



Extracts from the Chapter minutes from 1733 onwards and divers historical prospecting.

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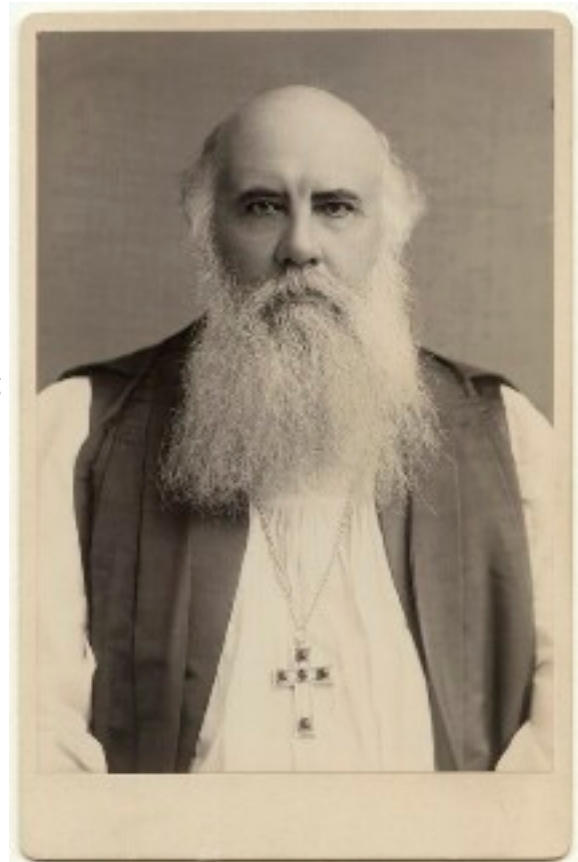
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A PEEK THROUGH THE WINDOW - NO. 17

MIKE DEEMING WRITES:

One reason for convening the first Lambeth Conference was the Colenso controversy. John Colenso had been appointed Bishop of Natal in 1853 where he sought to convert the Zulu tribal leaders. Questions that they posed led him to doubt the literal truth of some Biblical doctrine, and this led ultimately to his being convicted of heresy and ex-communicated by Bishop Robert Gray of Cape Town. However, he was able to appeal to the Privy Council in London which held that because the Crown was powerless to appoint a bishop in a colony that possessed its own independent legislature, the royal courts could not uphold the legality of Gray's authority. Colenso was re-instated, but another bishop was appointed alongside him! The Lambeth Conference was thus first convened in 1867 to try to sort out this mess - the conflict of authority between the CofE in England and the Anglican community overseas.

Into this quagmire in 1870 strode the spritely 30-year-old figure of the Rev Allan Becher Webb (he liked to be known as Alan Webb *sic*) as Bishop of Bloemfontein (right), fresh from the rectory at Avon Dassett, Warwickshire. He too was appointed by Gray, so was consecrated by the Anglican community in Scotland where the CofE had no legal authority. In Bloemfontein he worked tirelessly to bridge the gaps in the community, amongst other things founding a nursing order of sisters. In 1883, he was promoted unanimously to the position of Bishop of Grahamstown, where he established an 'era of pacification', succeeding in re-uniting the factions of the St George's cathedral and the pro-cathedral of St Michael. The New Cathedral of St Michael and St George was commenced in 1890 to initial designs by Sir George Gilbert Scott and has the tallest spire in South Africa! In 1901 he was appointed Dean of Salisbury Cathedral and he died here in 1907. Meanwhile Colenso continued to work with the Zulu community and, indeed, produced the first Zulu translation of the Bible.



The glorious group of windows which face you as you enter the morning chapel, representing the 'Heavenly Jerusalem', are dedicated to Dean Webb. These 1908 windows are an astonishing tour-de-force of J W Brown, one of the 'Aesthetic' movement of stained glass artists. He worked at Powells of Whitefriars at the turn of the century, having been recruited there by Henry Holiday. The three main lancets



closely follow the description of the 'Heavenly Jerusalem' in the Book of Revelation. The central figure of Christ is surrounded by archangels with, below, angels offering incense. Angels either side carry a scroll with the words from Revelation :- 'I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore'. Below the figure of Christ, stands a fountain from which issue the streams of the 'Water of Life' flowing across the side lights through the 'Garden of Paradise'. In the garden, are saints, kings, queens, bishops, priests,

warriors, women and little children, with the figures becoming less stylised and more lifelike as you move from Heaven to the Earthly world below. Over a hundred figures are displayed in these three lights. At the very top, the four-square city of Jerusalem, filled with the world's most beautiful buildings, be they cathedrals, temples or mosques.

