the west is a good view of the south ambulatory and the south aisle of the nave.

The next chapel, *i.e.*, the middle one of the three on this side, has no known dedication.^[18] It is also pentagonal—somewhat irregular, it is true, but its length and breadth are the same—20 feet. There are two windows of three lights.

This chapel has become the museum for the storage of many interesting fragments of destroyed portions of the fabric. Some of the coloured fragments are under glass, others are grouped against the eastern wall. It is to be regretted that no list is hung up in the

cases. The larger of the two cases contains in one division pieces of the broken upper part of the sedilia, all finely coloured. In the other division are fragments from the Warwick Chapel and other mutilated tombs in the choir. Most of these were found buried in the choir at the restoration in 1875. There are some iron rings which belonged to the coffin of Sir Hugh le Despenser. They were removed when the tomb was inspected in 1875.

Portions of figures of the De Clares are also in the case—one with an inverted torch, representing Gilbert de Clare, who died, the last male of his line, at the battle of Bannockburn, 1314. Three bases of figures contain inscriptions as follows:

- | | | | | |
|--------|------------------------|---------|--------|-----------------------|
| 1. | Rob ^s . | Consull | Filius | Regis |
| [65]2. | Willelm ^s . | | Comes | Gloces ^r . |
| 3. | e Regis. | | | |

Another portion of a figure, in a blue mantle, is said to be Thomas Lord Despenser, the last Earl of Gloucester. It has upon it the arms of Despenser and Clare.

On the wall are some swords which recall the panic caused in 1803 by Napoleon's projected invasion and humiliation of England. It is difficult to see why they or the colours of the Volunteers were removed to this position from the Town Hall.

Against the eastern wall are portions of a beautiful frieze, with ball-flower ornament, and many shields bearing traces of rich colour. There is a fine head, and a curiosity in the form of a coffin of an infant, a portion of a cluster of marble columns, and a figure in camelskin and leather girdle representing St. John the Baptist.

Across this chapel is the tomb of Abbot Cheltenham, who died in 1509 (*vide* [p. 95](#)).

The Vestry.—The third of the chapels is the most regular in shape, and is used, as it was in monastic times, as a Vestiarium or vestry. The arch is closed entirely by masonry, built upon the original wall which formed the outer wall of the Norman church. In the walled-up space that corresponds to what is the entrance in the case of the other chapels are a fine tomb and the doorway into the vestry. A description of the tomb will be found on p. 97. The tomb of the Abbot may have been removed from a grave outside the building, but it is not known who was buried in it. Willis ascribed it to Robert Fortington, who died in 1253. A fine doorway, richly decorated, with three elaborately wrought brackets for images over it, gives access to the Clergy Vestry. The door is of oak, plated with roughly wrought metal plates, of which tradition has it that they were made by the monks out of swords and armour found in and around the precincts after the battle of Tewkesbury in 1471.

This chapel is profusely enriched with ball-flower moulding, both inside and on the side next the ambulatory. It will be noticed that the windows are small and placed, for the sake of the security of the sacristy, high up in the south wall. In the south wall is a piscina, and close by on the south-east wall must have stood an altar. The window nearer

to this has richer [66] detail than the other two. In the south-west wall a small recess is formed inside a buttress. This may have been used as a safe for plate and other valuables in the charge of the sacristan.



(H.J.L.J.M.)

THE VESTRY DOOR, SOUTH CHOIR AISLE. [ToList](#)

[67]A special staircase in the north-west corner, entered from the ambulatory, gives access to the room over the vestry. In this room, which has a fireplace, the sacristan probably slept. He was able from the windows on the stairs to see into the Vestiarium or Diaconum Magnum, and also into the choir. In fact, this view is one of the most interesting in the church. Two large square modern windows give light to this room, and a doorway in the east wall communicates with the space over the vaulting of the ambulatory and chapels. The room had originally a low timbered roof, as will be seen by the holes once occupied by the beams.

There are two tombs of interest built into the wall between the vestry door and the south transept, and space for them has been cut out of the original Norman solid wall. One is quite plain and simple Early English work [M], and contains the remains of Abbot Alan, a man of learning and of considerable note, as he was a friend of Thomas à Becket, the great Archbishop of Canterbury. This is the only tomb of that period now surviving in the church, and it has been thought that he was the first of the abbots who was honoured with an intramural tomb.

Close to Abbot Alan's tomb is another recess which now is without its coffin. The arch is pointed and crocketed with pinnacles at the sides. In the absence of a tomb the chief interest consists in the old encaustic tiles which have been transferred here from other parts of the building, a few of them having been found in 1875 under the then stone pavement of the choir. They are now safe here from the destroying power of the ubiquitous tourist's foot.

On the south-east tower pier is a marble tablet in Renaissance style, erected in 1890 to the memory of Mrs. Craik, the author of "John Halifax, Gentleman," who is said to have written her story whilst staying at the ancient "Bell Inn" near the Abbey gate. The memorial was designed by Mr. H.H. Armstead, R.A., and is gracefully carried out entirely in white marble. The only fault in the memorial is that there is too much work in proportion to the size of the tablet. The topmost portion above the projecting cornice is a charming piece of work, illustrating Charity, but too high above the ordinary [68]visitor's head to be seen or appreciated as it should, and the group rather overweights the memorial.



Photo by A.H. Hughes

THE APSIDAL CHAPEL, SOUTH TRANSEPT. [To List](#)

South Transept.—(Dimensions 40 feet 8 inches by 32 feet 10 inches.) This transept has vaulting of the same character as the other, and a large west window, rebuilt in

1820, filled with glass in memory of Thomas Collins, of Tewkesbury. ^[69] Beneath this window is a deeply recessed doorway (now blocked up) which once gave access to the cloisters. In this recess are to be found some of the old tiles which formerly were in the choir. In the south wall too, like the north wall of the other transept, there are recessed Norman arches with two windows—enlarged later—under the roof. The doorway in this wall formerly communicated with the Chapter House. One of Tewkesbury's glories, the old organ, forms the north boundary of the transept. On the east side there are four large Norman arches. Of these the first is the archway which gives access to the south ambulatory, with a triangular window (of fourteenth century work) over it, occupying the position once taken by the arch of the triforium of the Norman choir. In 1893 this window was glazed with stained glass by Rev. W.H.F. Hepworth in memory of his mother, the subject of the window being Faith, Hope, and Charity.

To the south of this is the large arch which gives access to the Norman chapel with its early Norman groined roof. This chapel will give the student an idea of the original plan of the north transept before the alterations in 1237 and in 1246.

The east window was perforce blocked up when the ambulatory chapels were built, and to give light to the chapel the south-east window was inserted in the apse, no other position for a window being possible, as will easily be seen by reference to the plan.

An anonymous donor presented the Salviati mosaic now in the filling of the east window, but the effect is not good, as too strong a light falls upon the gold background. Probably the work will look better when the south transept is entirely glazed with coloured glass. The subject is our Lord enthroned, bearing a book in one hand, and having the other raised as in blessing. The glass in this window was formerly in the east window of the ambulatory of the choir, and was removed to its present position in 1887. It is a memorial to Mr. A. Sprowle, a former resident of Tewkesbury. The glass is by Clayton and Bell, but the window is very poor and uninteresting.

This Norman chapel ^[19] was at one time used as the Baptistry, and the font, now in one of the two north-east chapels, was in ^[70] use here up to the time of the restoration in 1875. After this restoration the altar from the choir was transferred to this chapel, and the various guilds connected with the church subscribed towards the cost of fitting the chapel for special devotional use. It is used for the daily morning services in the week.

There are remains of a piscina in this chapel, but very much battered. It is to be hoped that money will not be frittered away on any attempt at polychrome decoration of the ordinary kind in the chapel as has been done at Gloucester in the chapel of St. Andrew. Mr. Blunt has thrown out the suggestion as a possible ideal, but the simplicity of the present chapel is far preferable.

Immediately above it is a large vaulted room, similar in shape, but less lofty, open to the transept. Its roof shows traces of having been at one time elaborately painted with frescoes, and the room formerly communicated with the original Norman triforium of

the choir. This room has at various times had absurd names given to it, perhaps the most absurd being that of the Nun's Prison. As Mr. Blunt in "Tewkesbury and its Associations" says, there are many people who cannot hear about monks without immediately thinking of nuns. It would seem that the room communicated with the dorter or dormitory, and was designed for invalid monks, who from it might hear mass sung in the church without going downstairs. In the south-east corner of the transept a staircase gives access to this chamber, and communicates with the triforium of the transept, the clerestory of the choir, the vaulting of the ambulatory as well as that of the tower.

Before 1875 a gallery filled up the south transept and two bays of the south aisle, and communicated by means of the organ screen with the similar gallery in the north transept.

In the west wall is a recess, formerly a doorway of Early English work. On the south wall is a brass tablet from the choir pavement, to the memory of Prince Edward.

At the corner of the south transept and the south aisle is a curious recess in the masonry hidden by a curtain.

At the extreme east end of the south aisle, near the niche or recess just mentioned, is a rudely carved head which no doubt served as a cresset.

[71]

THE CHOIR.

This part of the building is usually entered from the south ambulatory by the entrance opposite to the door of the clergy vestry. The screen-work at this entrance to the choir was in a ruinous state in the early part of this century, and has been most carefully repaired, and in part renewed.

It is a choir of great beauty, and though at first sight small and low, its proportions are admirable in every way, the length being almost exactly twice the breadth.

From the centre of the eastern tower-piers to the back of the altar the choir measures 63 feet, but the total length from the present oak-screen to the altar is 103 feet. The breadth in its widest part is 33 feet.[\[20\]](#)

The upper part of the choir was reconstructed in the early part of the fourteenth century in its present polygonal form, the Norman pillars being carried up three feet, and fitted on the choir side with Decorated capitals.

The curious effect of the carrying up of the columns will be seen from the fact that the arches which spring from the Decorated capitals do not correspond in pitch with the vaulting in the ambulatory. The latter springs from the original Norman capitals on the columns in the choir (*see illustration, [p. 52](#)*).

The moulding of these arches of the choir is exceedingly rich, and the outer ones on the north side contain a double moulding of quatrefoil flower ornament.

The easternmost arch is somewhat stilted; the bare wall thus left exposed having originally been concealed by the reredos, or at any rate decorated in some way.

In these alterations to the choir here the Norman triforium had to be sacrificed; and those who wish to see on a larger scale what the original triforium was like must study that at Gloucester. In fact the two choirs alone will form the basis of much interesting study, the Gloucester choir having been left comparatively intact below the clerestory, and veiled over with richly wrought Perpendicular stonework.

The windows and the roof are of about the same date, *i.e.*, early fourteenth century; the roof is anticipatively Perpendicular. A great feature of the choir is the skilful way in which the work of different times has been so effectively combined, and brought into a harmonious whole.



[72]

Photo A.H. Hughes.

THE CHOIR, LOOKING WEST. [ToList](#)

It is interesting to compare the ground-plans of Gloucester and Tewkesbury, and to see how the two originally Norman [73]choirs have been treated. At Gloucester the apsidal formation has been destroyed, traces only of it being left under the present reredos, but there the actual removal of Norman work stopped. The Norman piers of the choir and presbytery and the Norman triforium of the choir are all there, though they are partly concealed by the later Perpendicular casing. The choir at Tewkesbury has lost its distinctively Norman character, as nearly all the original outside wall of the church to the east of the tower was removed, but it has retained its apsidal formation.

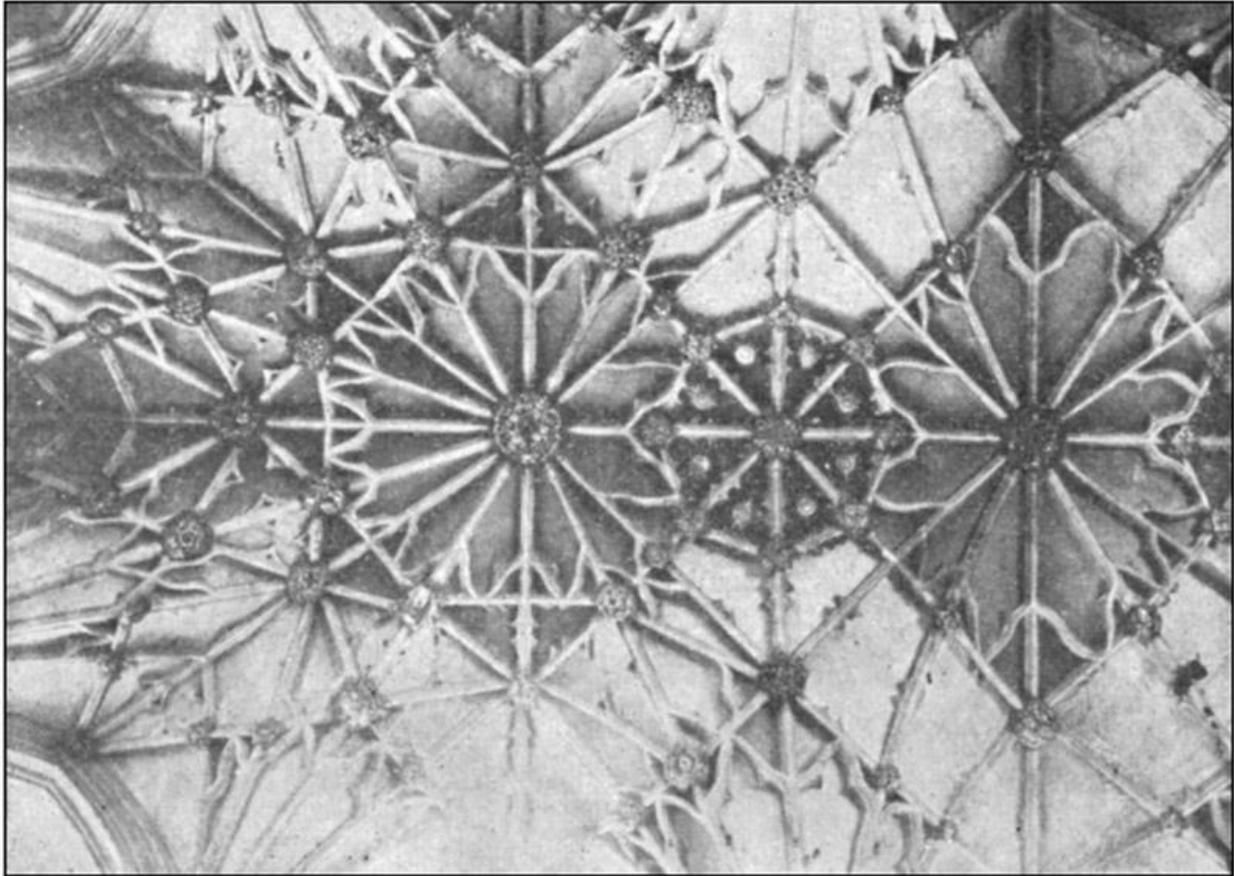


Photo. W.G. Bannister.

THE CHOIR VAULT. [ToList](#)

Beautiful as the choir is, it owes much of its effect to its vaulted roof, which is a fine specimen of early Decorated work. The vaulting ribs spring from small engaged shafts, which are carried up the face of the wall from the main piers, and then radiate from very ornate capitals over the vault. A fine colour effect must have been presented by the original ceiling painted and frescoed.

The bosses are less elaborate and less varied than those in the choir at Gloucester, but are well carved, consisting for the most part of vine-leaves delicately treated. All this roof was colour-washed in 1828, when so much restoration was done in the church.

[74]The suns[21] in the centre are supposed to have been put up by command of Edward IV. after the battle of Tewkesbury. The suns were a device which was appropriated by the Yorkists after the downfall of the Lancastrian party. Those in the tower vaulting are modern copies of these original suns. The modern painting of the vaulting is subdued in tone.

The vault of the tower is a lierne vault, and from the occurrence of the arms of Sir Guy de Brien, once quartered with those of Montacute (*i.e.*, of his wife), the vaulting has been credited to his exertions. The Despenser fret is to be found twice.

In front of the altar-rails is the large boss from which used to hang the sanctuary lamp, the sacred flame of which was kept ever trimmed and bright, as a sign that "the house was evermore watching to God."

Altar.—The Purbeck marble altar is supposed by some to have been the altar mentioned in the Abbey Chronicles of 1239, but any Early English features have been destroyed beyond recognition. It is reputed to be the largest altar in England, but, at any rate, it may be said to be the longest. Originally set up in its present situation, it seems to have been buried in the choir by the monks, perhaps by some who were not so mercenary as the rest. Sixty-eight years afterwards it was found, and its purpose being recognised, it was set up in the middle of the choir as a Communion table. In 1730 it was transferred to the aisle, the churchwardens' accounts stating that 12*s.* was paid for so doing, and that 2*s.* 6*d.* was given "to the men that did it for working all night." The "large entire blue stone" was then cut into two lengthwise, and was further desecrated by being converted into seats for the north porch.[22] Earl Beauchamp, at his own expense, had the two slabs restored to their original use. Considering what the marble has gone through, its size has been well maintained. In 1607 it was 13 feet 8 inches by 3 feet 6 inches by 7 inches; and now it is 13 feet 6 inches by 3 feet 5 inches by 5 inches. It is supported by a massive framing of oak.

