



*Extracts from the Chapter minutes from 1701 onwards*  
*Mark Brandon - markandsuebrandon@outlook.com*

## THE EAST END

The following clarification is taken from the Encyclopaedia Britannica. **Presbytery**, in Western architecture, that part of a cathedral or other large cruciform church that lies between the *chancel*, or *choir*, and the *high altar*, or *sanctuary*. As an element of a cruciform church, the presbytery may be located geographically west of the sanctuary and east of the choir. This area, which is sometimes also called the *presbyterium*, can be occupied only by members of the clergy, those priests who participate in services within the sanctuary. The presbytery is often raised a few steps above or otherwise separated from the chancel, as in Winchester and Salisbury cathedrals in England, but it may also be combined with the chancel, as in the English cathedrals of Lincoln and York. The term is also used to describe the house of a priest.

## GEOLOGY

These interesting extracts are taken from a tour by Steve Hannath (Wiltshire Geology Group) in the Journal of the Bath Geological Society, No.31, 2012.

The base: was thought to be some 15% of water by volume to the gravel, 9m in depth. There were built foundations but they did not go below the level of the summer water table. Those for the four main Purbeck marble columns at the Nave and Transepts Crossing that were eventually going to bear the weight of the added tower and spire being founded like all the others at a depth of just 1.2m. These four each exert a force of approximately 164 tonnes per square metre on the hard, well-sorted gravel terrace.

It was to the nearby quarries of Chilmark and Tisbury that the medieval masons turned for their main supply of building stone. Some 60,000 tons of Chilmark stone together with a further 10,000 tons of Purbeck marble from the Isle of Purbeck in Dorset. Both were used in the construction to which was added a further 6,500 tons of Chilmark stone when the tower and spire were completed c1320. The highest 49m of the spire were clad in 200mm thick stone slabs but in the 1950 rebuild the top 9m of Chilmark were replaced by Clipsham stone from Rutland.

The word, "Chilmark", has come to be used as a generic name that covers stone from the Vale of Wardour's Portland Stone Formation, laid down in the Upper Jurassic as a marine deposit, whether from the main outcrop up to 12m thick around Tisbury (the Tisbury Member of lower building stones) or from the valley or "ravine" South East of Chilmark where a higher 5m thick freestone was exploited in the past. The Chilmark Member is distinguished by abundant ooliths, less sand and lack of glauconite.

Just east of the town of Tisbury is Chicks Grove quarry and close by, a furrowed and ridged hill, known locally as Dumpling Down, from which, it is said, came the "Chilmark" stone in medieval times for the building of Salisbury Cathedral. This would accord with the statement that the Chilmark mine is not medieval in origin. Be that as it may, Chicks Grove is the premier supplier of stone for restoration today, quarried only from the Tisbury member.

The great feature of Early English Gothic is that it imbues a building with spaciousness, grace and light as it soars heavenward as high as the medieval masons dared go. This was achieved at Salisbury with solid blocks or “drums” of unpolished Purbeck limestone piled high to form the pillars to a height of 7.8m at the capitals and decorated with completely detached columnar lengths of polished Purbeck “marble”. Not marble in reality, but highly polished limestone. A fossiliferous limestone, as it has been described. It is found in the overlying Durlston Formation of the Purbeck Group of largely early Cretaceous age having freshwater strata at the top that gives way to marine strata at the base. The two principal “marble” beds sit near the top in the Peveril Point Member. Purbeck marble has also been used as flooring at Salisbury where some 15,000 tons were laid down. Particularly where polished, fossils of the *Viviparus* genus of freshwater snail together with fossils of the larger genus *Unio*, may be clearly seen, both in the slender columnar lengths or in the flooring.

It should be mentioned here that the limestone that was destined to become the polished Purbeck marble columnar lengths was quarried from beds horizontally in order to achieve this. Possibly the largest slab of Purbeck marble in the world, is to be found in the Morning Chapel and is laid into the floor as a monument to Bishop Wyeville who became bishop at about the same time as the spire was completed.