Above this in the triforium, yet more seraphs, with a rainbow to unite the lights below; and above that, in the clerestory, the images of angels are tightly grouped to appear like the Cathedral's medieval grisaille. As if that weren't enough, a few years later, all eighteen clerestory windows to the east and west of the chapel were similarly glazed, barely visible from the floor. The windows thus reflect Webb's striving for peace and recognition of our shared humanity, which he championed throughout the Zulu and Boer conflicts in his time in South Africa.



In a final touch, at the foot of the centre lancet, a bishop kneels in the Garden of Paradise with a young girl close by – sadly, Webb's only daughter, Henrietta, died in infancy.

THE MURDER OF BECKET

Joscelin de Bohun was Bishop of Salisbury and along with the Bishops of London and York was excommunicated by Archbishop Becket for presiding at the coronation of Henry II's eldest son, the 'Young Henry', who died in 1183 before he could reign. It should be noted that the practice in Europe was to crown the future king during the reign of the current monarch to ensure a smooth transition.

The three bishops arrived at the castle of Bures in Normandy on Christmas Day 1170 and complained to the king of Becket's high-handed conduct. According to Alison Weir's research for Eleanor of Aquitaine (Pimlico 2000), Henry and his barons listened to their catalogue of Becket's misdemeanours with mounting indignation. The king *waxed furious and indignant beyond measure, and, keeping too little restraint upon his fiery and ungovernable temper, poured forth wild words from a distracted mind* (William of Newburgh). *A curse! A curse on all false varlets and traitors I have nursed and promoted in my household, who let their lord be mocked with shameful contempt by a low-born priest* (Edward Grim).

Incidentally, one of the primary sources is John of Salisbury, Secretary to Archbishop Theobald and Thomas Becket who eventually became Bishop of Chartres. So, bearing in mind that Becket's major gripe with Henry II was the Constitutions of Clarendon (1164) you can see that dear old Salisbury was at the heart of the quarrel that led to Becket's martyrdom. It is therefore



interesting that our major parish church is dedicated to the Saint. As a consequence of Becket's death, Benefit of Clergy was retained in law. Left is a 14th century depiction of Henry II and Thomas Becket. *Courtesy of Liber Legum Antiquorum Regum, a Cotton manuscript in the British Library.*

ELIAS OF DEREHAM

Sue Allenby writes: Richard Owen and I are both admirers of Elias of Dereham. Here, I wish to comment only on one small point he made in the J&T no 68. He wrote that he 'would be surprised if Elias spent any time with a chisel in his hand'.

Elias was extraordinarily multi-skilled. His knowledge and artistic genius were an integral part of his interpretation of the Reformers' message in this church, the 'Heavenly Jerusalem' down in the valley below Old Sarum. His interpretation drove the design, the geometry of the construction, and the glazing and the subject of the vault paintings, all as a framework for the Sarum liturgy. His practical skills appear to have included shrine and tomb building, thus providing an explanation for more of the written evidence we have on Elias, evidence that those who do not take this view must therefore ignore. You were directed to look at Professor Nicholas Vincent's revised entry in ODNB [Oxford Dictionary of National Biography] that Steve Dunn transcribed for J&T.

NV is a scrupulous historian. His entry on Master Elias' career is based on his considerable and specific research. And that, he says in his essay on Master Elias of Dereham: 'A Reassessment', is where his competence ends.¹ 'The documentary evidence presented should only be seen as the beginning of the search for Master Elias, and that for a more rounded assessment specialists will have to shift their attention to the material evidence'. He believes that the question of Elias' role remains an open one and that it is time for Hamilton Thompson's negative appraisal to be challenged.

NV is not an art or architectural historian, but he is an honest broker: his headline in ODNB cites Elias of Dereham as 'incomparable artificer', even though he cannot follow it up himself, nor does he try. In the same vein, he can but state that in 1238, Elias 'was helping' construct a tomb used for the burial of Joan, Queen of Scotland. That is not what it says in the Liberate Rolls.² NV also must ignore the 30 *livres* [old French coin] of the king's gift, that from an entry on 8th March 1244, was to be 'delivered' to Elias, *contrabreve* to cause Master Elias de Dereham to make a cup (a golden pyx) for the reserved sacrament in Salisbury.³ (Note this is not for Elias to *cause a cup to be made*.) We know the Liberate Rolls are precise on detail: On June 4th 1273, an entry states the anchoress at Britford was to be walled in 'by the counsel of Master Elias of Dereham' – he was not expected to do the work himself. Elias could only make a golden cup however, because of his training as a goldsmith (*aurifaber*).