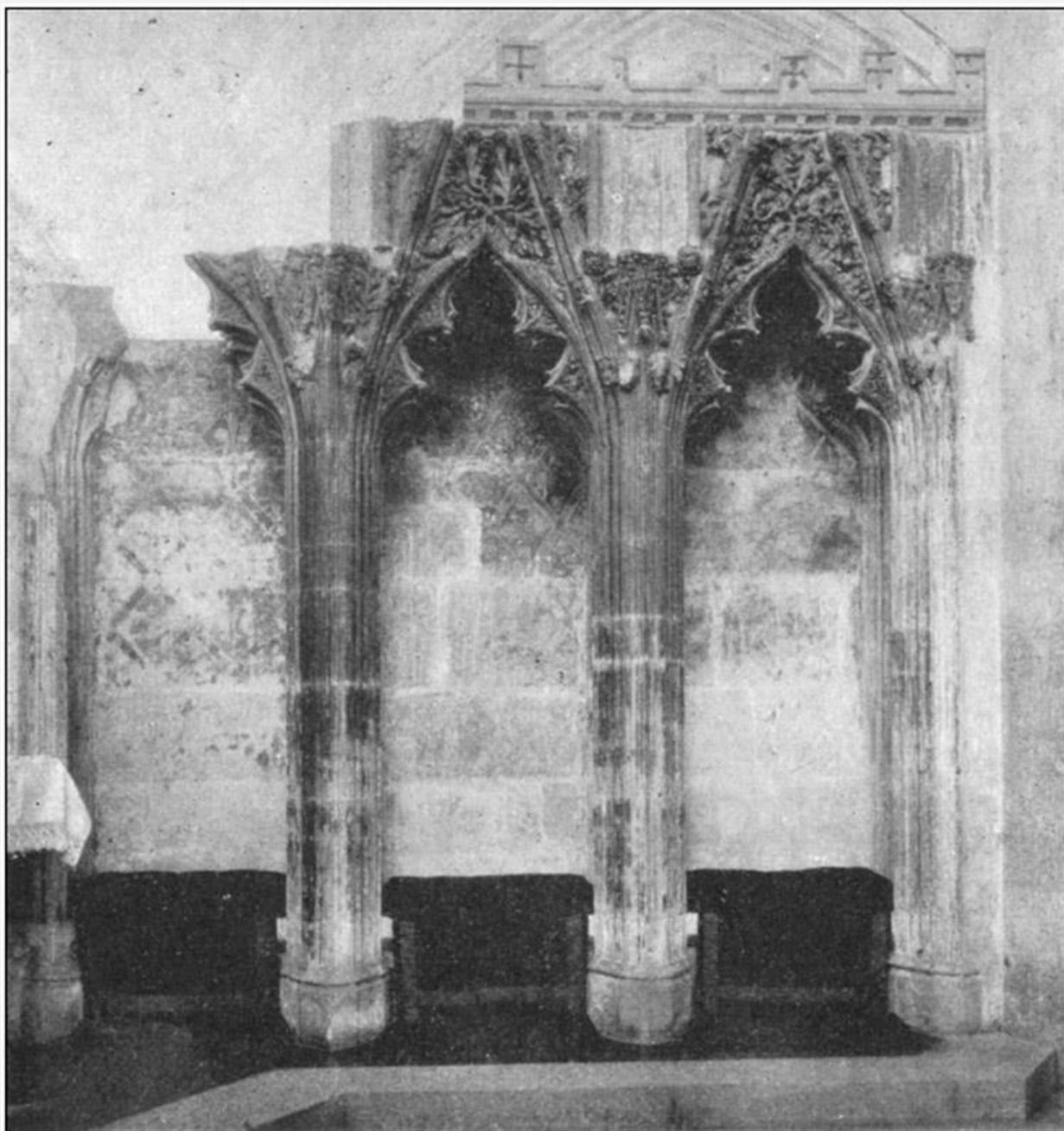


Photo D. Gwynne.

THE SEDILIA. [ToList](#)

Sedilia.—These are on the south side in the canted bay of the apse. These sadly mutilated remains of a once glorious work are especially interesting. Originally they were decorated with rich colour and gold, much of which still in parts remains. The canopy of tabernacle work has been ruthlessly destroyed, together with the major part of the easternmost section. All the shafting is very richly moulded with a great number of diminutive mouldings, principally ogee and hollow. Foliage work of rare beauty and

representations of grotesque animals [76] form the greater part of the ornament. There are interesting remains of diaper work in the wall which forms the back. The plinth and seats are probably modern work. At the top are placed some pieces of battlement work, of which there is a great amount in different parts of the building. It seems a pity that the remains of the sedilia which lie elsewhere in the church cannot be placed together in position here—not "restored," but honestly pieced as well as may be done with care and patience.

The north-east pier that supports the tower bears a plain corbel, supporting what is supposed to be the remains of an oak case for the Saunce-bell or Sanctus-bell.

Tiles.—During the wholesale restoration of 1875 and following years some old tiles were found, after the pattern of which the present tiles were made. The fashion of paving buildings of the age of Tewkesbury Abbey with glazed and glossy machine-made tiles, all cut mathematically true, is much to be deprecated. Time has done much, and will do more, to remove the glaze, but nothing will ever remove the stiff printed look of the pattern. The black patches of tiles are rather heavy in appearance, but the pavement looks better so than it would if broken up with streaky slabs and squares of glaring white marble incised with more or less pictorial designs relieved with a background of black cement. The choir of Tewkesbury in this respect has fared better than that of Gloucester, though a little more might have been made of the graves of the illustrious dead who are known to have been buried underneath.

Windows of the Choir.—These fourteenth century windows are the chief glory of the choir. There are seven in all, and though they have suffered much from wilful damage and neglect, there are perhaps no others in England containing quite so much glass of the same date, and in such good condition as a whole. [23] Every one must rejoice that in 1828 lack of funds prevented these windows from being thoroughly restored.

The windows nearest to the tower have four lights each, and the tracery is comparatively simple though flowing and free. [77] The next two on either side of the choir are slightly more elaborate and contain five lights each, while the east window is quite different from the rest. It has five lights, and the head of the window contains a fine Catharine-wheel.

In the north-west window (*i.e.*, immediately over the Warwick Chapel) are—1. Fitz-Hamon; 2. Robert Fitzroy; 3. Hugh le Despenser; 4. Gilbert de Clare (third), the tenth Earl of Gloucester. In the south-west window, *i.e.*, the one exactly opposite to the last mentioned, are—1. Gilbert de Clare (the first of the name); 2. Lord de la Zouch; 3. Richard de Clare; 4. Gilbert de Clare (the second). These knights are all in armour, and are valuable as giving accurate representation of the armour and knightly gear of their time. Above the knights are represented canopies, and in the heads of the windows are scrolls of vine-leaves.

The bodies of the De Clares lie below the choir pavement, almost in a line with these two windows.

The other windows on either side contain Scripture subjects, many of them very fragmentary: Daniel, David, Abraham, Jeremiah, Solomon, and Joel are, however, easily to be found.

The east window represents the Last Judgment. In the centre Christ is depicted with uplifted hands, on which are the stigmata of the Passion. The side lights, from their unsymmetrical arrangement, would seem to have been rearranged, or rather disarranged, at some time. The Apostles would naturally be grouped on either side, in the outer lights. The other two lights represent St. John and the Blessed Virgin. Of these figures the heads, which are modern, were put in (free of charge) in 1828 by a London glass-painter named Collins. In the five panels below the figures are groups of persons arising from their graves; one group represents an angel disputing with the evil one for the possession of three persons bound with a chain. At the bottom are armorial bearings.

In the floor of the choir there are graves in which many notable persons, who made their mark in history, were buried.

Exactly under the central point of the vaulting of the tower is the site of the grave of Prince Edward, son of Henry VI. and Margaret Anjou. He died on the 4th of May, 1471, and with him the last hope of the Red Rose party was finally crushed.

A modern brass, with a Latin inscription which was [78]composed by Mr. J.D.T. Niblett, records that "Hic jacet Edwardus princeps Walliæ, crudeliter interfectus dum adhuc juvenis Anno Domini 1471, mensis Maii die quarto. Eheu, hominum furor: matris tu sola lux es, et gregis ultima spes,"—or in English, that "Here lies Edward, Prince of Wales, brutally murdered while but a youth, in the year of our Lord 1471, on the 4th of May. Alas! the madness of men. Thou art the only light of thy mother, and the last hope of the flock." Holinshed writes that the body of the Prince "was homelie interred with the other simple corpses in the church of the monasterie of the blacke monks in Teukesburie." Another MS., which gives a list of noblemen slain in the battle of Tewkesbury, states more definitely that he was "buried in the midst of the convent choir in the monastery there." Traces of a coffin-lid were found near the north-west pier of the tower, and from other evidence it was taken to be the tomb of the young prince, and this would give more colour to Hall's statement that he "was buried without any solemnity among some mean persons in the church of the black friars in Tewkesbury."

In 1796, when several alterations were made in the church, a brass plate was inserted in a stone over a tomb in the choir supposed to be that of the Prince. This tablet is now on the wall of the south transept. It runs:

"NE TOTA PEREAT MEMORIA EDWARDI PRINCIPIS WALLIÆ POST PRÆLIUM
MEMORABILE IN VICINIS ARVIS DEPUGNATUM CRUDELITER OCCISI HANC

TABULAM HONORARIAM DEPONI CURABAT PIETAS TEWKESBURIENSIS ANNO DOMINI MDCCXCVI."

Or in English: "That the memory of Edward, Prince of Wales (brutally murdered after the famous battle fought in the fields close by), perish not utterly, the piety of the people of Tewkesbury had this memorial tablet laid down, A.D. 1796." This tablet is mentioned in the accounts for that year, and the cost is put down at £10; but perhaps this included the composition of the Latin inscription, and the stone in which the plate was inserted. This *pietas Tewkesburiensis* still [79]survives, as flowers are annually laid upon the site of the grave. Before this there was, according to Dingley, who wrote in 1680, a "fair tombstone of grey marble, the brass whereof has bin pickt out by sacrilegious hands, directly underneath the Tower of this Church, at the entrance into the Quire, and sayed to be layd over Prince Edward, who lost his life in cool blood in the dispute between York and Lancaster, at which time the Lancastrians had the overthrow."

Another grave under the tower was that of the Duke of Warwick, who is sometimes said to have been created and crowned King of the Isle of Wight by Henry VI. He died at the age of twenty-one, and was buried, at his own request, between the stalls in the choir. At the time the choir was repaved in 1875 a grave of stone filled with rubble was found, together with some bones of a man of herculean size. These, no doubt, were those of the Duke who was buried here in 1446. The large marble slab that formerly covered the grave disappeared early in this century, but the brasses that were originally in it had been taken away long before. Cecily the Duchess of Warwick, a daughter of the Earl of Salisbury, was buried in the same place in 1450.

Further eastward, in a line with the Warwick Chapel, are the graves known as those of the **De Clares**.

The first is a stone with an inscription running round the edge, in old French, as follows: "Ci gît Maud de Burgh la veuve comitisse de Gloucestre et Hertford, que mourust le 2 juillet l'ann grâce 1315. Nous cherchons celle que est à venir." This slab, which is of large size, covers a well-wrought stone grave, and must have contained a very handsome brass, judging by the matrix. The next grave contains the remains of the Lady Maud's husband, Gilbert de Clare, the third of that name, the tenth Earl of Gloucester and Earl of Hertford. Though young in years he had a wise head, for Edward II. made him his regent when he himself was fighting in Scotland, and later again in 1313 when fighting in France. Gilbert de Clare the third was killed at Bannockburn in 1314, and was laid to rest next to his father. The tablet gives his arms, and the inscription runs: "Gilbertus tertius nomine Glocestrie et Hertfordie comes decimus ultimus, obiit 23 Junii, 1314, prælio occisus, Scotus gavisus." Which being freely translated is: "Gilbert, the third of the name, tenth and last [80]Earl of Gloucester and Hertford, died on June 23, 1314. He was slain in battle, to the joy of the Scots."

The tomb next to this is that of his father, Gilbert the second, usually known as the *Red Earl*. He married the Princess Joan of Acre, a daughter of Edward I. This Earl was at first an important figure in the revolt of the Righteous Earl, Sir Simon de Montfort; but later, having changed his views and his side, was an important factor in his former leader's final overthrow at Evesham in 1265. Fragmentary remains only of a coffin assumed to be his were found in 1875. His tablet says: "Gilbertus secundus, cognomine Rufus, comes Glocestrie octavus, et Hertfordie septimus, obiit septimo Decembris, anno domini 1295. Vir strenuus et fortis cui deerat timor mortis. Ora et pugna." Or in English: "Gilbert the second, surnamed the Red, eighth Earl of Gloucester and seventh of Hertford, died the 7th of December, A.D. 1295. A stout and brave man, who had no fear of death. Pray and fight."

In the next grave lies Gilbert de Clare, the first who bore the double title. His interest to us consists in the fact that his seal is one of those attached to Magna Charta, and he took a considerable part in the Barons' struggles against King John. He died in Brittany, but was buried here by his own wish. Very little of his coffin remains.

The tablet to him says: "Gilbertus de Clare, nomine primus, comes Glocestrie sextus et Hertfordie quintus, obiit 25^o Octobris, anno domini 1230. Magna Carta est lex, caveat deinde rex"; *i.e.*, "Gilbert de Clare, the first of that name, sixth Earl of Gloucester and fifth of Hertford, died October 25th, A.D. 1230. Magna Charta is law, let the King henceforth beware." [\[24\]](#)

The next grave is that of Richard, the second of that name, the son of Earl Gilbert. He is usually believed to have been poisoned at the table of Peter de Savoy at Emersfield in Kent. To his memory a most gorgeous tomb was set up in the Choir, composed of marbles, precious stones, mosaic, gold and silver, and bearing a large image of the Earl in silver on the top. Weever, in "Funeral Monuments," gives the epitaph:

"Hic pudor Hippoliti, Paridis gena, sensus Ulyssis, Æneæ pietas, Hectoris ira jacet."

[\[81\]](#) And he translates it:

"Chaste Hippolite, and Paris fair, Ulysses wise and sly, Æneas kind, fierce Hector, here jointly entombed lye."

The brass tablet says: "Ricardus de Clare, comes Glocestrie septimus and Hertfordie sextus, obiit 15^o Julii, anno que domini 1262. Dum petit crucem sic denique petit lucem"; *i.e.*, "Richard de Clare, seventh Earl of Gloucester and sixth Earl of Hertford, died July 15th, A.D. 1262. While he seeks the cross, he seeks thereafter light." This alludes to his having been a Crusader. Richard de Clare's entrails were buried at Canterbury, and his heart at Tonbridge, at which place he had founded a monastery of Austin Friars.

Despenser Graves.—Between the graves of the De Clares and the steps of the altar are the Despenser graves. The grave on the north side nearest to the Fitz-Hamon or Founder's Chapel is that of Richard Despenser. His brass runs: "Ricardus le Despenser baro octavus, et Burghersh baro quintus, obiit anno domini 1414, dum adhuc adolescens. Flos crescit et mox evanescit"; or in English: "Richard, eighth Baron Despenser and fifth Baron Burghersh, died A.D. 1414, whilst still a youth. A flower grows and soon passes away."

He was married to Elizabeth Nevill, daughter of the Earl of Westmorland, but, dying at Merton at the age of 19, left no family. He was the last of the male line of the Despensers, and is buried next to his father, Thomas le Despenser, who was laid to rest in the central grave of the three. His record on the brass is: "Thomas le Despenser, baro septimus, et Gloucestriæ comes tertius decimus et ultimus crudeliter interfectus 15^o Januarii, anno domini 1400. Cibell angau na cywillydd." This being translated means: "Thomas, seventh Baron Despenser, and thirteenth and last Earl of Gloucester, was brutally killed on the 15th of January, A.D. 1400. Rather death than dishonour."

He had married Constance, daughter of the Earl of Cornwall and niece of the Black Prince. Being attainted in 1399 after the deposition of Richard II., whom he had faithfully served, he was deprived of both his titles and executed at Bristol in 1400. His grave was under the lamp which burned before the altar. In 1875 no trace of his grave was found, but there is a fragment of a statue in the "museum" in which he is clad in a blue mantle, wearing the badge of the Garter.

[82]The third and southernmost of the Despenser graves is that of Isabelle, Countess of Warwick, Abergavenny, Worcester, and Albemarle. The inscription on her brass is: "Mementote dominæ, Isabelle le Despenser, Comitissæ de Warwick, quæ obiit, anno domini 1439, die Sancti Johannis Evangelistæ. Mercy, Lord Jesu"; *i.e.*, "Remember the lady Isabelle le Despenser, Countess of Warwick, who died A.D. 1439, on St. John the Evangelist's Day. Mercy, Lord Jesu." This lady was the daughter of Thomas le Despenser, next to whom she lies here, and though she was given in marriage to Richard Beauchamp when she was only eleven years old, she is chiefly known from the title of her second husband, who was her first husband's cousin. Her grave was identified in 1875, and her remains were found enclosed in a shroud and in a tomb of solid masonry, 7 feet by 2 feet 5 inches, by 2 feet 5 inches. The covering slab had a cross incised with the words "Mercy, Lord Jhu" (Jesu). The top of the slab had traces of mortar upon it, pointing to the fact that her tomb was built immediately over it. We know from the chronicle that it was a "very handsome marble tomb, exquisitely carved." It was a table tomb bearing an effigy of the Lady Isabelle upon it, clad in a plain linen garment. At the head stood St. Mary Magdalen, at the right stood St. John the Evangelist, and at the left stood St. Anthony. At the foot of the tomb was an escutcheon with her arms and the arms of the Earl of Warwick, impaling the arms of Clare and Despenser.

In each of the two easternmost piers that support the tower (on the north and south sides) will be seen a round-headed doorway, which gave access to the choir from the aisles. They were walled up at an early date, as they were probably too narrow for processional use.

Since the restoration of the choir the old stalls of the monks have been collected from the various places in the church to which they had been removed, and placed in their present position across the arches of the tower, eleven on the north side and twelve on the south. Those on the north have lost most of their misericordes, and all the canopy work. Those on the south side are more perfect, and the backs are in better preservation, though the plain panels have been removed.

In the majority of the misericordes the carving, originally [83]fanciful, has suffered at the hands of bigots. It is only possible to conjecture what the stalls were like in monastic times, but they were probably, though less elaborate, similar to those at Gloucester. As carvings they cannot be compared with those at the Priory Church of Great Malvern.

THE TOMBS AND CHANTRIES.

One of the chief glories of Tewkesbury consists in the series of historic tombs and chantries which encircle the choir and presbytery and the surrounding ambulatory. It may safely be asserted that in no church, with the single exception of Westminster Abbey, can such a noble collection of sepulchral monuments be found. They are well worthy of detailed study, and for that reason have been grouped together in one section. It is not possible to examine or describe them adequately from the ambulatory only, and the most important are best viewed from the choir or presbytery, whence access to the chantries is obtained.

All these tombs have suffered terrible mutilation at the hands of fanatics and bigots, but it is surprising to find how much of what was really fine pierced work, almost as delicate as lace, has survived the zeal of the destroyers. Close inspection will show that a considerable amount of repair and refitting has been done in places. It must have been a task of great difficulty, and involved that "infinite capacity for taking pains" of which we hear so much but find so seldom; and considering the date (1825) at which this piece of genuine restoration was done, more praise must be given to the restorer. Had it not been undertaken then it might have been done later, and certainly not so lovingly, and possibly not so well.

Warwick Chapel.—This beautiful piece of work [A in the plan] is a chantry chapel, erected in 1422 by Isabelle le Despenser, to the memory of her first husband, Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Abergavenny and Worcester, or, as the chronicle calls him, Ricardus de Bello Campo. It is situate, as will be seen from the plan, under the westernmost arch of the north side of the choir. An inscription, which is only legible here and there, runs round the moulding: "Mementote dñe Isabelle le Despenser,

Cometisse de Warrewyk, quæ hanc capellam fundavit in honorẽ bte Marie Magdalene, et obiit Londiniis apud ^[84]Mnēs aó dñi MCCCCXXXIX. die Scti Jhis Evngste. Et sepulta est ã choro ã dextra patris sui: cuj. añe ppitietur Deus. Amen" (*i.e.*, "Be mindful of the Lady Isabelle Despenser, Countess of Warwick, who founded this chapel to the honour of St. Mary Magdalen, and died in London in the Minories, A.D. 1439, on St. John the Evangelist's Day. And was buried in the choir on the right hand of her father. On whose soul may God have pity. Amen").