The beautiful lierne vault of the Decorated Period replaced the wooden ceiling at the Crossing and records show that the Hazelbury stone for the ribs was brought from the Box area and was also used for the new flying buttresses at the North-East corner of the tower. Bath stone was used for the 16th Century Audley Chapel. Another oddity is the Lepine limestone from near Poitiers that had been used as a substitute for Caen stone and may still be seen.



Mistakes were made and the grain of the stone was not always read correctly when cutting it, resulting in later spalling damage, that is, fragmentation or separation of the surface after long exposure to the elements, particularly through frost damage and by acid rain. The action of the latter brings about a chemical change to the carbonate binder in the limestone which breaks down into the sulphates that do the damage. A chalk pit at nearby Harnham was the source of the raw material for the making of the lime mortar to which gallet was added (that is, chips of stone) to stop the lime from squeezing out.

Attempts were made in the past to protect the stone as evidenced by the orange-brown patina of the West Porch which research has shown was given the Greco-Latin empirical treatment, a preparation that included bone as a hardening agent but which also gave a pleasing aesthetic quality to the stone by the addition of the ochre colour. In modern times the restored North Porch has had new columns of Purbeck marble which, with the application of heated Renaissance wax (a standard conservation material that has a highly efficient water resistance) should keep them in good condition for a very long time. A secondary advantage of this treatment is that Quadripartite fans built with calcareous tufa and the columns have been given

the rich dark colour which makes such an attractive contrast to the Chilmark stone. The Purbeck bases were repaired with layers of coloured lime mortar built up slowly to the shape of the original and colour matched by the addition of the correct amount of stone dust.

### AFTER MAGNA CARTA

I was privileged to attend the talk by Professor Sophie Therese Ambler on Simon de Montfort (right, *courtesy of USA Public Domain*) at the Chalke Valley History Festival. When King John lost France the Barons were faced with a dilemma. Should they switch allegiance to the King of France and retain their lands or retire to their English estates. The de Montforts went for the first option and Simon (the father) was elected to lead the truly terrible Albigensian Crusade against the Cathar heretics. Sophie pointed out that in Medieval warfare it was the custom for knights not to kill their opponents but hold them for ransom - otherwise the pool of aristocracy might have been severely depleted. On a crusade however, there were no holds barred.



Simon junior returned to the family estates near Paris where he was educated by the Cistercians and came to idolise his dead father, even to the extent of copying his seal. As his elder brother Amaury inherited the French estates, Simon travelled to England to plead with Henry III for the return of the family title, Earl of Leicester, and estates. Surprisingly the King welcomed him with open arms; he was his brother-in-law. It appears that Henry was a good and kind king but is referred to in contemporary documents as 'simplex' or easily dominated. Simon who had joined his brother on the fateful Barons Crusade in 1239-40 was elected Regent of Jerusalem.

Simon became estranged from the king and lead the Second Baron's War against him in 1263. After capturing the King and his eldest son he set about reforms, arranging three parliaments a year in which townsmen were included for the first time, making it the first House of Commons. Eventually Edward 1<sup>st</sup> escapes, raises an army and defeats Simon at Evesham. Although power is returned to the king, Edward was clever enough to realise the virtue in keeping some of Simon's reforms.

### TTB

Tim Tatton Brown who was consultant architect to the Cathedral for many years gave a very interesting talk on Salisbury Cathedral at the CVHF. He covered a great deal of ground but here are some nuggets that I picked out.

A number of us have been pondering for some time about the location of the Foundation Stones. Tim pointed out that we are looking at the problem with modern eyes. The stones that were regarded as special were the Consecration Crosses (the design is unique to Salisbury) that on the outside would have been inlaid with bronze. The inside ones (with their modern paint) date from 1225. These emblems were seven feet above the ground and originally were lit by candle (on each anniversary) held in an iron bracket. As I understand it, we have eight external crosses



but the original number was more likely to have been twelve. There is also on the east end an unusual lozenge-shaped stone carving which represents the heraldic arms of Ella Countess of Salisbury.

