

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

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I recently purchased four excellent booklets published by Shire Publications. I pass on some of the insights they contain for what they are worth.

MEDIEVAL MASONS



The pic on the left is of course our tower supports in the nave's triforium and clerestory levels.

Below is a similar picture from Worcester Cathedral and the same can be seen at Gloucester, Chester and Durham. The interesting point is that in the other four cathedrals they were not there to support a heavy spire!

As large churches and cathedrals were usually built from east to west in order to start services as soon as possible, it was necessary to shore up the crossing before the nave could be built. Hence the buttressing.

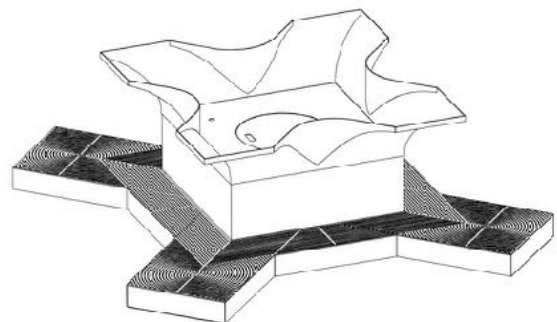


Malcolm Hislop, who wrote the booklet, points out that the masons were not usually the largest component of the building's cost, it was the transport of materials. For example in 1285-6 at Caernarvon Castle the materials came to £151.5.6 ¹/₂ whilst the transport came to £535.8.8 ¹/₂. Perhaps Rievaulx Abbey is the ultimate example. Cistercians looked for sites away from civilisation which made obtaining stone difficult. The monks were reduced to excavating a canal down the valley in order to bring in the raw materials.

CHURCH FONTS

Matthew Byrne writes that Baptism comes from the Greek, meaning immersion or submersion and font from the Roman *fons*, a fountain. The symbolism is a lot older than Christianity (see Ezekiel 36:25). Nowadays it is most usual to baptise by affusion, that is pouring over the head only, and therefore only a relatively small basin is required. Our own spectacular *William Pye* font can of course cope with full immersion. Its design is unusual in that it is basically square with four radiused sections removed to form a cross.

For those who like the facts, the font contains 1,300 litres of water with a further 1,700 litres in the reservoir. Incidentally, Potterne (the Bishop's prebend) has a 9th century plain font (below) with a quotation in Latin from Psalm 42 *As a deer longs for the running brooks, so longs my soul for you, O God.*



ROOD SCREENS

The booklet by Richard Hayman is fascinating. Apparently the first screens appeared in the second half of the thirteenth century although the division between sacred and secular parts of the church is much earlier; Old St.Peters in Rome being 6th century.

The pulpitum (Latin for stage or platform) found in cathedrals and monasteries is not seen as a direct forerunner of the rood screen. In most parish churches a decorated chancel arch (as in our St.Thomas') was a symbolic barrier but *the rood screen was the visual focus of the medieval parish church*. Sarum St.Martins has a rood screen (below) which although only dating from 1918 replaced a much earlier rood. Other screens can be seen at Avebury, Compton Bassett and Mere but the largest concentrations are in Devon and Norfolk.



MONUMENTS

Sally Badham's booklet includes a picture of our Bishop Roger, pointing out that he died in 1139 but the effigy was not carved until the 1170s. The slab is of Tournai marble, *a dense blue-black carboniferous limestone quarried on the banks of the River Scheldt in Belgium*. The use of this stone for people of status was swiftly superseded by Purbeck marble.

SEX AND THE CITY

On my way to the Cathedral I passed the abandoned St. Luke's Chapel in Love Lane. Does anyone know the history of this building? Also, according to Phil Harding (Wessex Archaeology and Time Team), Love Lane was the site of the Bishop's Pound. Any idea what this was?

We all know that Love Lane was the centre of the Red Light district and was generally tolerated, even by the Church. An interesting fact is that one wealthy 'madam' (right, and delicately called 'landlady') founded Trinity Hospital on the site of a brothel. Agnes is believed to feature in St.Thomas' Doom Painting.

In order to find out more about the medieval attitude to prostitution I turned to Robert Bartlett's *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings*. He points out that as most writers were (supposedly) celibate it was difficult to get a balanced picture. In fact he does refer particularly to Salisbury. The statutes of the synod of Salisbury of about 1218 stated: *It should be drilled into lay people in confessional and sermon that all sexual intercourse, unless it has the excuse of marriage, is a mortal sin*. To balance this, at around the same time the theologian and Sub-Dean of Salisbury, Thomas of Chobham, described simple fornication as *the common*



vice of almost everybody that seems quite excusable to many. I particularly loved the case of John and Maxilla of the diocese of Lincoln who lived together for ten years and had ten children but the Pope ruled that as they were not married they must separate.