The chapel was dedicated in the names of St. Mary Magdalen, St. Barbara, and St. Leonard just two years after Richard Beauchamp had died.

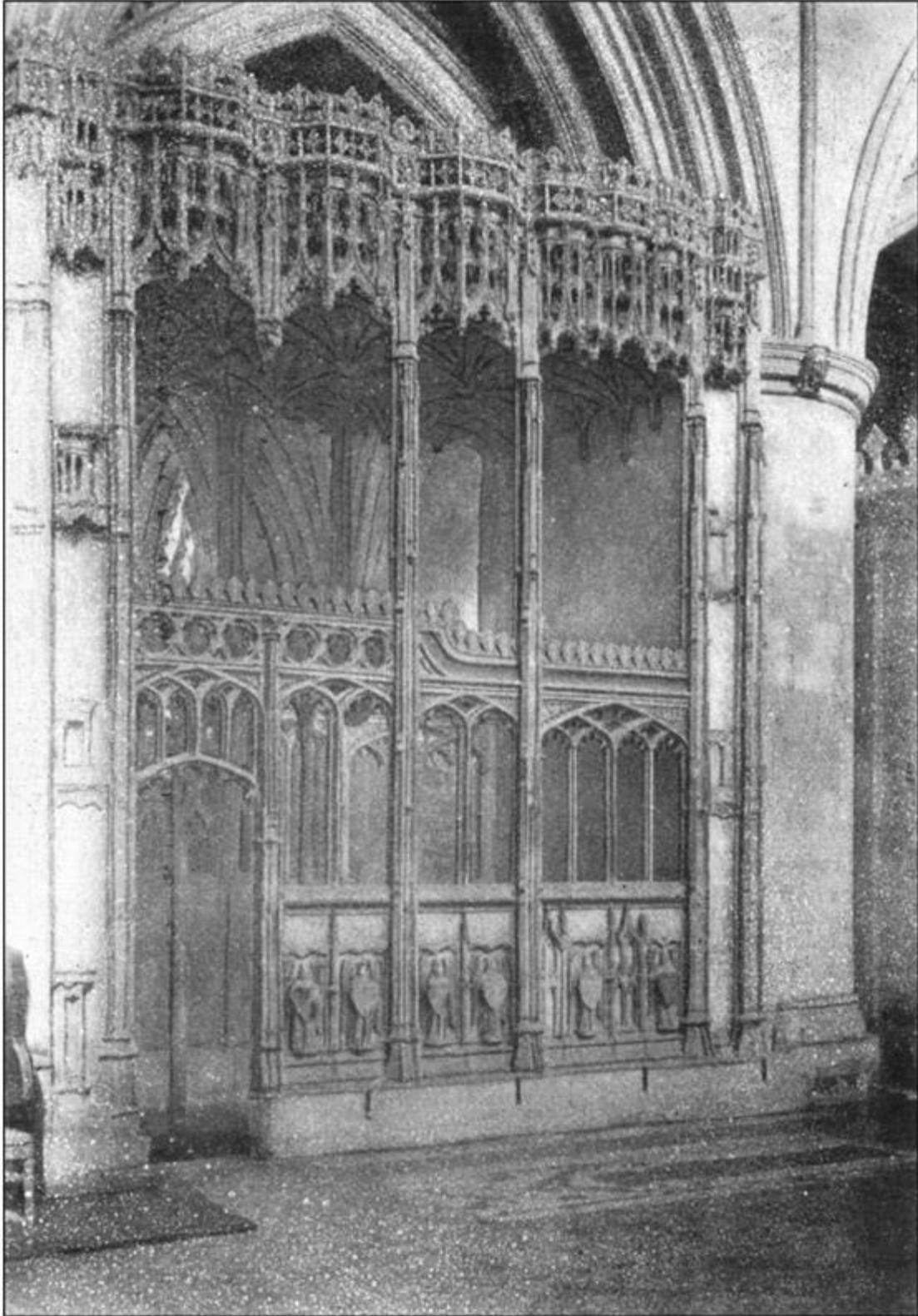
This Richard Beauchamp, after whom in truth the chapel should be called, had shown his bravery at Agincourt in 1415, and in 1420 been made Earl of Worcester. He was slain at the siege of Meaux, in France, in 1421. In Dyde's "History of Tewkesbury" it is spoken of as "Mary Magdalen's Chapel, now commonly called 'Spenser's Chapel.'" It may have been designed to surpass in glory the chantries previously existing in the building, and if so, the Countess, who was only twenty-one years of age, spared no expense in causing this beautiful work to be made.

The chapel consists of two parts or stories, the lower of which has a door into the north aisle as well as into the choir. The lowest portion or base on either side consists of figures of angels, much mutilated, bearing shields.

The chantry has two roofs, both with fine vaulting, formerly richly painted, but the lower roof only covers the western half of the chapel. The pendent bosses have been destroyed. At the top the canopy work is so delicately sculptured that it resembles lace.

The lower ceiling, extending over half the chapel, consists of large and small circles. Of these, the larger ones are ribbed with sixteen ribs, while the smaller ones are quatrefoils, each member being composed of a trefoil with an elegantly carved cusp. Between these smaller circles are still smaller ones composed of quatrefoils. This ceiling is supported by two slender shafts. Along the exposed front of the ceiling are four double cinquefoil arches, between which were three busts. Of these, one only, viz., an angel with a scroll, remains.

In the upper storey of the chapel the ceiling is made up of hexagons and octagons, the intervening space being filled up with circles, trefoils of irregular shapes, though symmetrically disposed, and quatrefoils. The points of the pendant have been ruthlessly destroyed.



[85]

Photo. A.H. Hughes.

THE WARWICK CHAPEL. [ToList](#)

[86] Of this chantry Mr. Knight wrote: "There can be but one opinion on the praise which belongs to the exquisiteness of finishing by which the several parts of it are distinguished; the entablature, wedged between two of the old pillars of the choir, and appearing to rest upon light columnar buttresses of singular beauty, give us an assemblage of filigree and fretwork, which may vie with the finest specimens of similar workmanship in the kingdom: the elegant palm-leaved parapet, which occurs in the division between the storeys,—the numerous escutcheons blazoned in their proper colours,—the niches, and pedestals, under their respective canopies, once ornamented with figures which fanaticism has dislodged,—the slender shafts supporting a higher apartment, probably the rood-loft, in the inside of the fabric, from whence half-figures of angels are seen to issue,—the pendants dropping, like congelations in a grotto, from a roof adorned with the most delicate tracery spread over it like a web,—these and a countless multitude of minuter beauties, almost distract attention, and overwhelm the judgment with their different claims to notice."

Some have thought the upper portion was intended to serve as a private pew for the Lady Isabelle. To this the difficulty of access may well be urged as a valid objection. Others have thought that the upper part was a rood-loft. Others again have thought that the half-roof was a platform upon which a kneeling figure (in imitation of that in the Trinity Chapel) was placed.^[25] By her will the Lady Isabelle gave instructions that her statue was to be placed on the right hand of her father in the choir, and that it was to represent her entirely naked (*i.e.* without any state robes), with her hair cast backwards; with St. Mary Magdalen (one of the saints to whom the chapel was dedicated) laying her hands across: with St. John the Evangelist on her right side and St. Anthony on her left. At her feet there was to be an escutcheon, bearing her arms impaled with those of her late husband—who had died just three months before her—supported by two griffins; and at the ^[87]side there were to be statues of poor men and women in humble apparel with their beads in their hands. From the Abbey Register this part of the lady's last will and testament seems to have been carried out; but nothing remains of these added figures or of the tomb. The chapel is less perfect on the south, or choir side, than on that which faces the north aisle.

The appearance of the chantry when first finished, with all its rich colour and profuse gilding, must have been very rich. Some have thought it too elaborate and overweighted with ornament, but we may well call it one of the most glorious specimens of its time.

Among the heraldic decorations are to be found the chevrons of the Clares, and the arms of the deceased Earl. On the outside are to be traced the arms of the royal ancestors of Isabelle, of the Clares, and of the Despensers.

The arms upon the chapel are given in "Neale's Views of Tewkesbury" as follows:

On the side of the chapel next the choir, over the door—

1. France and England, quarterly, King Edward III.

2. Castile and Leon, quarterly, and Peter, King of Castile and Leon.
3. France and England, quarterly, Edmund of Langley, Duke of York.
4. France and England impaling Castile and Leon—for Isabelle of Castile, Duchess of York.
5. Clare quartering Despenser (Thomas Despenser, Earl of Gloucester).
6. Clare quartering Despenser and impaling France and England (Constance, the mother of the foundress of the chapel).

On the side next to the aisle—in the basement or lowest portion and in the first division, three angels bearing shields—(1) as 1 above; (2) destroyed but presumably as 2 above; (3) as 3 above.

In the second division, two angels bearing shields—(1) as 4 above; (2) as 5 above.

In the third division, two angels bearing shields—(1) France and England quarterly in chief.

[88] The arms on the fascia and over the door are, in each compartment, three:

1. The royal arms of England.
2. The arms of the Clares, Earls of Gloucester.
3. Clare impaling England (Isabel, Countess of Gloucester, and John, afterwards King of England).
4. Despenser (Hugh, Lord Despenser).
5. Despenser impaling Clare (Eleanor, Countess of Gloucester, wife of Hugh, Lord Despenser).
6. Clare and Despenser, quarterly, impaling Burghersh (Sir Edward Despenser, K.G.).

The iron railings were probably removed as being an inconvenience when the ugly rows of pews, which took up the whole of the choir and presbytery, were placed in the chancel in 1796.

The Lady Isabelle, after completing this tomb, married the cousin of her first husband, who was also a Richard Beauchamp. He died in Rouen in 1439, but his body being brought home by his countess, was buried in the noble Beauchamp Chapel at Warwick, which is a further development of that at Tewkesbury. She died in London in the same year on St. John the Evangelist's Day, as the inscription on the Warwick Chapel sets forth, and at her own request was buried at Tewkesbury, in the following January. All traces of her handsome marble tomb have disappeared, but the site of her grave was identified at the restoration of the choir in 1875. The site is marked (8) in the plan.

To the east of the Warwick Chantry is the chapel [B] known as the **Founder's Chapel**. Fitz-Hamon, as already stated on p. 13, was buried in the Chapter House, but Abbot Forthington removed his body to this site in 1241.

The open screen-work, which was erected in 1397 by Abbot Parker, is an excellent specimen of early Perpendicular work. It is extremely light and graceful. The cresting of oak-leaves is finely wrought; below it is a frieze ornamented with roses.

It is unfortunate that the brass has disappeared from the marble top of the tomb.

On the cornice there used to be the following inscription:

"In ista capella jacet Dñus Robertus, Filius Hamonis hujus loci Fundator."

The fan-tracery of the ceiling is a beautiful piece of work, [89]and shows traces of its former decoration with colour and gold. There is fan-tracery at Gloucester, where it is thought to have originated, which is essentially the same as this. This specimen is one of the most beautiful in every way.

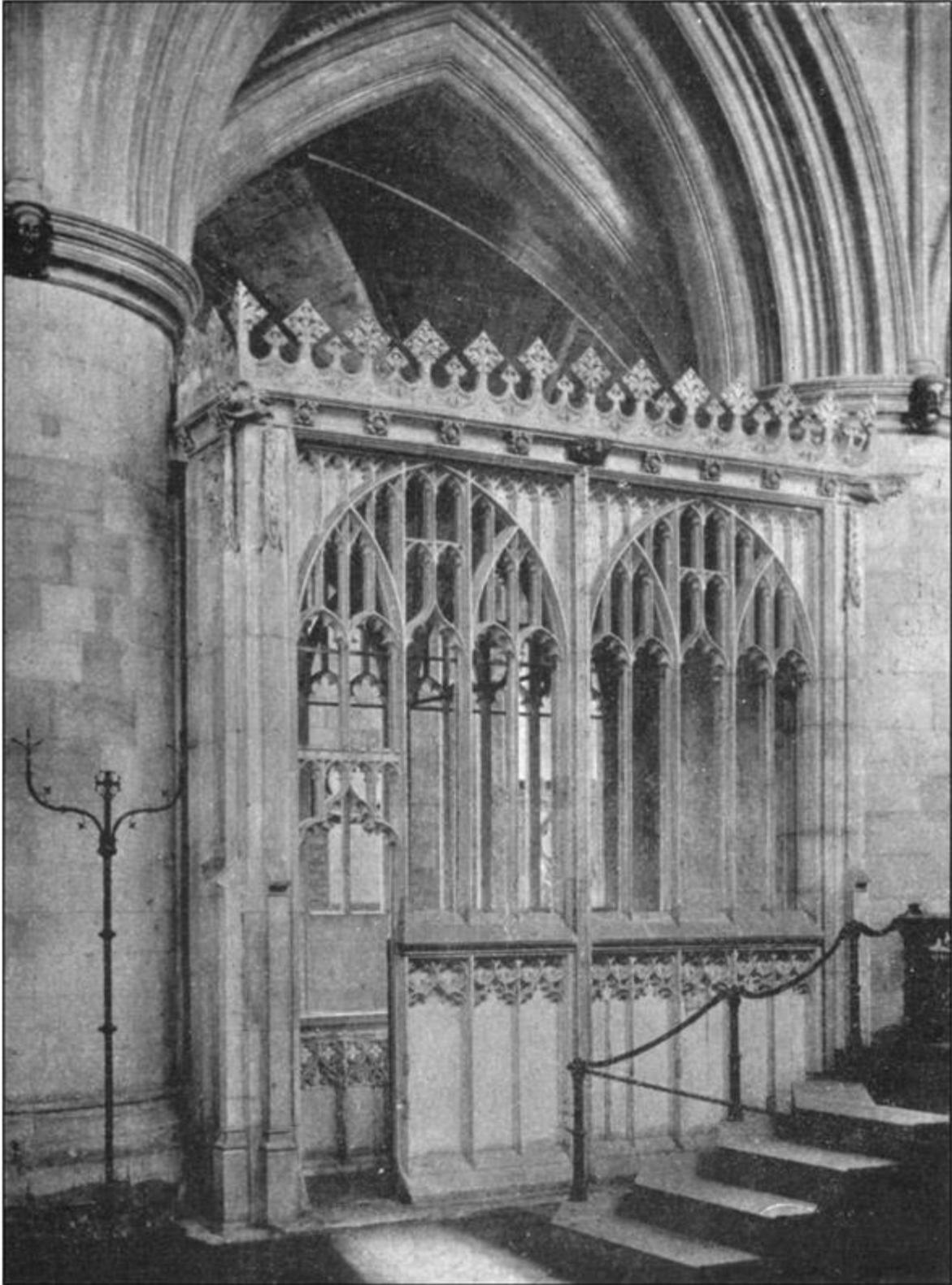


Photo. D. Gwynne.

CHANTRY OF THE FOUNDER, FITZ-HAMON. [ToList](#)

[90] Brackets to support an altar remain in part, and there are faint traces of a fresco painting on the east wall, which is said to have represented scenes in the life of St. Thomas à Becket.

The easternmost panel of the chapel on the south side has been restored; the rest has been very little touched. Restoration was necessary because no access to the chapel could be obtained when the choir was all pewed, and the eastern end was ruthlessly cut away. Some of the cresting on the north side is also new.

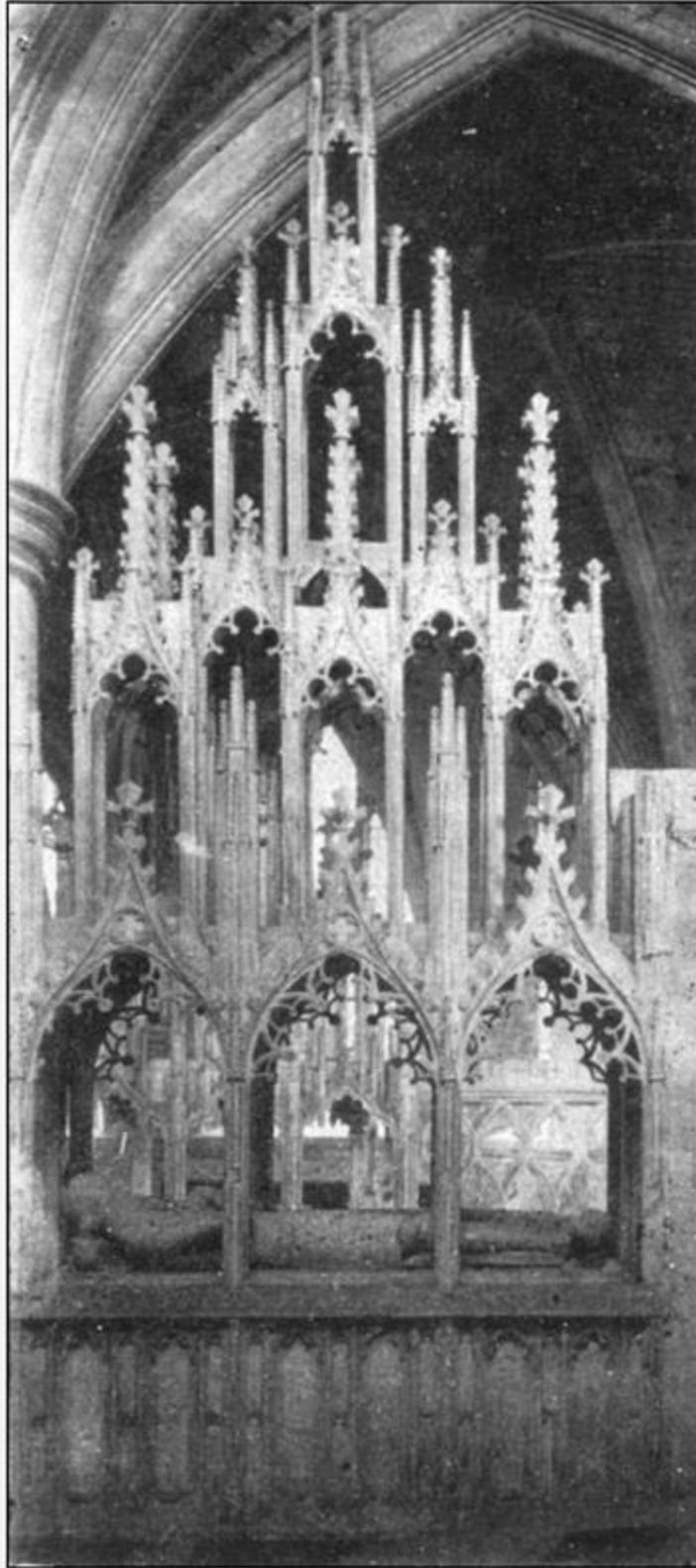


Photo. A.H. Hughes.

THE DESPENSER MONUMENT. [ToList](#)

The Despenser Monument.—Still further to the east is the tomb [C] of Sir Hugh Despenser, who died in 1349, and his widow, who died ten years later, having in the interval married Sir Guy de Brien, the tomb to whose memory is close at hand. This tomb is full of interest, and consists of a richly panelled base with trefoil arches (each of which must once have contained a statuette), in three sets of two each to correspond with the open tracery in the tier above.