Now Tim's detailed analysis of the stonework shows that the Cathedral was not simply built east to west. In fact it was built west to east up to the level of the stone bench. From then on it was built east to west. He also dismisses the idea that the Cathedral was lucky to survive being built in such a wet area and to survive having a heavy tower and spire on a building with only four foot foundations. According to him, the Custos (Elias of Derham) and the senior masons were highly intelligent and new exactly what they were doing. The weight of the Cathedral compresses the gravel giving an effective foundation of 25 feet. It is Winchester that is not so clever.

Tim thinks that Old Sarum was really quite a big town with the housing going down as far as Hudson's Field. New Sarum was so successful because it was kick-started by being filled with the workers from the Cathedral for forty years, making New Sarum the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> largest town in the kingdom. There are no detailed records of the numbers engaged on the building but there are for Westminster Abbey where Tim is still consultant. The answer would be many hundreds.

Saint Osmond's tomb is a rare survival of a Foramina tomb, based on that in Jerusalem's Holy Sepulchre and also used for Saint Thomas of Canterbury.

Tim admits a bias towards his favourite cathedral but points out that the use of ashlar masonry both inside and out shows that this was a 'Rolls Royce' building. The oak beams for the roof needed to be both straight and long and were impossible to source in England. The King however donated timber from virgin forest south-east of Dublin. The same source was used for Canterbury and Exeter. Above the Trinity Chapel is the remains of a gypsum Tracing Floor and the floor in the Muniment Room is also special being laid on timber instead of stone vaulting. The Choir stalls are the oldest intact set in the country. We also have the largest cloisters and close in the country so I can see why Tim holds the cathedral in special affection.

One final point: one of the oak beams is engraved with **IϕN** which are apparently the oldest Arabic numerals on a structure in England.

### TEXTUS ROFFENSIS

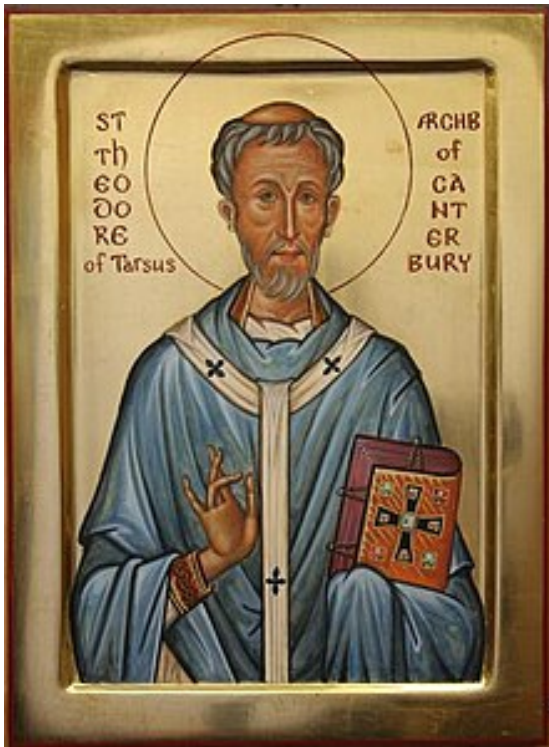
I have worried for some time that Magna Carta contains ideas that were clearly not Norman. We were a conquered country and the Feudal system tied us to the land so where did the idea of our 'rights' come from?