NEPOTISM

This word comes from the Italian for nephew as Popes frequently found jobs for their 'nephews' who were often in reality their illegitimate offspring. In November 1895, Bishop John Wordsworth announced that he was appointing the Reverend Christopher Wordsworth (his brother - right) to the Wardenship of St. Nicholas Hospital. As a non-resident his income would be £100 to £200 but if he later decided to become resident and chaplain it would be considerably higher.

Bishop John's father Christopher was the son of the poet and became Bishop of Lincoln. The St. Nicholas records show that four wardens were sons of bishops, also two brothers and one grandson and indeed Christopher followed on from a Moberley who increased the pool of possible residents by including more educated people *who have seen better days*. Christopher communicated regularly to the Chaplain by letter and wrote special prayers for use in the chapel and admitted friends of the residents to the services. Bishop Wordsworth convened a great Chapter to discuss the hospital and especially the Warden's rising salary. In the end though he installed his brother under the old terms!



We should perhaps not judge the situation with our 21st century mores. There were no HR specialists in Victorian times and the 'devil you know' was probably a better bet. Also, it was something of a 'clan responsibility' to help other members of family and friends. Up to this point all benefices went to individuals personally selected by the Residential Canons - in turn.

Just to show that the Dean and Chapter were occasionally altruistic: in December 1895 *in consideration of the long and faithful service of James Kellow it was agreed to increase his pension from £13 per annum to £15.12.0 per annum to take effect from Christmas last.*

CHAPTER MINUTES 1895-6

November: The Dean read a committee report that it was thought desirable to have a reunion with dissenters [Methodists, Baptists etc.], partly sociable and partly for the interchange of thought on non-controversial subjects. To take place in the Cathedral and Palace next Spring. *Carried 16 votes to 4.*

Committee set up for the promotion of the Anglican Bishopruck in Jerusalem; Bishop willing to be Chairman if asked.

It was felt that without more information the Chapter would be too divided to discuss Christians living under Turkish rule.

GDW Digby [one of the Sherborne Castle Digbys who took over after Raleigh's fall from grace] asked for the suppression of Catholic manuals that had been circulating, but none of the Canons had seen them. £12.13.2 to Crawley Arnold & Co. of 20 Whitehall Place, London, being share of costs in Distressed Cathedrals case laid before Council respecting the position of cathedral establishments.

December: Mrs Mary Crockett, widow of Rector of Upton Lovell accepted into the Matrons College *provided she was in possession of a guaranteed income of £40 per annum.*



February: dean has written to the Ecclesiastical Commission's Chief Church Commissioner, Lord Stanhope, asking for a grant to repair Cathedral tower and spire with an estimated cost of £10,000. The EC reply with a full history of their transactions showing that the Cathedral had already received this sum. A letter from Dean Henry Parr Hamilton dated 6th April 1864 to be entered in the minutes. This explained that the £10,000 received was not a gift but the transfer value of the Chapter's property portfolio.

March: Bishop unhappy that in the transfer of properties (excluding the Close) to the EC the Chapter will lose Old Sarum.

April: EC agree to the exclusion of Old Sarum

June: Canon Edward Dugmore of Gillingham (left) suggests that timing of reunion with dissenters is inopportune in view of their attitude to the Educational Bill. [This bill failed to reach the Statute Book until reformed in the 1902 Balfour Act.]

August: Order in Council ratifying the property for tithe rents exchange with the EC has been published in the London gazette.

Chapter agreed to insure parish church chancels against fire with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Office but not the stained glass windows or the furniture at Amesbury £800, Britford £230, Martin £600, Stapleford £223 and Tisbury £1,000. [The rest of the church was of course the responsibility of the parish].

TOMB TALK

In the Choir North Aisle is a relief portrait in bronze of **St. Clair Donaldson**, Bishop of Salisbury from 1921 to 1935. Educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge he narrowly missed representing Cambridge as stroke in the 1883 boat race due to illness. He obtained a first class degree in classics and also one in theology.

At 41 he was enthroned as the Bishop of Brisbane and found that there was £30,000 towards building St. John's Cathedral. He set to work to raise the rest of the money and the cathedral was consecrated 6 years later. In 1905 he became Archbishop. In this role he offered to mediate in the 1912 Brisbane general strike and spoke up strongly for aboriginal rights. During his episcopate the number of clergy increased from 55 to well over 100. In his will he left £4,000 to Brisbane endowment funds.

He chaired the difficult committee for the Archbishop of Canterbury on 'The Church and Marriage' for which the King appointed him *Prelate of the Order of St. Michael and St. George*. He was appointed Bishop of Salisbury on his return to England in 1921 when Arthur Benson (Master of Magdalen and writer of the words to Land of Hope and Glory) described him as *a very fine, simple-minded, robust, sensible prelate.*