[91] On the tomb is a slab on which are two recumbent figures, carved in white alabaster. The knight is clad in armour, viz., a spherical bascinet, with a camail of chain-mail. His jupon is charged with his arms. The shirt is also of chain-mail, while the arms and legs are protected by plate armour. His head is resting upon a tilting helmet, his feet upon a lion. The Lady Elizabeth, who was a daughter of William Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, has a dog at her feet, and is robed in a long flowing dress, which, with the square head-dress, is characteristic of the time of Edward III.

The Decorated canopy is in two parts, viz., the arched portion which covers the two figures, and the tabernacle work in four tiers above. Three arches of marvellously delicate work support the arched roof, which is like fan-vaulting on a diminutive scale; the ribs have been indicated by colour.

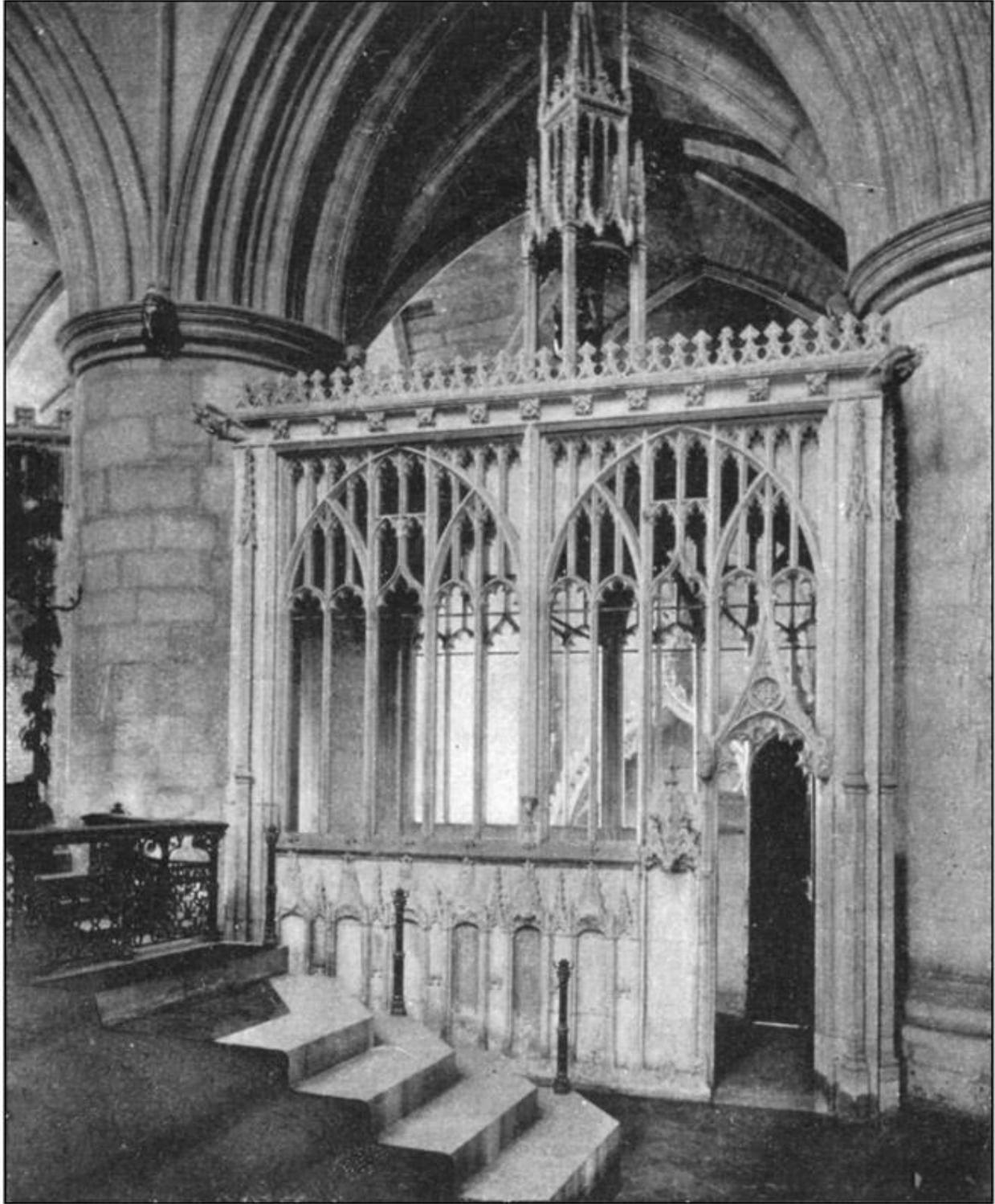
The tabernacle work tapers very gradually, and forms a charming finish to one of the finest tombs to be seen anywhere. Trefoil-headed arches are used throughout the design, but with such consummate skill that no feeling of sameness is aroused. Of straight lines there are many, but of stiffness there is none. Formerly the whole work was painted with red, green, and gold, traces of which are to be seen on the side next to the choir and underneath the canopy.

The tomb is more perfect on the choir side than on the other.

Of the statues that formerly formed part of the canopy or canopies, no traces are left, but it is evident that they were removed with unusual care.

This tomb was formerly ascribed to George, Duke of Clarence, and also to Thomas Despenser. The arms on the tabard, however, settle the question definitely. If further confirmation be required apart from the style of the architecture and the arms, Leland writes: "Hugo le Despenser tertius ... sepultus est apud Theokesbury juxta summum altare in *dextera*[26] parte." Of the Lady Elizabeth he says: "Sepulta est juxta Hugonem maritum apud Theokesbury."

Trinity Chapel.—On the south side of the choir in the bay opposite to the Founder's Chapel is the Trinity Chapel [K], the building of which is ascribed to Elizabeth, Lady de Burghersh, the widow of Edward, Lord Despenser. Lord [92] Despenser died at Cardiff in 1375, and was buried before the door of the vestry, near the presbytery. His widow, who died many years later (1409), was buried beside her chapel in the choir.



(H.J.L.J.M.)

THE TRINITY CHAPEL. [ToList](#)

The tomb has many beauties, of which the chief is the [93]fan-tracery. Much damage has ruthlessly been done to the niches and canopies at the side.

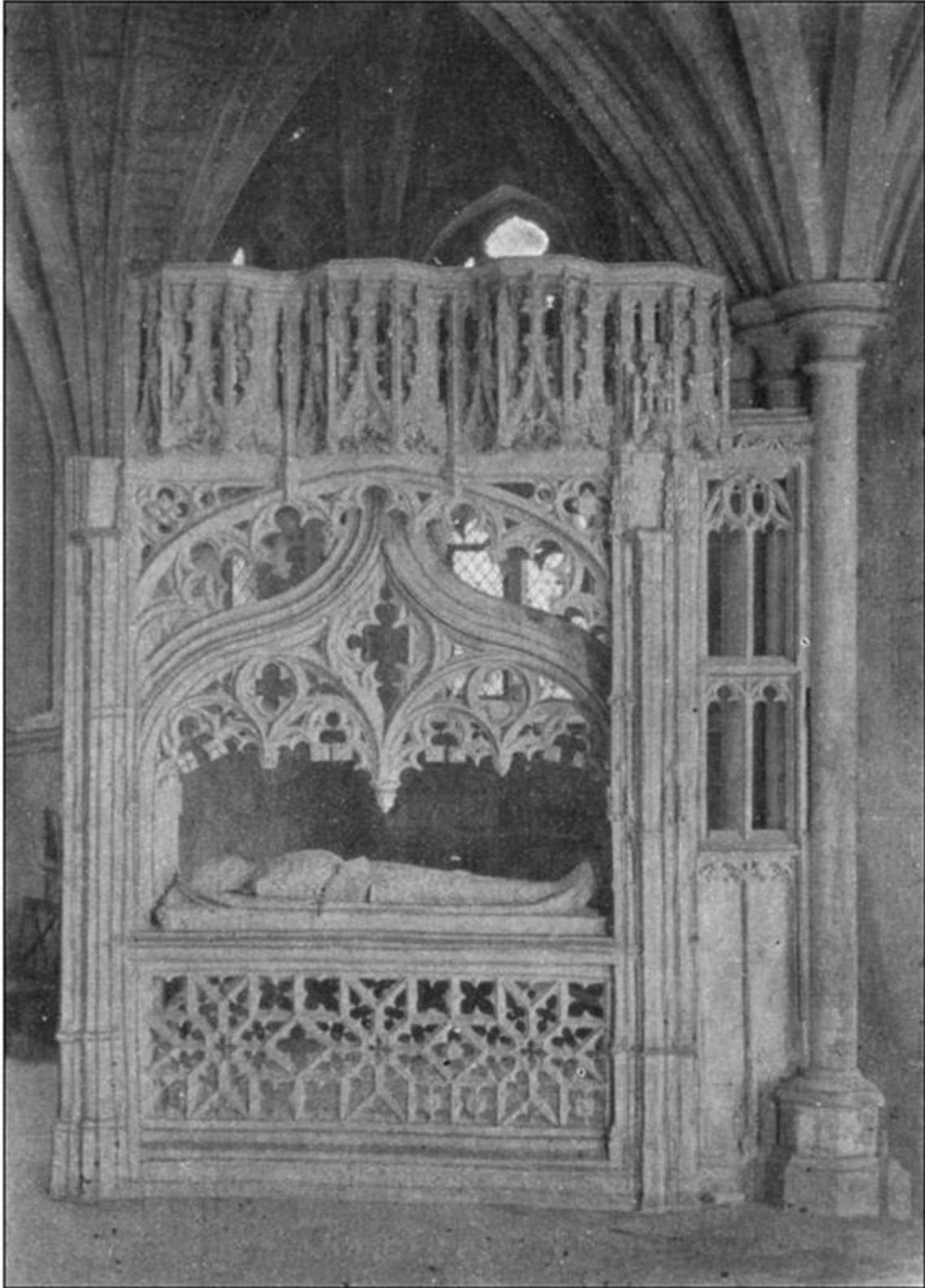
A curious feature in the chapel is the figure of Lord Despenser under a canopy on the top of the chapel, kneeling in prayer, with his face turned towards the high altar. The canopy is very rich, supported by four slender shafts, and further enriched with carved pinnacles. The figure is probably unique, in such a position.^[27] It is represented as wearing the martial equipment that was usual towards the end of the fourteenth century.

This chapel may have been built by the same builders as the Founder's Chapel on the opposite side of the choir, but some variety of treatment is very noticeable. The cresting is different in scale on the two sides (portions of it are modern insertions). Owing to the non-correspondence of the panelling in the lowest portion with the open work in the next tier, it has been thought that the upper portion is slightly later in point of date than that upon which it is built.

The chapel derives its name from its dedication to the Trinity as well as to St. Mary. At the east end of the chapel are traces of mural painting. Some of these represent the symbols of the Trinity, others the coronation of the Virgin Mary.

Other tombs of interest in the church will be found in making the circuit of the ambulatory. The first of these is the tomb of *Sir Guy de Brien* [D]. It has a central position in the stone screen-work which separates the chapel of St. Margaret from the north ambulatory. Sir Guy married Elizabeth, the widow of Hugh, Lord Despenser. The tomb is very similar in design to the Despenser tomb over against which it is placed. The knight is represented at full length, clad in his armour, with a lion at his feet. A vault-like canopy, still showing traces of the blue paint with which it was decorated, rises over the effigy. The monument is very lofty in proportion to its width, is full of rather heavy detail, and, though worthy of careful inspection, will not bear comparison with the Despenser tomb opposite.

The knight's lady elected to be buried in the tomb of her second husband, Lord Hugh Despenser, who, like Sir Guy, was a liberal benefactor to the Abbey.



[94]

Photo. A.H. Hughes.

THE "WAKEMAN CENOTAPH." [ToList](#)

Three panels facing the aisle have shields with arms upon them. The central shield bears the arms of Sir Guy de [95]Brien, and the other two bear his arms and those of the Montacutes, his wife having been Elizabeth Montacute.

The next chapel, that of St. Edmund, contains, lying across the eastern half of the entrance, a magnificent tomb which goes by the name of the *Cenotaph of Abbot Wakeman* [E]. It is not known when the tomb was built, but it is apparently earlier than Wakeman's time, who was abbot from 1531 to the dissolution of the monastery in 1539. Certainly Wakeman is not buried here, for he became the first bishop of Gloucester, and was buried at Forthampton.

The tomb is peculiarly beautiful, and consists of a slab supported by a rich piece of open or pierced work, in the pattern of which may be seen three crosses. Upon the slab rests a representation of the corpse of a monk undergoing the process of decay, and being devoured by various lizards, snails, &c. It is rather a gruesome subject for contemplation, reminding one of some of the drawings in the Dance of Death at Basle. Immediately over the body, in the centre of the tomb, is a massive ogee arch, richly foliated, from which descends a rather cumbrous pendant—itsself ogee in form—which divides the main arch into equal parts, or arches, with rounded heads. These arches are again subdivided into two smaller round-headed arches, full of very fine carved work.

The front of the tomb, as seen from the ambulatory, is composed of a very fine arch which springs from the piers at the side. Its lower edge is foliated, and the spandrils are enriched with quatrefoils.

At the top of all is a projecting canopy in three main sections—a portion of the rest is gone—all of very delicate and intricate carved work.

In the south ambulatory in the middle one of the three chapels there is a tomb to *Richard Cheltenham* [I], who was abbot from 1481-1509. It is a table tomb in the Perpendicular style, with very rich tracery enriched with quatrefoils and shields. A depressed arch forms a canopy, in the spandrils of which are the abbot's initials R.C. and his pastoral staff.

Almost opposite to this is a depressed arch which supports a mass of delicate work decorated with vine-leaves and grapes. Over this are many canopied niches (much mutilated). The images they once contained have been destroyed. Under the [96]arch is now a coffin of Purbeck marble, with a cross on the lid, and the inscription "*Johannes Abbas hujus loci.*"

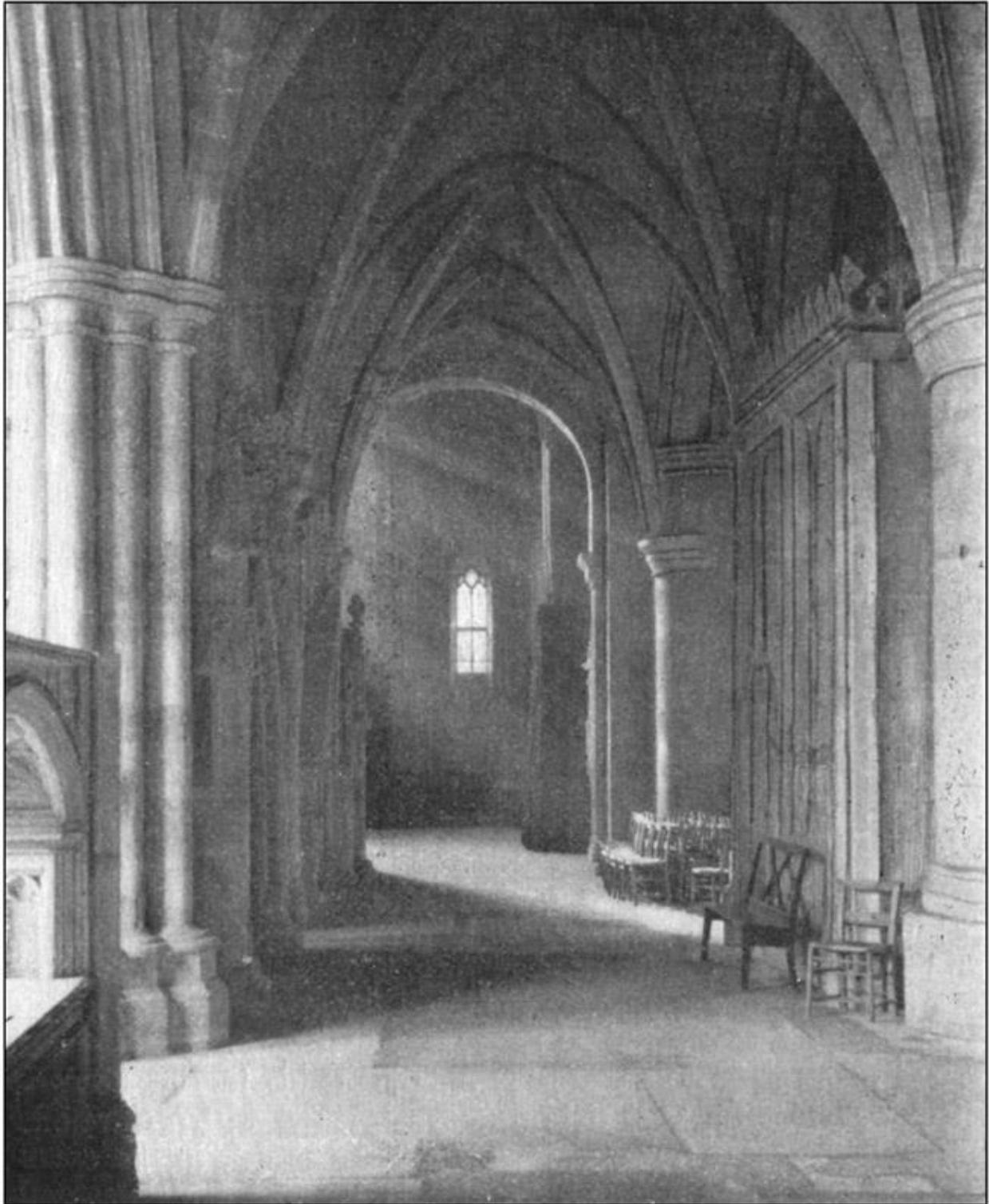


Photo. A.H. Hughes.

THE SOUTH CHOIR AISLE, LOOKING WEST. [ToList](#)

It is generally assumed that this is the coffin of John Cotes, who died in 1347. The tomb [H] is supposed to be that [97]referred to by Leland as that in which some of the

remains of Hugh Despenser the younger, the Earl of Gloucester who was hanged and quartered in Hereford in 1326—just three months before the murder of Edward II. in Berkeley Castle—were interred. Close to this tomb, but more to the east, is a fifteenth century tomb, presumably that of an abbot, but his name is unknown.

To the east of the door of the chapel which is now used as a vestry, is another tomb of an unknown abbot. The coffin lid bears a rich floriated cross, with a representation of an abbot at the one end, and that of a lamb at the other. The arch over the tomb is crocketed, and is enriched with a profusion of ball-flower ornament in the moulding. The finial is very heavy, though beautifully wrought to represent birds and foliage. At the spring of the arch is the very curious figure of a devil. Two pinnacles^[28] at the sides have most grotesque faces at the corners instead of the conventional foliage. This idea has been adopted in the decoration of the tomb-recesses in the nave in Bristol Cathedral.