The material evidence in church building associated with Elias (much of it lost unfortunately) deserves a great deal of attention, but I began this reply just putting a chisel in his hand. All the snippets of written evidence so far ignored point to Elias also being a shrine and tomb builder, a skill now often overlooked. Deriving originally from wood, in the late twelfth century and first decades of the thirteenth century, this was in the hands of the goldsmith-metal worker

(aurifaber). ‘Sculptor’ still meant ‘a worker in stone’. In England, marblers were supplying the bases, but not yet carving. (Purbeck is much more difficult than Carrera marble for fine work). By mid-century, the marblers had become accomplished carvers and workshop stonemasons were supplying good free-stone effigies. During the thirteenth century however, the reliquary itself remained a goldsmith’s job.⁴



It was not unknown for clerics to be shrine builders and goldsmiths.⁵

Edward Prior (Slade Professor of Fine Art at Cambridge) and Arthur Gardner put Elias in this category, alongside his co-worker on Becket’s shrine, which was finished in 1220.⁶ This was Walter, the famous Colchester goldsmith and shrine builder, who at that point worked for the sacristans at St Alban’s Abbey. He became a monk there in 1240. Matthew Paris the St Alban’s Chronicler wrote of the two men equally as ‘artificers’, which is exactly how a shrine builder would be described.⁷ In our terms he called them both ‘incomparable craftsmen’. This is all the more believable because he and Walter could so easily have discussed Elias’ work. Shrine builders were carvers, and ivory and metal workers, they set jewels and they did the painting.

So, building Longspee’s tomb chest in 1226 (the artist was painting what could have been an ivory and jet inlay detail enhancing the blind arcading, as paint and jewels echoed each other for a shrine and tomb builder), or engaged in building a marble tomb (probably for Richard Poore), that in 1238 the king requisitioned in a hurry. And towards the end of his life, the making of a golden pyx: none of these now sounds improbable. We don’t know how or where Elias was trained. We know too little of his first four decades. He spent many years in exile in France, possibly more likely to be found on cathedral building sites than in debating the moral certainties with Stephen Langton and Richard Poore, who had taught in the University Schools in Paris. Elias was a key member of their inner circle, but he is not documented (as were the aforementioned) in relation to intensive theological debate.

From what we know of Elias’ dealings with King John, for him the moral certainties were never in any doubt!

¹ Nicholas Vincent, ‘Master Elias of Dereham (d.1245) : A Reassessment’ in *The Church and Learning in Late Medieval Society* ed. Caroline Barron & Jenny Stratford (Shaun Tyas 2002), p. 158

² Calendar of Liberate Rolls: entry March 6, 1238: To: The Sheriff of Wiltshire *contrabreve* to cause the marble tomb that Master Elias de Dereham is making at Salisbury to be paid for and to cause it to be carried with all speed to Tarrant to entomb there the body of J. Queen of Scotland, The king’s sister.

³ Calendar of Liberate Rolls 1240-45 page 222

⁴ E.S. Prior and A. Gardner, *An Account of Medieval Figure Sculpture in England* (CUP 1912) p.249.

⁵ Ibid. Introductory

⁶ Ibid. p.93

⁷ Matthew Paris, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. F. Maddern (Rolls Series), 1866. II. P.242. (At the Translation) ‘present also were the incomparable artists, Masters Walter of Colchester, Sacristan of St Albans, and Elias of Dereham, canon of Salisbury, by whose advice and skill everything necessary for the making of the shrine, its erection and translation had been impeccably prepared’.

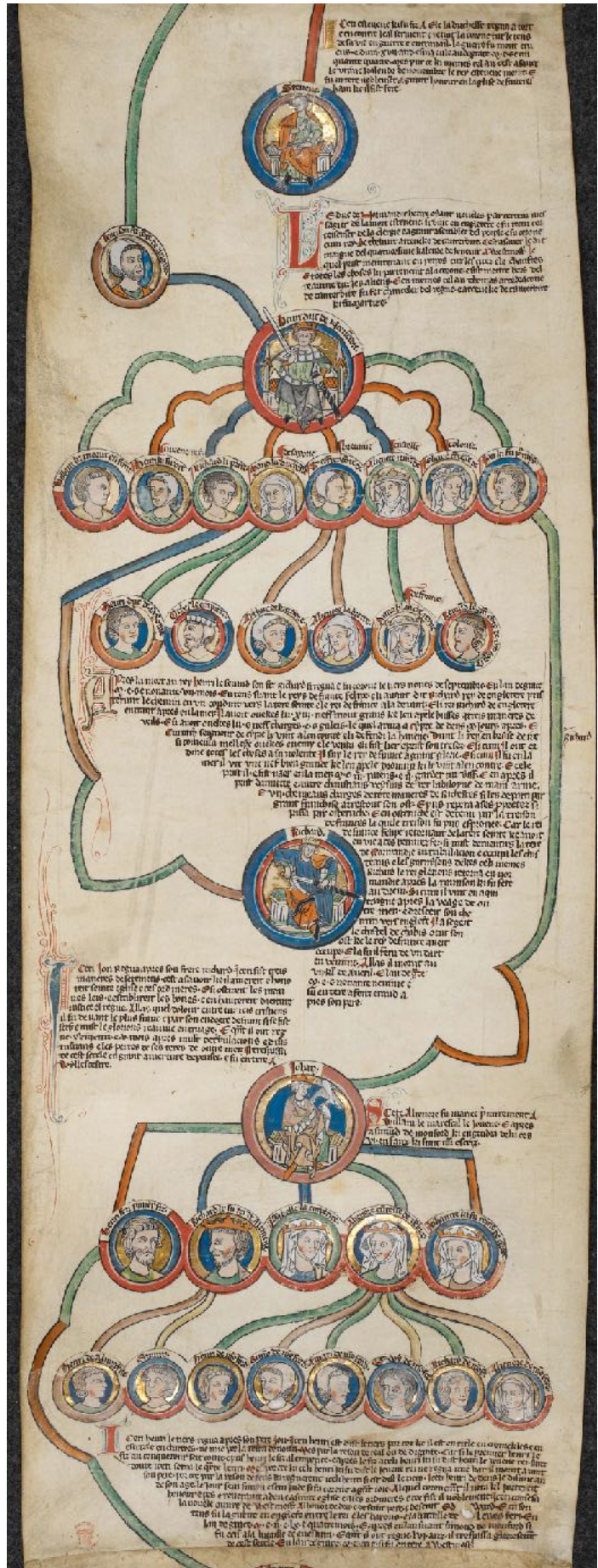
Ed. Note: Ibidem = Referring to a book or passage already mentioned. Pyx = container for eucharist consecrated bread. Liberate = Instruction to deliver. Contrabreve = Assigning the task to someone and allowing expenses.