Another excellent speaker at the CVHF was the popular TV historian Michael Wood who made a good case for the importance of the Anglo Saxons to our culture and institutions. Each section of the talk was based on a different text that is currently forming part of an exhibition in the British Library entitled Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms. One fascinating codex was the Rochester Book part of which was an encyclopaedic record of Anglo-Saxon laws. One section dealt with the Coronation Charter of Liberties of Henry I dated 1100. In it he proposed to restore the *laga Eadwardii* laws of the Saxon Edward the Confessor. In turn Archbishop Langton used it as a basis for Magna Carta. The Textus Roffensis (below, *courtesy of Rochester Cathedral Library, now in Medway*

Archives, Strood) lacks the image of Magna Carta but is just as important - and of course it shows that we owe the idea of our rights to the Anglo-Saxons.

Being close to Winchester we know the importance of Alfred the Great but Michael thinks that Alfred and the ruling family members that followed him did more for this country than any other monarchs.

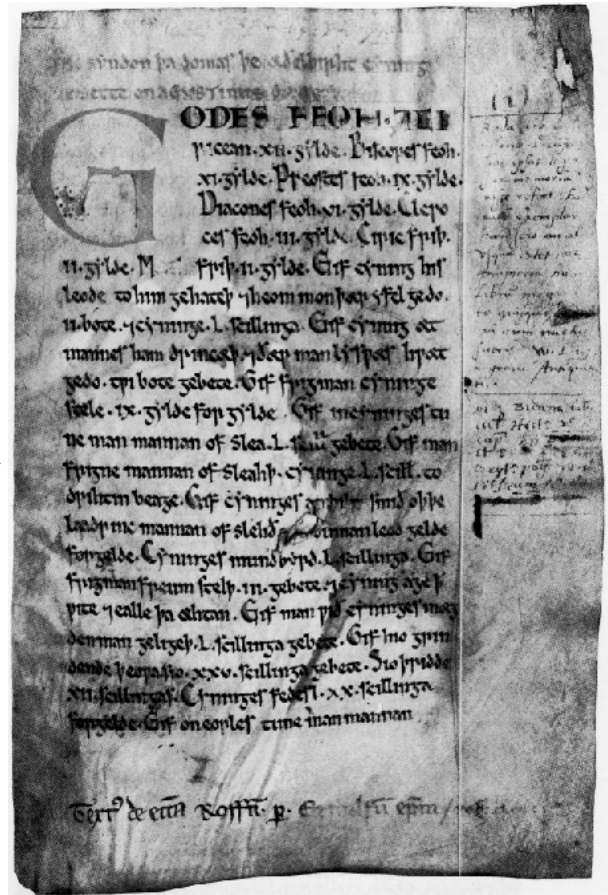
Part of the incredible story of the Anglo-Saxons is down to Pope Gregory who persuaded Theodore of Tarsus (below *courtesy of USA Public Domain*) to take up the long vacant post of Archbishop of Canterbury (668 to 690). Theodore refused unless he could take the dark-skinned North African



Hadrian with him. These two mighty scholars

gathered together a library of important classical and theological works to take with them. With this library they formed a school in Canterbury that attracted the noblemen's sons and thus promoted education and a thirst for learning. Their lecture notes are still with us.

The monasteries became powerhouses of learning and technology. Those of Jarrow and Wearmouth particularly so under the influence of Bede who translated the Bible into Latin. This English Renaissance spread to Europe when Archbishop Alcuin was head-hunted by Charlemagne.



## CHAPTER MINUTES

January 1882: Rev. George Bennett offered the Minor Canonry (Vicar Choral) vacated by Rev. Moberley. In his reply Bennett states *I can, I am sure, venture to promise that I will never allow one part of my duty to the Chapter to interfere with the proper discharge of the other.* He agrees to attend services at least on Sundays and Saints Days, *Made and subscribed the Declaration against Simony\* (Prescribed by the Clerical Subscription Act 1865).* Followed by a Declaration of Office in latin.

\*Simony: buying or selling of something spiritual or closely connected with the spiritual. More widely, it is any contract of this kind forbidden by divine or ecclesiastical law. The name is taken from Simon Magus (Acts 8:18), who endeavoured to buy from the Apostles the power of conferring the gifts of the Holy Spirit.