On the western side of the vestry door is a beautiful Early English tomb. The lid of the Purbeck marble coffin is inscribed "Alanus, Dominus Abbas" along the moulded edge, and a similar inscription is to be read at the right-hand end, "HIC IACET DOMINUS ALANUS ABBAS." This is the tomb of Alan, who was made Abbot here in 1187, after having previously been Prior at Canterbury. He was one of the most distinguished of the Abbots of Tewkesbury: he had known Thomas à Becket, and indeed wrote his biography. This tomb is no doubt the oldest monument in the church. The arch over it is a moulded trefoil arch, surmounted by a plain canopy of very simple and formal design. The top of the coffin bears a very beautiful cross.

Further westward, near to the south transept is a thirteenth century recessed arch, with pinnacles at either side and a decorated arch. The tomb has been removed. The floor has been laid with fragments of old encaustic tiles removed from other parts of the building.

Organs.—The church has two organs, both of which are noteworthy, viz., the old organ in the choir, of which the ^[98]interest is historical, and the Grove organ in the north transept, the chief interest in which, apart from its tone, is the perfection of its many modern mechanical contrivances.

The organ in the choir was brought to Tewkesbury in 1737 from Magdalen College, Oxford, and was placed on the then existing screen, where it remained till 1875. It was built by John Harris, the grandfather of René or Renatus Harris, for Magdalen College, Oxford. By Cromwell's orders it was removed to Hampton Court, and is said to have been played upon there by Milton, who was Cromwell's Secretary. In 1660 the organ went back to Oxford, and was repaired in 1672. In 1690 Renatus Harris contracted, for £150, to put it into thorough repair, and make it "an extraordinary instrument and the best old organ in England." In 1736-37 the Magdalen College organ was sold to the then organ committee of Tewkesbury.

Sixty years later (1796) a sum of £186 18s. 2d. was spent in painting the case, in repairs, and in the addition of a swell organ; and in 1848 it was enlarged by Willis at a cost of £322 15s. 8d. Little of the original work remains, with the exception of some of the diapasons, the principal, and the tin pipes in the choir front. The old organ is in constant use for ordinary evening services, and for the services on Sunday mornings and afternoons. For the Sunday evening services the Grove organ is generally used. Sometimes the two organs are used together.

The Grove organ is a very fine instrument, but it is more fitted for a concert-room than for the accompaniment of ordinary church music. It was given, as the brass tablet sets forth, "*To the greater glory of God, and to commemorate the Jubilee of the Queen in 1887.*" The specification is as follows:

CHOIR ORGAN (CC to C in alt^o., 61 notes).

1. Spitzflöte	8 ft.
2. *Viole Sourdine	8 ft.
3. *Lieblich Gedacht (<i>w</i>)	8 ft.
4. Gemshorn	4 ft.
5. *Zauber Flöte	4 ft.
6. Flautina	2 ft.
7. Clarionet	8 ft.

Accessory Stops.

1. Ventil.
2. Octave Coupler.
3. Pneumatic Piston, acting on No. 1 off and on.
4. Swell to Choir.
5. Tremulant.

[99] GREAT ORGAN (CC to C in alt^o., 61 notes).

1. Violone	16 ft.
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2. Great Open Diapason	8 ft.
3. Small Open Diapason	8 ft.
4. Claribel (w)	8 ft.
5. Octave	4 ft.
6. Flute Octavante	4 ft.
7. Quint Mixture,	12, 15.
8. †Great Mixture (4 ranks),	19, 22, 26, 29.
9. †Tromba	16 ft.
10. †Trumpet	8 ft.

Accessory Stops.

- | | | |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Sub-Octave Choir to Great. | 2. Swell to Great. | 3. Solo to Great. |
| 1. Ventil Flue to Quint Mixture. | | |
| 2. Ventil Flue Great Mixture and Reed. | | |

Two Pneumatic Pistons acting on Ventil placed beneath the keys as in the Choir.

Three Composition Pedals.

SWELL ORGAN (CC to C in alt^o., 61 notes).

The swell-box is made in three thicknesses, each of one inch. Between each thickness is a layer of felt.

1. Flauto Traverso	8 ft.
2. Open Diapason	8 ft.
3. *Viole d'Orchestre	8 ft.
4. *Voix Celeste	8 ft.
5. Geigen	4 ft.
6. †Mixture—3 ranks,	15, 19, 22.

- | | |
|--------------------|--------|
| 7. †Contra Posaune | 16 ft. |
| 8. †Horn | 8 ft. |
| 9. Oboe | 8 ft. |

Accessory Stops.

Octave Coupler. Ventil Flues to Geigen, Mixture, and Reeds.

Two Pneumatic Pistons acting on Ventils, as in the Great Organ.

Tremulant. Three Composition Pedals.

SOLO ORGAN (CC to C in alt^o., 61 notes).

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Harmonic Flute | 8 ft. |
| 2. *Violoncello | 8 ft. |
| 3. †Tuba | 8 ft. |
| 4. Voix Humaine (metal, enclosed in a Swell-box) | 8 ft. |

Accessory Stops.

Octave Coupler. Tremulant.

Two Ventils, two Pneumatic Pistons, as in the other manuals.

PEDAL ORGAN (CCC to F, 30 notes).

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| 1. *Harmonic Bass (<i>w</i>) | 32 ft. |
| 2. Great Bass (<i>w</i>) | 16 ft. |
| 3. *Dolce Bass (<i>w</i>) | 16 ft. |
| 4. Great Flute (<i>w</i>) | 8 ft. |
| 5. †Bombarde | 16 ft. |

* Stops thus marked are of novel construction, being fitted with prolongement harmonique.
† Stops marked thus are on heavy wind.
w Stops marked thus are of wood.

Pedal				Couplers:[100]
1.	Choir	to		Pedals.
2.	Great	to		Pedals.
3.	Swell	to		Pedals.
4.	Solo	to		Pedals.
Manual				Couplers:
1.		Choir		Octave.
2.		Swell		Octave.
3.		Solo		Octave.
4.	Choir	Sub-Octave	to	Great.
5.		Swell	to	Great.
6.		Solo	to	Great.
7.	Swell to Choir.			

The Tremulants are set in action by one pedal, or by the use of the draw-stops, separately or collectively.
Pneumatic action is applied to the Organ throughout, except to the Choir Organ, which is direct action.

Church Plate.—The oldest pieces of plate are two silver chalices, one dated 1576, the other 1618. There is also a paten of the latter date. A flagon weighing 54 ounces was given to the church by the bachelors and maidens of the borough in 1688, and another was given in 1724. Curiously they are both fitted with whistle-handles. There are also two cut-glass cruets, said to be of the fifteenth century.

The Church Registers.—These date from 1559, containing baptisms to 1598 and marriages to 1574, but are copies on parchment of an older register (on paper) now lost. Another register, on paper, dates from 1595, and contains baptisms down to 1610, marriages to 1629, and burials to 1608. Thenceforward, with few exceptions, the registers are complete. The register of baptisms, 1607-1629, contains a quaint composition:

"Lo, heare thou maiest with mortall eie beholdeThy name recorded by a mortall wighte;But if thou canst looke but spiritualieUnto that God which gives such heavenly sighteThou maiest behold with comfort to thy souleThy name recorded in the heavenly roule.And therefore praie the Register of heavenTo write thy name within the booke of life;And also praie thy sinns maie be forgeven,And that thou maiest flee

all ceare and strife: That when thy mortall bodies shall have end, Thy soule maie to the immortal bliss ascende.

"*Per me*, GUILIELMUS PARKE,
1609."

[101] **Arms of the Abbey.**—The arms are gules, within a border argent, a cross engrailed or, and are so given by Willis in his *Seals of Parliamentary Abbeys*, and by Tanner in *Notitia Monastica*. In Sir Charles Isham's copy of the *Registrum Theokusburiaë*, in a window in the choir, and also on the old organ the border is omitted. It is also a disputed point whether the Abbot was a mitred prelate or not. Fuller, in his *Church History*, is in doubt about it, while Bishop Godwin admits that some of the Abbots sat in Parliament. The Abbots, without enjoying any prescriptive right, were summoned to Parliament in the reigns of Henry III., Edward I., and Edward II., and the last Abbot (Wakeman) was certainly summoned as a mitred Abbot. It may be that the Abbot received the dignity in the time of Abbot Strensham, who died in 1481.

Old Tiles.—In the Founder's Chapel (1397) are some tiles containing the arms of Fitz-Hamon (a lion rampant), impaled with the arms of the Abbey, a cross engrailed, and showing the head of a crosier above the shield in the centre. In the Warwick chantry there is to be seen a set of tiles with the arms of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Worcester, in whose honour the chapel was built. The arms are a fess between four crosslets with a crescent for difference. There are also some in the Trinity Chapel, showing the arms of the Despensers, impaled with those of Burghersh. Other tiles found in the church at different times give the arms of De Clare, Despenser, Berkeley, De Warrenne, De Bohun, Corbet, and De la Zouch.

ABBOTS OF TEWKESBURY.

Giraldus (1102-1109), previously Abbot of Cranbourn, was the first Abbot of the Benedictine foundation. Deprived by Henry I. in 1109.

Robert I. (1110-1124). In his time the greater part of the Abbey as it stands was finished, and dedicated in 1123.

Benedict (1124-1137).

Roger (1137-1161).

Fromundus (1162-1178). No new Abbot was instituted till—

[102] **Robert II.** (1182-1183).

Alan (1187-1202). His tomb is in the south ambulatory of the choir. He was a friend of Thomas à Becket, having previously been Prior of St. Saviour's, Canterbury.

Walter (1202-1213), previously Sacrist of the monastery. He was succeeded by—

Hugh (1214), who had been the Prior. Dying in a year, his successor was Bernard, but the latter was never instituted.

Peter (1216-1231) was a monk from Worcester.

Robert Forthington (1232-1254), or **Robert III.** had previously been Prior. A tomb ascribed to him is in the south ambulatory.

Thomas de Stokes (1254-1275) had been Prior of St. James, Bristol.

Richard de Norton (1276-1282).

Thomas Kempsey (1282-1328).

John Cotes (-1347).

Thomas de Legh (1347-1361).

Thomas Chesterton (1361-1389).

Thomas Parker, or Pakare (1389-1421).

William Bristow, or de Bristol (1421-1442).

John de Abingdon (1442-), who was probably identical with

John de Salis, or Galys.

John Strensham, or Streynsham (-1481). He was Abbot at the time of the Battle of Tewkesbury.

Richard Cheltenham (1481-1509).

Henry Beoly, or Bealy (1509-), was Abbot in 1526.

John Walker (d. 1531).

John Wich, Wyche, or Wakeman (1531-1539). This ecclesiastic was the last Abbot of Tewkesbury. He, unlike the Abbot of Gloucester, seems to have been in no wise unwilling to surrender his Abbey. In return he obtained a pension of £266 13s. 4d., and also the house and park at Forthampton. When, later, Gloucester was made a bishopric, he was the first bishop. He was buried at Forthampton.

FOOTNOTES:

[7]In point of actual size the Tewkesbury piers are 30 feet 8 inches high, and 6 feet 3 inches in diameter; while the piers at Gloucester are 30 feet by 6 feet. Those at Malvern are considerably less in height.

[8]This boss represents the Virgin as being present at the Table.

[9]The ball-flower here as well as that in the vestry differs from that in the neighbourhood, as there is a curious little side-twist or kink in it.

[10]Mr. W.H. St. John Hope's description of this quoted *in extenso* in "Gloucester" (Cathedral Series) is most interesting, and should be carefully studied.

[11]Letters in brackets refer to the plan at the end.

[12]This Transept was used from 1813-17 as a temporary National School.

[13]The columns are, with the exception of one which is round, roughly hexagonal.

[14]In some plans this chapel is ascribed to St. Nicholas.

[15]The arch of this chamber shows distinct traces of fire, not mentioned in any records, and the staircase to the tower, which then communicated with this chamber, shows traces for a short distance on the stonework.

[16]The same moulding is found at Durham in the doorway from the nave into the cloisters, but there it is much mutilated; it is also found at St. Joseph's Chapel, Glastonbury, and in various forms in the West of England.

[17]It is not quite certain whether Sir Guy is actually buried here.

[18]It is generally considered to be that dedicated to St. John the Baptist. The other altar in this chapel may have been dedicated to St. George, though the chapel of the latter was probably one of those in the nave.

[19]The dedication of this Norman chapel, like that of several others here, is not known.

[20]The choir at Gloucester is 140 feet long and 33 feet wide.

[21]The sun was a favourite badge of Edward IV., and is said to have been adopted in consequence of the appearance of three suns before the battle of Mortimer's Cross. It appears upon some of his coins.

[22]The altar-stone at Gloucester was at one time used to pave the south porch, and is now in the crypt.

[23]The safety of the old glass has been ensured by a protective external window of rolled glass let in the mullions from the outside. This was done in 1889.

[24]This Gilbert de Clare is said to have had a copy of Magna Charta and the Charta de Foresta made and deposited in the Abbey.

[25]The floor of the upper part was never flat, and was in all probability never intended for use.

[26]Heraldically speaking.

[27]Henry VII. left instructions in his will that a kneeling effigy of himself should be placed on the top of the Confessor's shrine at Westminster.

[28]The western pinnacle was carved locally in 1825-8, and is a very careful piece of work.

[103]

DEERHURST.



Photo. R.W. Dugdale.

DEERHURST PRIORY CHURCH, FROM THE SOUTH. [ToList](#)

DEERHURST. [ToC](#)

Deerhurst, or Deorhurst—the wood or grove of wild beasts, as its etymology implies—lies close to Tewkesbury, and the visitor to the latter must on no account omit to pay a visit to the older building. It may be reached by a pleasant walk through meadows on the left bank of the Severn, by the road or by a path across the fields.

The Priory church of Deerhurst is one of the oldest buildings of any importance that yet remain in use in England. Its exact date is more or less a matter of conjecture, but it seems certain from documentary evidence, which is still accessible, that in the ninth century the Abbey or Priory was in a prosperous condition—the document referred to

above being a grant of lands in Gloucestershire and Worcestershire to the Abbey in 804. No earlier authentic evidence than this exists, though a *lapsus calami* of Leland (who credits the Venerable Bede with an acquaintance with Deerhurst about the year 700) would seem to give it an earlier date. From the earliest time Deerhurst—situated where it is, so near that great highway the Severn, and occupying a position on the direct line of traffic by road between Worcester and Gloucester, must have had an important part to play. Legend has it that Edmund Ironside and Canute, intent on fighting a duel after Essendune, met at Olney in 1016, but settled matters without coming to blows, and later tradition affirms that this meeting took place in the meadow—once an island or eyot, hence its present name—called the Naight.

Tradition, again, has it that the Abbey suffered from the Danes, and this seems likely enough, seeing that they were encamped at Cirencester for fully a year. Werstan, one of [106]the monks who escaped from the Danes, is said by Leland to have founded a cell at Malvern, and was later murdered by the Danes in his own chapel there. In the windows of Malvern Priory he is described as "Sanctus Werstanus Martir," but little else is known about him.

The Abbey, though small, was richly endowed with land, and is said to have been possessed of nearly forty thousand acres. Its wealth in landed property was the cause of its being transferred by Edward the Confessor in 1054-56 to the great French Abbey of St. Denis; and what was not so transferred was mostly given by the King, together with the Manor of Pershore and other possessions, to his Abbey of St. Peter at Westminster, which was then building.

The Abbey lost its importance when it became an alien priory, and its landed possessions, which had once surpassed those of the abbeys at Gloucester and at Winchcombe, were dwarfed to very scanty dimensions. It suffered, too, in prestige, having become a priory, and was constantly being harried by successive monarchs.

We find that the Conqueror confirmed the grant of the Abbey of Deerhurst to St. Denis, but that King John confiscated its revenues. In 1225 Pope Honorius III. by a Bull approved that the Priory should be perpetual and conventual. In virtue of this the Prior could claim not to come into the King's hands, but it was many years before this claim was barely recognised. In this same year the Prior was again in possession of the Priory and its lands; but in 1250 (*temp.* Henry II.), the Priory was sold to Richard, Duke of Cornwall, who seems to have driven out the monks and destroyed the greater part of their buildings. Later in the same reign, 1260, the Abbot of St. Denis again got possession of the Priory.

In 1295 Edward I. took possession of all the existing alien priories for the sake of the revenue they would bring into his exchequer. Edward III. [29] again despoiled the monks of what was theirs, and his grandson, Richard II., followed in his steps.

The Priory had a respite from such continued harrings with the accession of Henry IV. (1399). This king took [107]possession of it as an alien Priory, but immediately handed it over to William Forester, the then Prior, with the stipulation that in the event of a war with France the King should receive a sum of money equal to that which in time of peace would be paid to the Abbey of St. Denis. With halcyon days like these the Priory set about rebuilding what had been destroyed, and works were undertaken—much of which is standing at the present time.

Henry V. by charter in 1419 confirmed the policy of Henry IV. in giving the Prior all the rights and privileges enjoyed by William Forester, and Henry V. acknowledged the claim of the Priory to be conventual and perpetual, and as such, not to come into the King's hands. However, one king proposes, another disposes. Henry VI. in 1463, while confirming all existing rights, made the Priory a denizen priory with the same status as all other similar English foundations. But this change was followed by yet another in four years' time. Henry VI. being the founder of Eton College, and King's College, Cambridge, was in want of funds, and he relieved the pressure on his exchequer by appropriating the possessions of the Priory, and handing part of them to his royal College at Eton, and part (in 1422) to the already rich Abbey at Tewkesbury. Much litigation followed with Eton, and in 1469 the Priory was united and annexed by Carpenter, Bishop of Worcester, to the monastery at Tewkesbury, with the stipulation that the "Abbot of Tewkesbury was to find and maintain there one monk in priest's orders, to be called Prior or Warden, four other monks, and one secular priest daily to perform divine service in that priory."

The independence of Deerhurst was now at an end, and little is heard of it again. At the Dissolution, like many of the Tewkesbury possessions, it became private property, the site, the buildings and the tithes being conveyed to George Throgmorton, a local personage, who became the lay impropiator. The tithes passed later into the hands of the family of Cassey, of Wightfield Court; but the lands became the property of the Coventry family, and at the end of the seventeenth century gave the title to Viscount Deerhurst, the fifth Baron. At the Dissolution Deerhurst became a curacy, and remained so till 1682, the advowson then being transferred from lay hands to those of the Bishop of Worcester.

[108]EXTERIOR.

Of the exterior of the church there is not much to be said. The chief feature is the **Tower**. It has been reduced in height, probably at the time that the steeple was blown down in 1666, but no churchwardens' accounts of that date remain. It is 70 feet high, 21 feet 8 inches from east to west, and 14 feet 4 inches from north to south, with a slight batter to the walls, which at the base are 32 inches in thickness. For about 35 feet or so the masonry is Saxon work, but has been subsequently severely handled, especially on

the west side. The east side contains a wall-plate of early date, and more of the interesting early work. The upper part is later work, having ashlar quoins at the four angles.