KING JOHN'S ANCESTRY

The 14th century saw a rise in the popularity of manuscripts containing diagrams that traced the ancestry of the English kings. Many of these were lavish products made for the aristocracy. They combined a diagram-based structure pioneered by Matthew Paris (1200–59) with an anonymous text probably based on the work of Peter of Poitiers (1130–1215). The resulting genealogies, illustrated with portraits, increased the legitimacy of the Angevin dynasty by highlighting its connections to their Anglo-Saxon and Norman predecessors.

40 genealogical chronicles of English kings survive from the period between Edward I's accession to the throne (1272) and the death of Henry V (1422). This chronicle dates from the reign of Edward I (1272–1307). Almost five metres in length, its historical narrative begins with a large round diagram depicting the Heptarchy, the seven kingdoms into which Anglo-Saxon England was divided. The royal line starts below with Egbert, the King of Wessex who united the Anglo-Saxons, and continues down to Edward I. Portraits of Edward II and Edward III were added in about 1340.

King John's father, Henry II (r. 1154–89), was the first Angevin king, and this roll emphasises his Anglo-Saxon descent through long, coloured lines connecting his grandmother, Matilda (1080–1118), the wife of King Henry I, with her ancestors Edmund Ironside (d. 1016) and Edward the Confessor (r. 1042–66). John is depicted twice on the roll, first among his father's descendants, and again as King 'Johan' following the death of his brother, Richard I (r. 1189–99). The second of these roundel portraits shows King John holding a hawk in his left hand; below him are illustrations of his legitimate children, Henry III (r. 1216–



72), Richard, King of Germany (d. 1272), Isabella (d. 1241, who married Emperor Frederick II), Eleanor, **Countess of Pembroke** (d. 1275), and Joan (d. 1238, who married Alexander II, King of Scots).

The original patron of this lavish chronicle is not known, but it is almost certainly the *Role des roys d'Angleterre* that was listed amongst the books kept by Henry VIII at Richmond Palace in 1535.

I am indebted to the British Library for the above.



BOSHAM

We visited Bosham near Chichester on a blustery, sunny day last month mainly so I could explore Holy Trinity Church (above), the oldest church in Sussex. I had not been back to Bosham since

working on the neighbouring Fishbourne Roman Palace as a teenager.

The venerable Bede mentions an Irish monk called Dicul who had a very small monastery at Bosanham. The tower and small parts of the chancel are Saxon and in fact Bosham was the family home of Harold Godwinson earl of Wessex (later King Harold). There is a picture in the nave (above) showing an early part of the Bayeux Tapestry in which Harold is seen arriving at Bosham with hawk and hounds before entering the church.

In the early 11th century, local tradition has it that King Cnut's daughter drowned in the millstream and was buried in the church. In 1865 a small stone coffin was found (see right) but without closer examination it cannot be dated.

Bosham is one of the sites that claims to be the place where King Canute (as reported by Henry of Huntingdon, 12th century historian) was supposed to have ordered the sea to retreat in order to demonstrate to his court the limits of a King's power.

ERRATUM

Edward Probert pointed out that two of the illustrations in J&T No.69 are incorrect. Please look on the website jot-and-tittle.com for the corrected version.