The entrance door is a Pointed arch of the fourteenth century date inserted within the earlier round-headed arch, of which the outer edges have considerably crumbled away. Above the arch is a piece of stonework, similar to one above the long, narrow window, considered by some to be a mutilated carved head, but with more real likeness to a broken mechanical contrivance for hoisting up weighty goods into the upper part of the tower. On the right of the entrance door is the door which now gives entrance to the belfry. In many parts of the exterior there are traces of the coarse herring-bone work so prevalent in Saxon masonry. At the north-west and south-west angles of the aisles are gargoyles, that at the north-west corner being the better preserved.

The church was rough-cast all over in the early part of this century, but was restored in 1861-62 to practically its present appearance. Part of the tower, that to the west, has a battlement, while the rest has a low gabled roof. The windows in the belfry are decorated in character, but much of the masonry near them seems to be re-used stone from other parts.

By obtaining entrance to the farmyard upon which the east end abuts, traces of the original apsidal termination may be seen. It is much to be regretted that the church precincts are so built upon that examination is difficult.

INTERIOR.

The western entrance is situate in the tower front, and by three doorways gives access to the nave.

The Nave.—The nave of the present church measures [109]60 feet by 21 feet, including what was the original choir, which was under the central tower, and which, from the plan, must have been 20 feet in length. The nave proper would be 38 feet by 21 feet, making allowance for the thickness of the choir arch wall. It is more than probable that the wall which separated the choir from the nave was in character like the present eastern wall, with a spacious and lofty arch spanning the opening, which gave access to the apsidal eastern end. Traces of such an arch were found at the restoration of the church in 1861-62. As was the case at Tewkesbury, Gloucester, and elsewhere, the nave was the parish church, and the choir and the rest of the building eastwards the private chapel of the Priory. Small though the original nave was—for the present aisles are later additions—it was, if the walls are of the original height, unusually lofty for a church of its date. The original nave had transepts, as shown in plan on page 118, with a room, probably a sacristy, to the east of the north transept and a similar room or a chapel at the east of the south transept.

On either side of the nave the original walls have been pierced, and an arcade of three good Early English arches was inserted in the thirteenth century. It will be noted that the easternmost of the three arches on each side is slightly wider in span than the other two. All the capitals differ in their details. Over these arches on either side is a triangular opening about 18 feet from the floor level, similar to the opening in the west end of the nave. The edges of these openings are left quite square, *i.e.*, there is no splaying.

The clerestory windows are, for the most part, early fifteenth century, and replaced the early windows, which may have been of circular form.

At the west end of the nave there are several very curious features. The arch of the doorway is a plain, round-headed arch with its edges left quite square, and the impost is plain with the exception of a hollow immediately below the abacus. In height the doorway is 10 feet, and in width 5½ feet, and it leans slightly to the north. Above this doorway, in the corners of the west wall, are two impost members or brackets, similar to those in the chancel, which may have been intended to support the floor joists of a chamber or gallery at this end of the nave. Not far above these brackets is a triangular opening similar to those in the north and south walls of the nave, and through which, from the room in the tower, a view is obtained of the nave generally. It is on the same level as those in the nave. To the right of this is a blocked-up round-headed doorway, which once gave access from the room in the tower on this level to a gallery at the east end of the nave. The jambs are each of two similar blocks of stone.

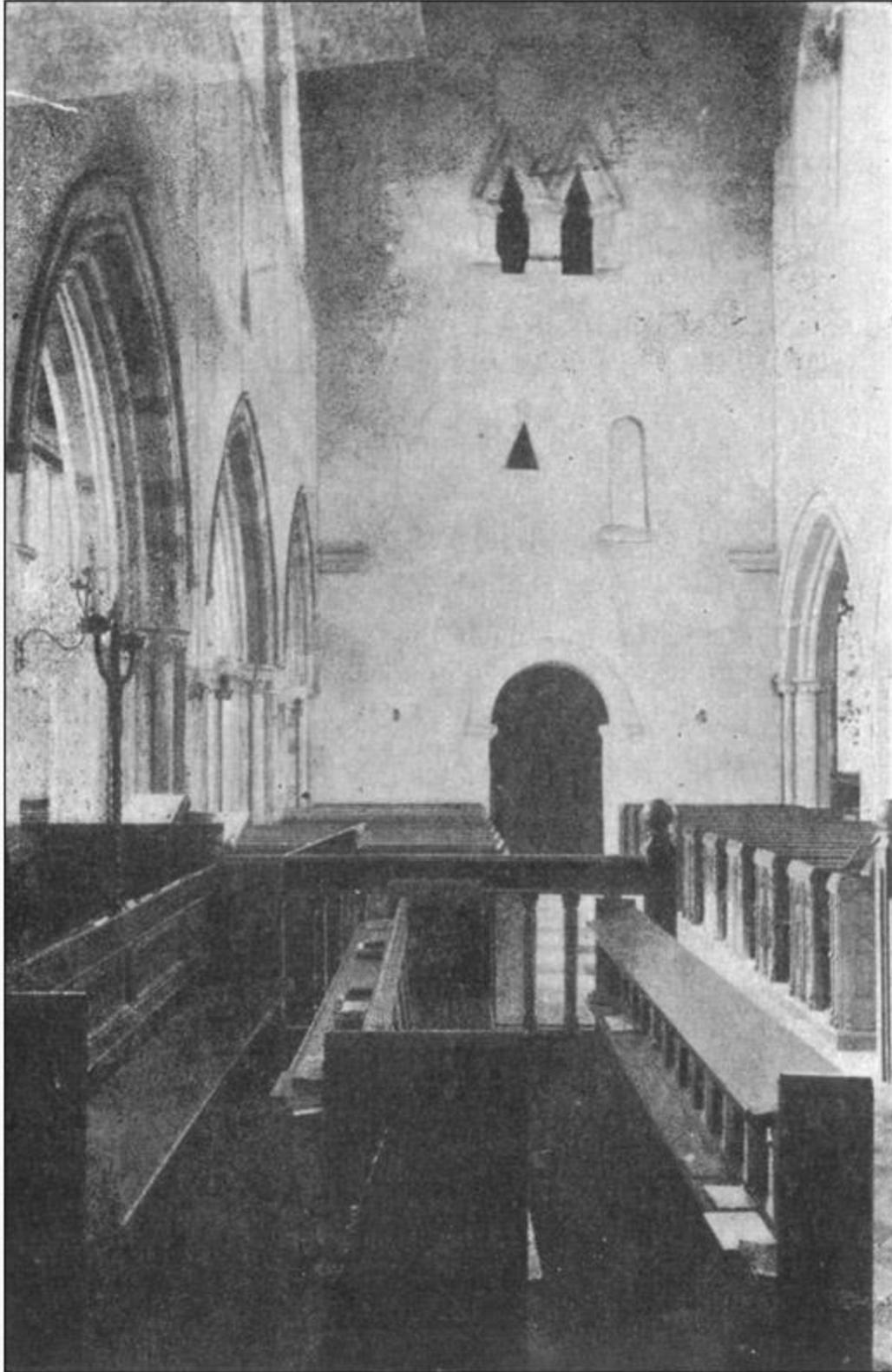


Photo. R.W. Dugdale.

INTERIOR, LOOKING WEST.[ToList](#)

[111]Above this, in the centre of the upper part of the west wall of the nave, is perhaps the most curious architectural feature of the church. It is a two-light window, each light having a head formed of an isosceles triangle. The outer jambs, as also the broad central massive pier, are slightly fluted, and in some of these flutings is a bar in relief. On the church side the bars are inserted in the upper part of the hollow; on the tower side they are in some cases at the top, in others in the lower half.

The following dimensions show how massive is this piece of primitive work. The sill on which the window is built is of stone concealed by plaster. Each light in its widest part is 18 inches, 13 inches between the plinths on the sill. The plinths are 14 inches in thickness, and that of the central pier is 21 inches. The central pier itself is a trifle shorter than the jambs, 1 foot 8 inches, but this difference is made up by a much more massive impost, the central impost being 9 inches thick as compared with 8 inches in the case of the others. Each impost is, as it were, in square-edged layers, each layer overhanging the one below it. The head of each opening is formed of two single stones so cut that they meet at an angle of about 30 degrees. These stones are 11¼ inches in thickness, and 3 feet 6 inches long on the outside edges. In the angle between the two portions of the window they measure 3 feet 1½ inches. They are carried right through the wall, with a plain label almost square in section.

Above the window, resting on the label points is an oblong block of stone which is thought at one time to have been painted, as no inscription can be traced.

Near the tower end is a portion of the Perpendicular timbered roof, and the rest of the roofing of the nave and chancel is modern work designed upon the basis of the older example.

The **South Aisle** was added in the twelfth century. The south wall of the south transept was continued to the west, the greater part of the west wall of this transept being removed, [112]a segmental arch being inserted exactly where the oak-screen is now. The wall from the original south-east corner of the tower was carried southwards to meet the new wall mentioned above. Next, the solid walls of the nave were pierced with three unequal openings, and, from the piers thus left, arches were carried across the new south aisle to the new south wall of the church, and the walls of the inner porch seem to have been pierced with arches about the same time, one being also made to span the space from the extreme end of the original wall of the nave to the new south-east corner of the tower. A turret and staircase seem next to have been made outside the church in the angle thus made by the new works, but the plan seems to have been soon altered by the carrying out of the west wall of the aisle till it was flush with the west front. The then external doorway into the turret became an internal one, but has been blocked up, access to the tower staircase being obtained by the narrow door in the west front. The remains of Transitional Norman work in the south aisle are scanty, but of extreme interest.

In the thirteenth century the **North Aisle** was constructed, and made to correspond with the south aisle, though it is slightly narrower. Its beautiful capitals inspired the workers to do their best and harmonise those in the south aisle arcade with those in the other aisle.

The walls of the nave were carried up to receive the clerestory windows about the year 1400, but as to their original height it is only possible to conjecture.

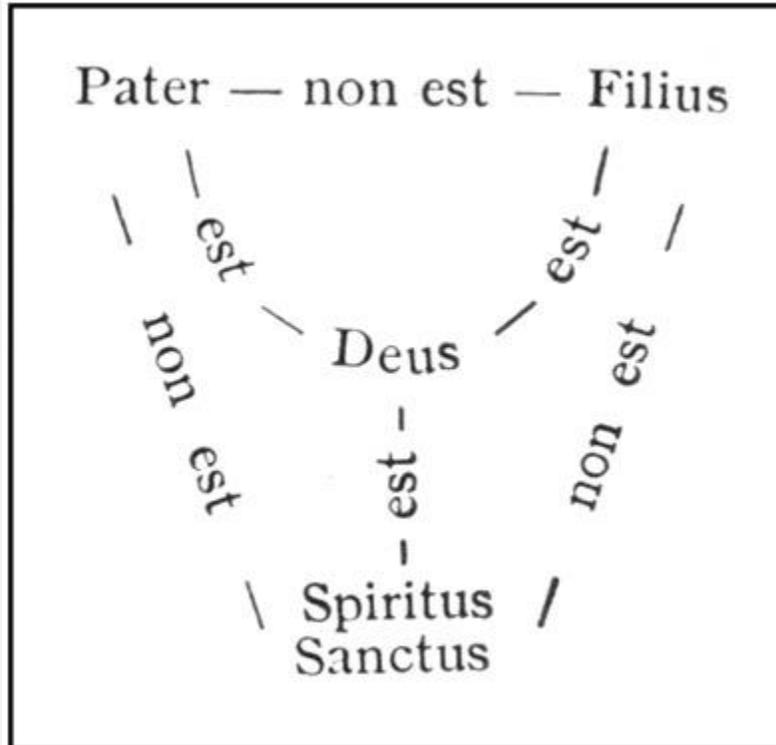
The Decorated windows of the north aisle all differ in style and date, that in the north transept being the earliest. The westernmost window in the south aisle is approximately of the same date, and contains the only glass in the church that is of any interest. The other windows in this south aisle are Perpendicular, and are high in the wall owing to the existence of the cloister, a blocked-up door into which can be seen under the westernmost window. Some fifteenth century oak seats in this aisle are worth notice.

In the north aisle the north-west window of four lights (by Wailes) is a memorial to Hugh Edwin Strickland (1853). The head of the window contains the fanciful device relating to the Persons of the Trinity, and below are Noah, Aaron, David, and St. John the Baptist.

[113]In the lowest tier are Adam and Eve, Abraham and Isaac, the Annunciation, the Baptism of Christ in the Jordan.

The next window (by Clayton and Bell) is a memorial window erected by the Rev. G. Butterworth, till lately Vicar of Deerhurst.

In the north wall near the font is a blocked-up doorway, containing another memorial to a member of the Strickland family.



[ToList](#)

Both the aisles of the nave had undoubtedly at one time altars at their eastern ends. The north aisle contains three aumbries and the south aisle has one, probably removed from elsewhere in the church. It contains a piscina and a small circular recess or reliquary in its eastern side.

The north aisle contains a very fine specimen of a brass dated 1400, which records the death of Sir John Cassy, Chief Baron of the Exchequer in the reign of Edward III., and his wife Alicia. The inscription runs (in finely cut black letters, with beautiful ornaments between each word), "Hic jacet Johēs Cassy miles quondam Capitalis Baro Sccii (*i.e.* Scaccarii) Regis qui obiit xxiii^o die Maii Anno Dñi MCCCC, et Alicia uxor ejus. quór añabus ppēr deus." The Chief Baron is represented in his robes, with a lion at his feet; his wife in a long loose flowing dress, fastened at the wrists and round the neck. She has her dog at her feet, with his name "Tirri" engraved upon his side. Only one other instance exists of a pet's name being thus handed down.^[30] Above the figures is a rich canopy, and a figure of the Virgin and St. Anne, a figure of St. John the Baptist being unfortunately missing.

Close to this are one or two other brasses. One of Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Bruges, Esq., of Coverle, and wife of William Cassey, Esq., of Whyghtfylde, and then of Walter Nowden, Esq., 1525. Another small brass in the floor of the doorway to the choir records that "Here lyeth the body of Edward Guy, gent., who married Francis the

eldest daughter of John Gotheridge, Esq., and had by her six sonnes and one daughter, and was here buried the sixt day of Dec. A°. 1612."

[114]Near to the Cassy brass is an old chest, and a stone coffin with a foliated cross upon its lid. This had been under the pavement till the 1861-62 restoration—hence its excellent state of preservation.

The blocked door in the east wall of this north transept once gave access to the sacristy.

The Font.—The font, one of the most interesting points in this interesting church, has had a curious history. A lady in the neighbourhood (Miss Strickland, of Apperley Court) found in a garden close to the river, in 1870, an upright carved stone. It occurred to this lady that the stone was in reality the stem or lower part of the font then in Longdon church, in Worcestershire, as the ornament seemed to be similar. The Vicar of Longdon was then asked to give up the bowl portion which had been conveyed in 1845 from a Deerhurst farmyard to Longdon church. The request was graciously entertained, and Longdon church received in exchange a new font. The two portions—probably long separated—were then replaced as they are now to be seen in Deerhurst, and the font previously in use there was given to Castle Morton church.



Photo. R.W. Dugdale.

FONT.[ToList](#)

The bowl is, like other early fonts, rather tub-shaped, made of coarse-grained oolite, a Cotswold district stone, covered with uncommon ornamentation. It measures externally 28½ inches in diameter, internally 24 inches, and 21 inches in height. The ornamentation consists of eight panels, each containing spirals which form an endless pattern, as they conjoin with other similar lines. Mr. Westwood in the *Arch. Soc.*

Journal said of the ornament that it is "especially Irish, and is found in the finest of the most ancient illuminated Irish [115]copies of the Gospels, and in those which were executed in England under the influence of the Irish missionaries. Thus it is found in all the illuminated Gospels of St. Chad and Mac Regol (which is in the Bodleian Library and ascribed to 820 A.D.), and in the Gospels of Lindisfarne or Durham Book, but I do not recollect having seen it in manuscripts known to be more recent than the ninth century." The ornament of the running border was thought by the same writer to be a later addition; others deem it contemporary with the scroll work, and think the design may have been obtained from some Saxon goldsmith's work.

Whether the stem belongs to the bowl, or whether the stem ought not to be inverted, are perhaps questions of minor importance. The spiral ornament in both parts is exactly the same, an interlaced strap ornament occupying three out of the seven panels in the stem. The effect of a heptagonal stem on an octagonal base or plinth is certainly odd. The *base*, or step, is probably of the late fourteenth, or of the fifteenth century. Originally there was not a hole in the bottom to let the water drain away, but one in the side. There is no trace of any leaden lining to the font-bowl.

The Choir, with the destroyed sanctuary, had a total length of 38 feet, a breadth of 20 feet. The actual height of the choir cannot now be accurately estimated, though it seems to have been higher than that of the nave. The interior at present is all of the same height. The walls were apparently quite plain, and not pierced for any windows.

There were in the actual choir space four doorways, *i.e.*, a pair on the north and another pair on the south side. Of each pair one doorway gave access to the transept, and the other, in the earliest history of the church, to the open air. These doorways are quite plain, and are cut straight through the wall. Those on the south side and one on the north have lintels or level tops; the other has a straight lined arch composed of two long pieces of stone.

In each side wall of the choir, above these doorways, is an open arch, cut through the wall with a slightly projecting border at the sill, which is 10 feet or so above the level of the present pavement. The jambs are quite plain, with heavy impost members, slightly hollowed, and a square label, much damaged and defaced. These two archways were no doubt [116]made to admit a modicum of light to what must always have been a dimly lighted choir.

The eastern wall of the present chancel contains the arch (now blocked up) which formed the entrance to the apsidal sanctuary. This arch is very spacious, being 12 feet 3 inches wide between the capitals, and 20 feet high. It is composed of a single broad, flat-faced member, with well carved but primitive caps, supported by a semi-cylindrical shaft on either side. The plinth, or base, is but slightly moulded, and is 23 inches in height. The label is square and exceptionally prominent, springing from carved heads representing tusked animals (probably boars) of considerable size.

Above the arch is a Perpendicular window, which was probably inserted after the sanctuary had been removed, though it may have replaced an earlier opening. Between the sill of the window and the blocked-up arch there are impost members or brackets fixed in the wall, and abutting against the side walls, the mouldings which return being different in each. There were probably similar brackets in the western wall of the choir which has been removed, and they may have been supports for the floor of the central tower. On this same wall are two stone slabs about 4 feet by 3 feet, with pointed tops flanking the window, which look as if they were intended to block up the splayed openings of former and possibly still existing window openings, though they have been internally and externally blocked.

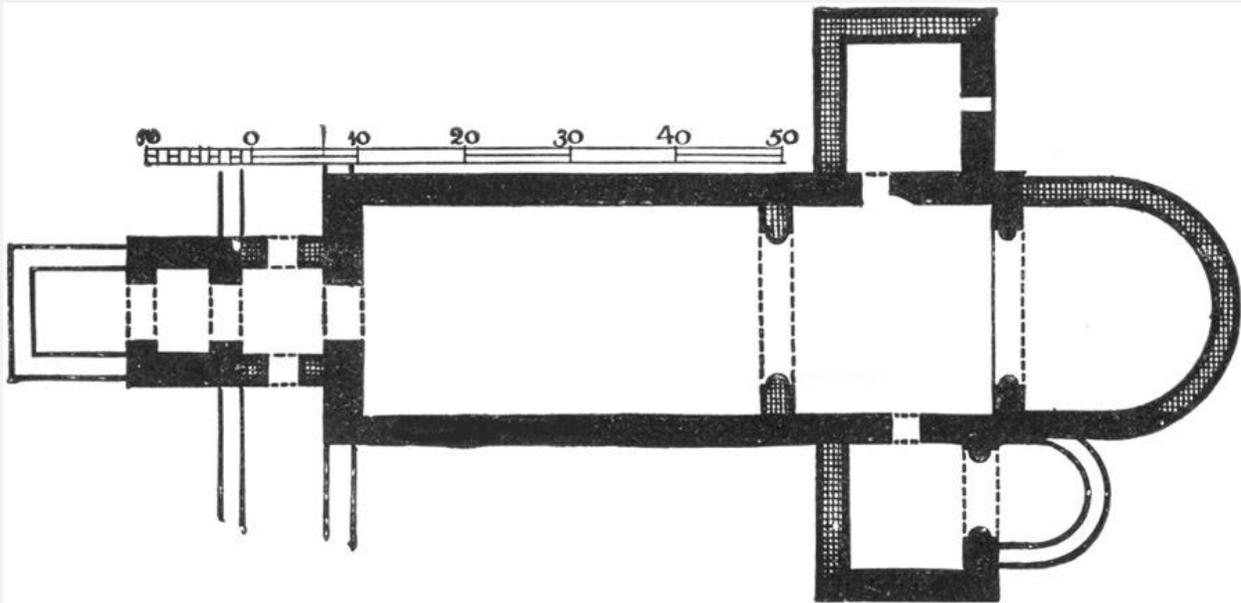
There is no trace in any account of the church as to how or when the eastern tower was removed or destroyed. Lyson's two drawings of the church show the choir portion considerably higher than the rest of the building, with a roof quite different in pitch. This might be due to the fact that the choir had been loftier than the nave, or to the partial removal of the masonry of this tower. It seems just a probable explanation that this tower fell towards the end of the fifteenth century—perhaps after a fire of which there are traces in the south east corner of the building—and in its fall did such damage to the sacristy, the apsidal sanctuary, and the chapel at the east of the south transept, that the brethren of Tewkesbury, of which abbey Deerhurst had become a cell in 1469, felt it to be beyond their means to restore the fabric. This, of course, is merely a theory, but it would account [117]satisfactorily for the structural alterations carried out about that time. The forced disuse of the old sanctuary would involve the blocking up of the choir arch which gave access to it, and also the making of an additional window in the then east wall of the chancel. As there was no tower to support, the west wall of the choir may have been removed and the rood-screen erected, the door of entrance to which still exists in the south aisle, unblocked. It is an open question when this west wall of the choir was removed. If it were done, as some have thought, in the twelfth or the thirteenth century, the removal may have been a predisposing cause of the fall of the tower.

The chancel contains some good oak seats and panelling which run all round the three available sides of the square. These were the seats for communicants, and the communion table until about sixteen years ago stood in the middle of the chancel. This Puritan arrangement was formerly not uncommon, but is now probably unique, seeing that Winchcombe church, where it once existed, has lately been "restored." Some of the panelling was part of a Jacobean pulpit, one panel of which, with the date 1604, is to be seen. The chancel rail is of carved wood, in keeping with the rest of the chancel furniture.

Mr. Micklethwaite in his Paper on Saxon Churches (*Arch. Journ.* vol. lxxiii.) refers to Deerhurst specially, and his remarks are, by his permission, here quoted, with one or two slight verbal alterations:

"The Plan shows that in its last Saxon form it was a two-towered church of like plan to the church at Dover, on the Castle Hill. The central tower has gone, but the western one remains, and is a very remarkable building. The plan of the church shows the side walls of the nave black as still existing, which in fact they do, but only the upper parts of them. They are carried by arcades of thirteenth century work. These may take the place of earlier ones, and the church may have had aisles at its first building. If it had, I suspect that it lost them as Brixworth did, and was without when the east part of the church was put into the form shown on the plan. That seems to have been about the beginning of the eleventh century, but it is certain that there is earlier work in the west end and in the tower, and probable that there also is [118] in the side walls of the nave. The presbytery was round-ended and wide-arched, as at Worth, and there is an arch in the east wall of the south transept leading to an altar place beyond. In the corresponding position on the other side (*i.e.*, in the north transept) is a doorway which has led to some chamber outside.

"The openings from the tower to the transepts on the floor lines are very small doorways, but there is an arch higher up on each side which looks as if it might have opened from an upper floor or gallery. [31]

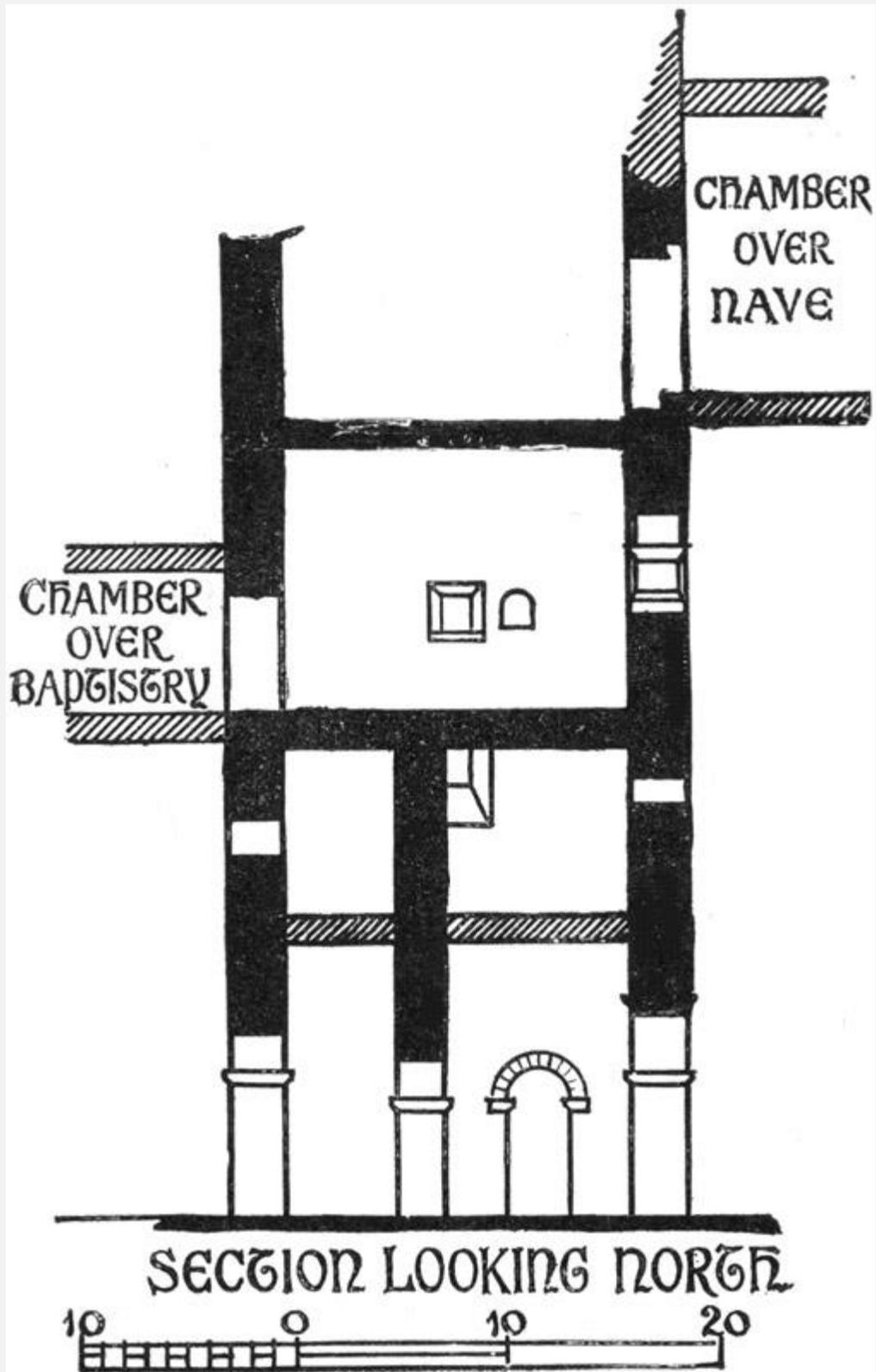


PLAN OF DEERHURST PRIORY CHURCH BEFORE THE CONQUEST.

By J.T. Micklethwaite, F.S.A., from "*The Archæological Journal*." [ToList](#)

"To the end of the Saxon time it was usual to make living-rooms in the towers and roofs of the churches, but the evidence of it is clearest in the fore-buildings of the early monastic churches. That at Deerhurst gives more points than are found together in any other single monument, but the parallels of all, except the division of the two lower stories of the tower, may be found elsewhere, and nearly all at Wearmouth and Brixworth.

[119] "Here is a section of the tower of Deerhurst looking north, with later mediæval work left out, and indications given of missing parts, of which those that remain supply the evidence.



THE TOWER.

From "The Archæological Journal." [To List](#)

"The tower is considerably larger from east to west than from north to south, and on the ground and second stories is divided into two unequal parts, the eastern being the larger. The eastern division has formed the usual porch of entrance from the fore-court, with an arch eastwards towards the church, and two small doorways north and south from the covered walks of the fore-court. These doorways were destroyed in the thirteenth century, or later, when the walls were cut away and pointed arches as wide as the chamber itself inserted. On the west, an arch rather lower than that towards the church leads to the western division, which was not the baptistery, but a sort of vestibule to it. The baptistery itself stood, in the usual way, west of the tower and in the midst of the fore-court. [120]A doorway of the thirteenth century now fills up the arch between it and the tower, which gives us the latest date up to which it can have stood.

"Ascent to the upper part of the tower must have been by wooden stairs or ladders in the western division. The western room on the second story probably had no use except as a landing. It received only a borrowed light from the baptistery, which equalled in height two stories of the tower. The eastern room was entered by a door from the other. It has windows on the north and south sides, and a triangular opening towards the church on the east. In the same wall, towards the north side, is the doorway which led to the gallery in the church, and which, I think, is an insertion of the tenth century or later.

"The third stage is now divided, but was originally one room, and that, as appears by the treatment of its details, an important one. I have suggested that it may have been used as a night quire. On the east is the very remarkable two-light window towards the church. There are windows in the middle of the north and south walls, and close by each is a round-headed recess very like those on the walls of the crypt at Ripon, and, I believe, like them, intended to hold lights.

"In the west wall is a doorway now towards space, but originally leading to an attic in the gable above the baptistery. This room cannot have been very convenient, but the treatment of its door-case marks it as one of some importance. Perhaps it was the abbot's room.

"Only part of the fourth stage remains, but enough to show that it was a single room like the one below; and on the east side, where the wall remains higher than elsewhere, is a doorway which led up one or two steps into the space between the ceiling and the roof of the nave. This seems to point to that loft having been used as the general dormitory.

"The tower must have gone up at least one more story, where the bells would hang, but that has all been replaced by later work.

"One reason for believing that the church at Deerhurst had aisles and lost them is that on each side of the nave in the Saxon wall, above the thirteenth century arches, is a three-cornered window like that from the second stage of the tower to the church, and looking as if it had served as a sort of [121]squint from some chamber outside, which

chamber is more likely to have been an attic in the roof of an aisle than anything else. If any such others existed at Deerhurst, there must have been separate access to them from the church or from outside, as they could not be reached from the tower."

THE MONASTIC BUILDINGS.

The chief remaining portion of the domestic buildings runs parallel with the wall on the right hand of the path leading from the gate in the churchyard to the west entrance of the church, and must have formed the east side of the larger cloister, as the corbels for the penthouse roof still exist in the walls, as they also do on the south wall of the church. Two doors into the cloister from the church, one at either end of the south aisle, have been blocked up.

The other sides of the cloister, which have entirely disappeared, probably comprised on the south side a refectory, and on the west side perhaps the Prior's apartments and a dormitory or infirmary. The humbler domestic buildings were probably to the east of the block composed of the church; and a smaller cloister, or at any rate a smaller quadrangle of buildings may have existed to the east of the present block now inhabited as a farm.

These farm buildings, which measure 68 feet 9 inches by 26 feet, with walls 30 inches in thickness, are probably late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, but contain many later modifications. There is a large upper room near the church with certainly a fifteenth century panelled ceiling, added to the existing open roof. This roof has a quatrefoil opening, through which it was possible to see what was taking place in the hall below.

Below this room (used as a granary) is a cellar three steps below the ground-floor level, with a Norman shaft, introduced from some other part of the buildings, to strengthen the floor above.

The present parlour, when in use as a hall, seems to have had two entrances on the south side, one of which, now blocked, serves as a small pantry.

The north wall of these buildings contains an early fifteenth century two-light window, upon which the other windows seem [122]to have been modelled. The south wall contains two windows, one of two lights, the lower one four. The east side is the most interesting from the presence of a reticulated window, similar to one at Clevedon Court, Somerset. This one originally measured 7 feet 6 inches by 2 feet 9 inches, but has been carried up 3 feet higher.

Near to this window, on the east, a wing has been rebuilt on the site of older buildings, with old materials re-used.

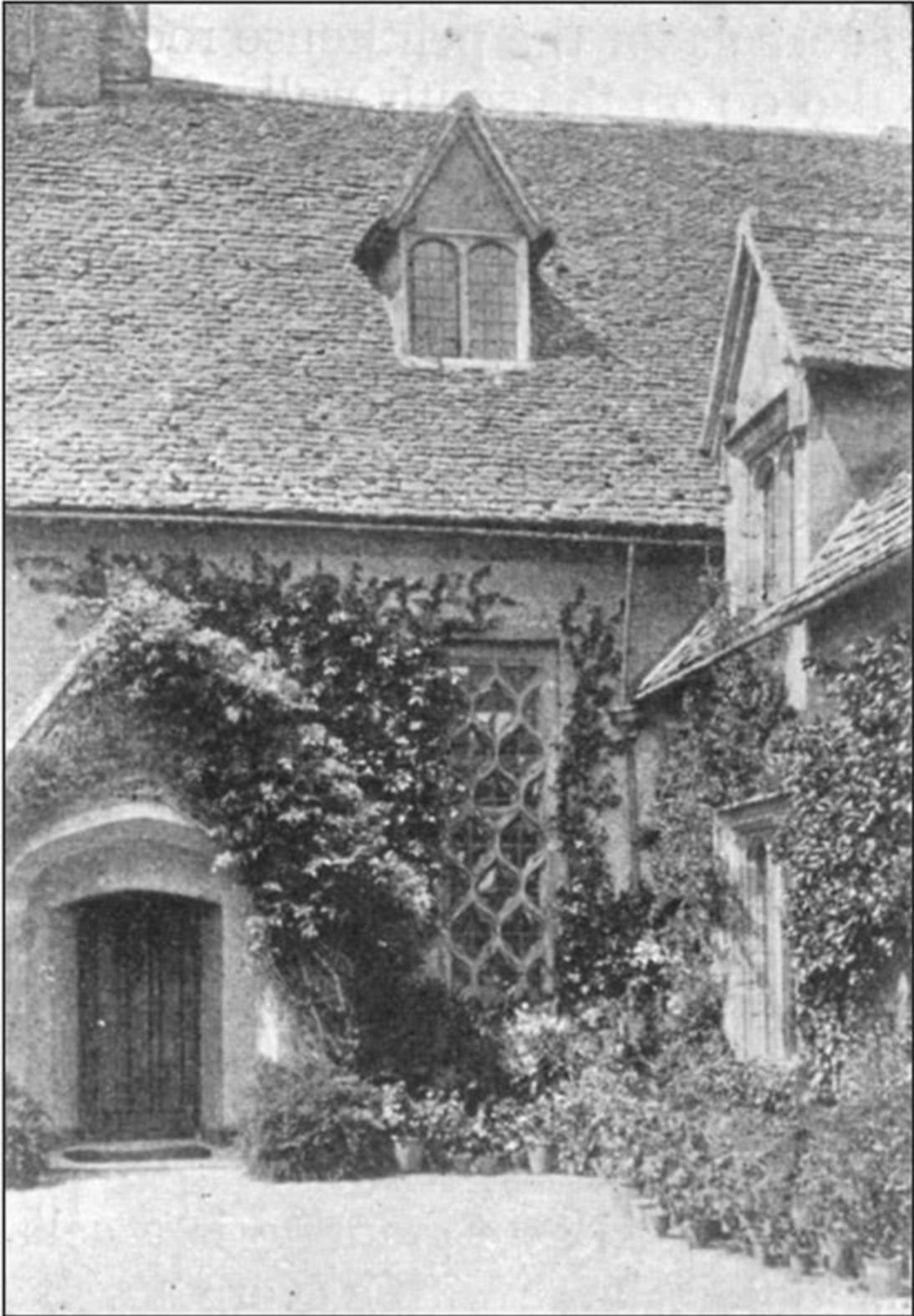


Photo. Dr. Oscar Clark.

FOURTEENTH CENTURY WINDOW. [To List](#)

FOOTNOTES:

[29]In 1339 the Priory had license given to it to hold two fairs annually, each to last three days, outside the precincts. They were to be held "*in inventione et in exaltatione Crucis*."

[30]The tomb of Sir Bryan de Stapleton and Cecilia Bardolph at Ingham (1438) has a dog upon it. His name is "*Jakke*."

[31]The plan shows parts which now exist only in the form of foundations below ground. They are taken from a plan made in 1860 under the direction of Mr. Slater the architect, who was then carrying out considerable alterations in the church. It is now in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries. The southern apse was not found by Mr. Slater, but is put in on the authority of Dr. J.H. Middleton, who found evidence of it.—J.T.M.

[123]

THE SAXON CHAPEL.[ToC](#)



Photo. R.W. Dugdale.

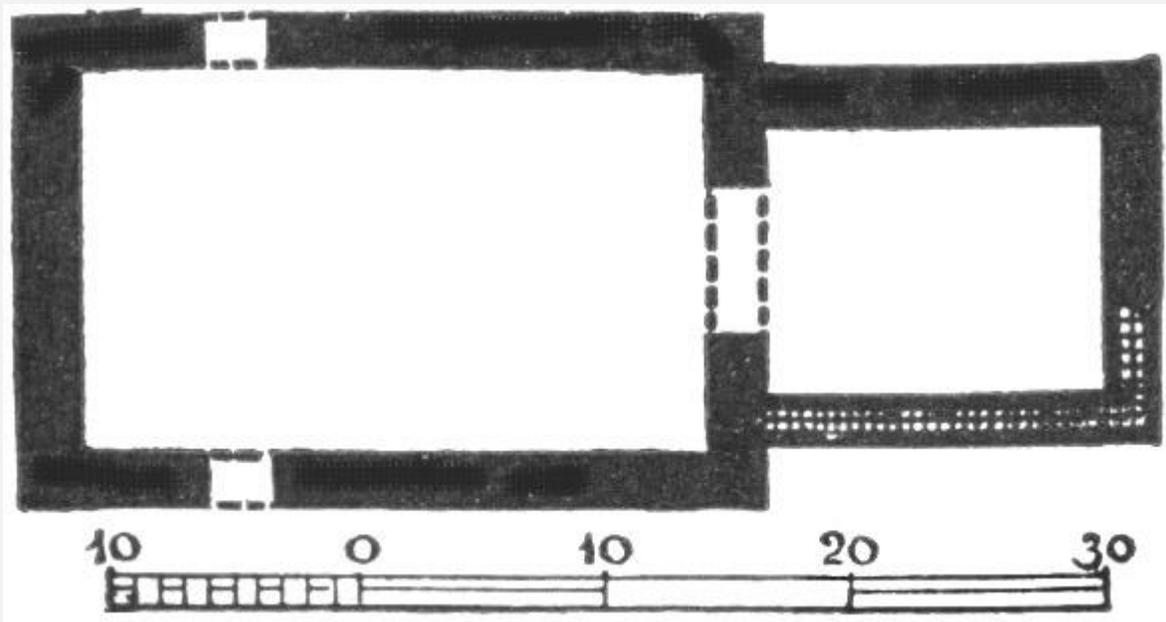
THE SAXON CHAPEL. [ToList](#)

About eighty yards or so from the Church of St. Mary at Deerhurst was discovered in 1885 in property known as *Abbot's Court*, a second Saxon building. It was proved, after careful examination, that this was a chapel, and the discovery of this fact threw considerable light upon the inscribed stone in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, which had been removed thither in 1675, bearing the inscription—

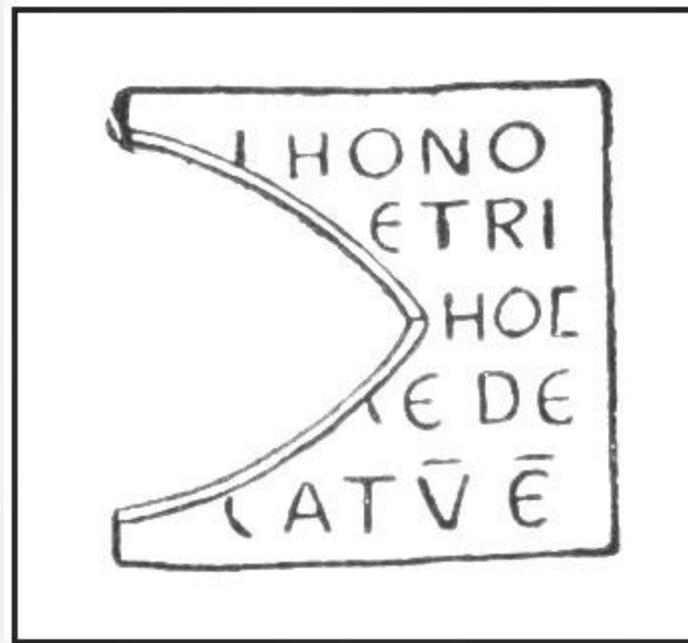
† ODDA DVX IVSSIT HANC
 REGIAM AVLAM CONSTRVI
 ATQVE DEDICARI IN HONO-
 RĒ S̄ TRINITATIS PRO ANIMA GER-
 MANI SVI ÆLFRICI QVE DE HOC
 LOCO ASSŪPTA. EALDREDVS VERO
 EPS̄ QVI EANDĒ DEDICAVIT II IDI-
 BVS AP̄L̄ XIII AVTĒ ANNOS REG-
 NI EADWARDI REGIS ANGLORŪ.

[ToList](#)

I.e. to say in English: "† Duke Odda ordered this Royal Hall to be built and dedicated to the honour of the Holy Trinity for the soul of his brother Ælfric which was taken up from this place. Bishop Ealdred it was who dedicated the same on the 12th April in the 14th year of the reign of Edward, King of the English."



From "The Archæological Journal." [To List](#)



This stone, of which a facsimile has been erected in this Saxon chapel, was for many years assumed to refer to the larger church at Deerhurst, but as soon as the smaller chapel was discovered, it was seen that the inscription could only refer to that building. The finding of a second stone, the dedication slab of an altar, in a chimney-stack, also seemed to confirm the idea that the building, with its nave, its chancel arch, and its chancel, was the chapel dedicated in 1056 by Earl Odda.

The dedication stone has been mutilated by being converted into the topmost portion of a window, and the inscription admits of two interpretations. What remains is here shown. [125] This may mean "*In honorem sanctæ Trinitatis hoc altare dedicatum est,*" or, as Mr. Micklethwaite suggests, "*In honorem Sancti Petri* [32] *apli (apostoli) hoc altare dedicatum est.*"

The chapel consists of a nave 25 feet 6 inches in length by 15 feet 10 inches in breadth, and a chancel 14 feet by 11 feet 3 inches, entered by a round-headed arch 6 feet 6 inches in width and 10 feet in height. [33]

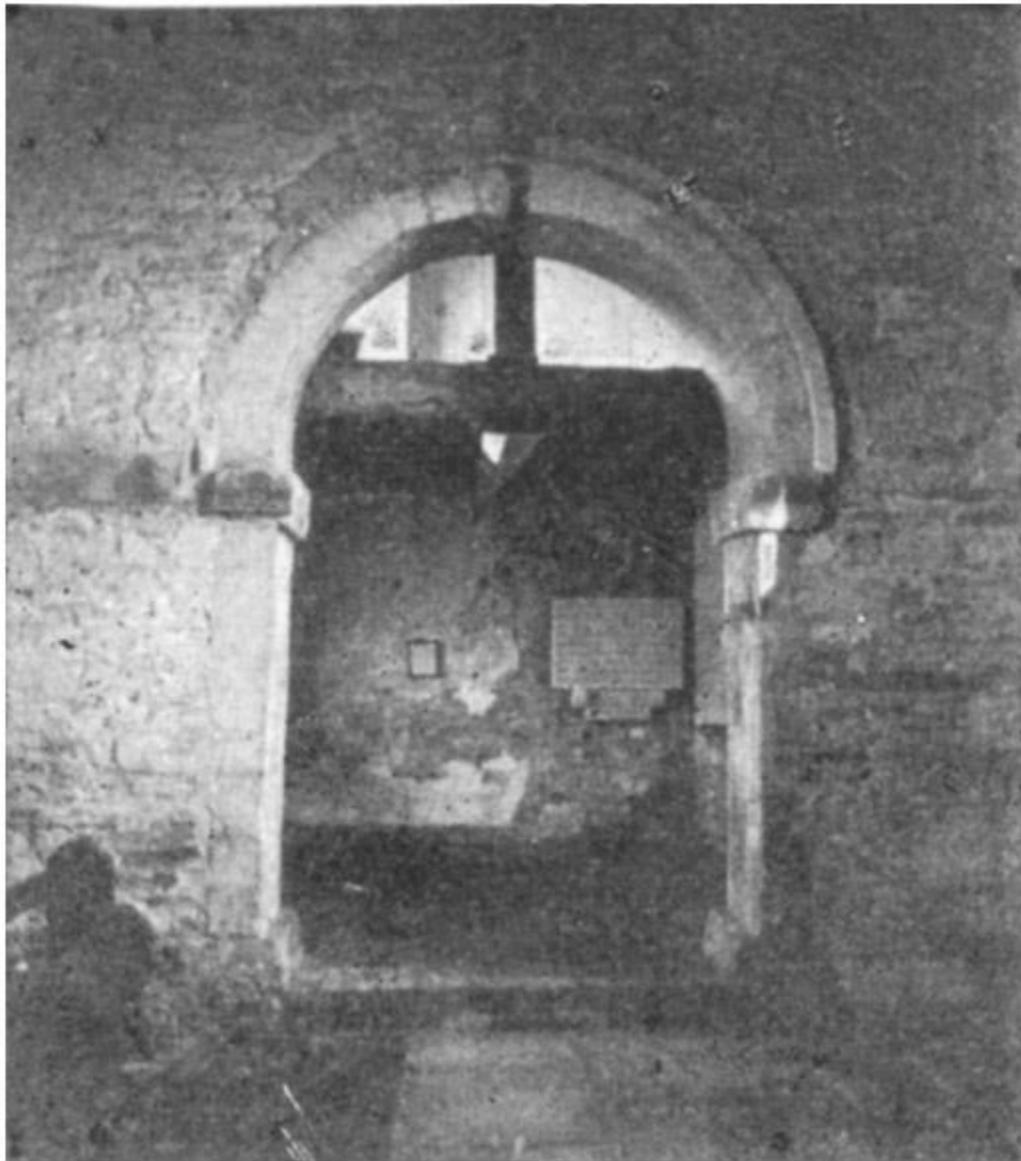


Photo. R.W. Dugdale.

CHANCEL ARCH IN THE SAXON CHAPEL. [To List](#)

The jambs of this curious arch are nearly 28 inches and the imposts nearly 10 inches in thickness. The latter are chamfered and moulded rudely with two hollows. The arch is distinctly horse-shoe-shaped, and on the nave side has a square label merging into the abacus, while the chancel side has none. The doorways were two in number, opposite to each other, in the north and south walls. Of the latter only traces remain. The north door was blocked when the chapel was discovered, but is now opened to give means of access to the building. Only half the doorway is original.

It is a doubtful point how the chancel was lighted, as there is no trace of a window in the old portion of the east wall, while the rest of this wall and the south wall were Tudor alterations. The north wall contains a sixteenth century window.

[126]In the north-east corner of the chancel is an Early English bracket of beautiful work, for the presence of which it is difficult to account, unless the chapel were in use in the thirteenth century.

The walls of the nave were originally 17 feet high, as compared with 15 feet for the chancel portion. There were also two windows in the nave opposite to each other. That in the north wall has been altered; that in the south wall is very curious and interesting. It is splayed both inside and out, from an opening $3\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ feet, with a sill 10 feet 6 inches above the level of the ground. The arch is of long, thin slabs of stone, inserted in mortar with wide joints, in some cases two inches in thickness.

A ladder gives access to what was the floor above, when the chapel was divided into two floors for domestic occupation.

Externally the chapel measures 46 feet by 21 feet, the walls being on an average 30 inches thick.

FOOTNOTES:

[32]The property even then belonged to the Abbey of St. Peter at Westminster.

[33]"Most small English churches were built on a plan which is purely '*Scottish*,' all through the Saxon time and beyond it. There are scores of them all over the country. The smaller church at Deerhurst, built in the middle of the eleventh century, will serve for an example. Note its small square presbytery and narrow arch. The church at Kirkdale, near Kirby Moorside, is a contemporary dated building of like form, but rather larger size" (J.T. Micklethwaite in *Arch. Journal*, vol. liii.).

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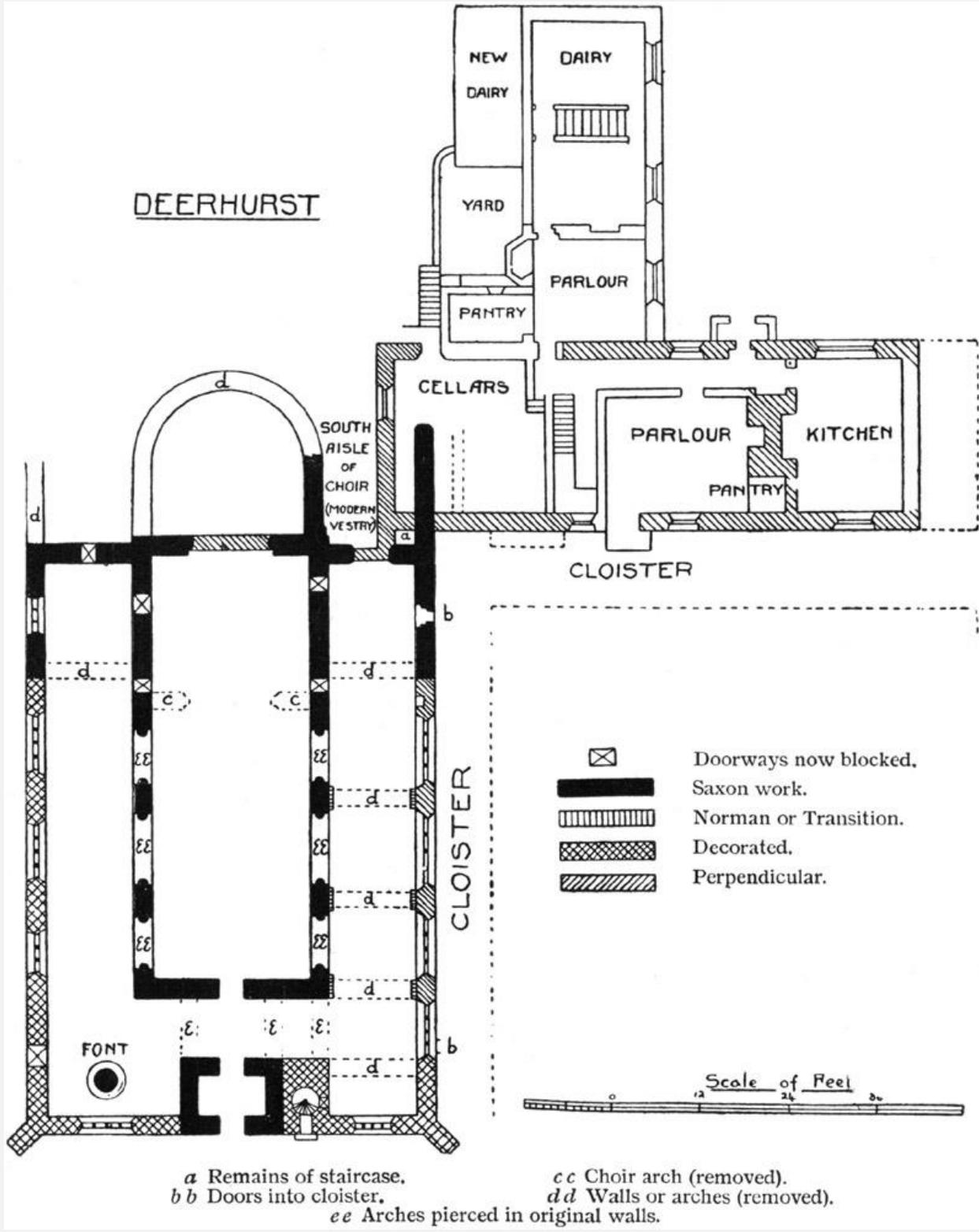
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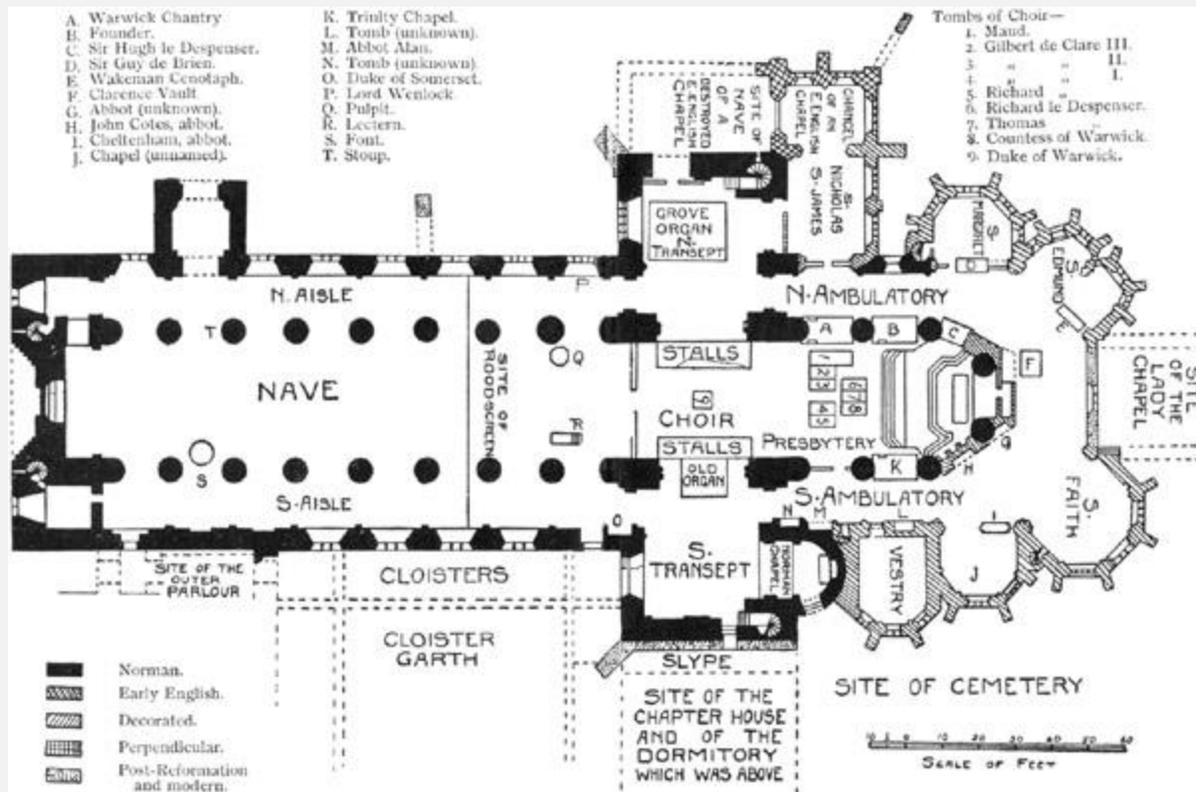
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DIMENSIONS OF TEWKESBURY ABBEY.

	Ft.	in.
Total Length (exterior)	331	0
Total Length (interior)	311	1
Breadth of West End (exterior)	80	0
NAVE:		
Length	170	0
Breadth	71	0
Height of Vaulting	58	6

Height of Piers	30	8
Diameter of Piers	6	3
Total Length of Transepts North to South	122	4
CHOIR AND PRESBYTERY:		
Total Length	103	2
Breadth	33	0
TOWER:		
Height to top of Pinnacles	148	3
WEST WINDOW:		
Extreme Height	65	0
Breadth	34	0
Area	25,110 square feet	

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Typographical errors corrected in text:

Page xi: FitzHamon replaced with Fitz-Hamon

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