

Extracts from the Chapter minutes from 1701 onwards and divers historical prospecting.

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TIMBER



It goes without saying that timber was an important resource in earlier times (see J&T No.2) and this resulted in a mind-set quite different to that of modern carpenters and joiners. Interestingly there was a much bigger accent on reducing waste and ensuring sustainability. The effort involved in cutting down trees or branches before the invention of the bowsaw was sufficient to make the woodward think twice, and choose each specimen with care. Photo on left shows Medieval hammer-

beam construction used in a modern setting, *courtesy of Vermont Timber Works Creative Commons.*

The trees selected would be the minimum size to do the job and of course cut timber would be reused though not as is often believed, ships' timbers for housing. Timber also would not be seasoned, it would be cut as required and would (unlike modern practice) include the sapwood, and even bark. This mean't that for the first few years buildings could change shape slightly until the wood settled down. The Clerk of Works would have had to understand the woodward's work so as to select the right trees. October 1755: *Canon Gilbert is empowered to go over to Bramshaw at a proper season this year to take a view of the timber trees growing there and to make a report to the Chapter, and to take with him John Marks for his judgement and to pay him for his trouble the said Canon Gilbert not exceeding one guinea in the whole expenses.*

The cathedral owned trees on its own land but also had rights in Royal forests (see J&J No.2). Although technically, *forest* was a place of deer, not necessarily a place of trees. There were 25 forests recorded in Domesday. King John's abuse of the Forest system was one of the grievances highlighted in Magna Carta - there were 143 forest by this time of which 90 belonged to the king.

April 1844: *Robert Mill Bailiff of Whitchurch Canonorum be paid £35-14-0 the amount of seventeen years salary to Michaelmas last for looking after the woods there.* January 1794: *That Mr Morris do cut down five Elm trees at Quidhampton to be applied for repairs of houses and premises those that Mr Morris do cut down the trees examined by him and found fit to be cut at Lockerley and Mr Morris do plant some young trees in the*

room of those to be cut down. April 1846: Communar to give such directions as he may deem necessary for felling oak timber on the estate at Whitchurch. Lessee of Hurst allowed six ton of elm timber for building. In January 1847 he was allowed a further 5 tons of elm but he is not entitled of right to timber.

It is received wisdom that a lot of oak woods were destroyed in order to increase the Georgian navy. In fact, merchant shipping expanded to a far greater extent than the Fleet. The merchant marine paid higher prices than the Navy could afford but even this did not really affect the amount of woodland as much as the growth in the tanning industry. The tanners paid good prices for bark which resulted in countryfolk even raiding hedgerows. Assarting, the clearing of forest in order to farm smallholdings, again only had a marginal affect on woodland, especially as soils that support forest are usually unsuitable for agriculture; and of course there were parts of the country, such as the fens, that have never been wooded.



In 1269-70 the monks of Beaulieu Abbey stated what was expected from an acre of wood of twenty years' growth: firewood of various kinds, faggots, vine-stakes and charcoal. To this can be added fencing, wattle, brushes and cattle fodder. In 1297-8 Norwich Priory paid a contractor to surround their two woods with a ditch and bank surmounted by a hedge to prevent browsing. It had eight gates secured with *feterlocks* and a bridge at each gate. Nearly all woods more than 100 years old are surrounded by some sort of earthwork.

Trees were usually farmed by being pollarded or coppiced. **Pollarding** involved cutting a tree at between 6' and 15' above ground level to leave a permanent trunk, called a *boling*, and branches which could be harvested repeatedly. This was difficult work but meant that the young branches could not be ruined by browsing animals. There are around 130 pollarded hornbeams in Hatfield Forest, Essex, dating back to the reign of James I.

Coppicing (Norman French) was much more widespread. Although we are used to seeing hazel coppices (or copses), maple, oak, lime, ash, wych-elm, hornbeam and alder were also given this treatment. The trees were cut at ground level or just above to form a stool. The stool would send up shoots (*spring*) that were cut at set intervals which varied according to the thickness of rod, pole or log desired. They could grow at more than 2" a day and it increased the life-span of the tree. An ash stool in Bradfield woods, Suffolk, measures 18' in diameter and is believed to be more than a thousand years old. The picture above (Cranborne Chase, known for hazel coppice) shows a coppice wood with *standards* which is no longer worked. Charcoal burners made great use of coppiced poles or *underwood*. Standards were used for 'timber' whilst the farmed stems

produced simple 'wood'. So the Medieval woodsman learned how to work with a tree's natural properties, not against it.

The largest trees tend to grow outside woods where they have less competition and more room to spread. In France the great oak forests such as the Limousin (origin of our word limousine) produce tall straight trunks that suit their requirement for wine casks. As the King owned a part of France for 300 years we tended to import wine in cask, British cooperage being largely confined to beer.

This information has largely been culled from Dr. Oliver Rackham's great academic work *Trees & Woodland in the British Landscape*. I would also recommend: *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben, *The Ash and the Beech* by Richard Mabey, *The Secret Life of Trees* by Colin Tudge and *Britain's Trees* by Jo Woolf.

ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND

Margaret signifies Pearl and she was descended from King Alfred. She was born in exile in Hungary in 1045. She became betrothed to Malcolm III and reigned as Queen of Scotland from 1070 to 1093. She built churches and monasteries and busied herself in making vestments. Her piousness rubbed off on her husband and she piously educated eight children, three of which became kings of Scotland. On her death-bed in Edinburgh Castle she received the news that her husband and eldest son had been slain in battle. One of her lesser-known achievements was to have established a ferry across the Firth of Forth, the towns on either side being known as Queensferry to this day. She was regarded as a great exemplar of a Christian monarch although rather OTT by today's standards. Her Saints Day is June 10th and the Cathedral of course has an altar dedicated to her memory. In the days when holy relics were important, Mary Queen of Scots owned her head - something prophetic there. Right is from St. Margareth's Chapel, Edinburgh, courtesy of Kjetil Bjornsrud New York GNU Creative Commons.



THE CURACY



The original 'curate's egg'

According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church a Curate is *properly a clergyman who has the charge (cure) of a parish, i.e. in England a rector or vicar. Such a clergyman is also known as the 'incumbent'. he is chosen by the 'patron' and admitted to the cure of souls by the bishop (Advowson). In general speech, however, the word is now used to denote an assistant or unbeneficed clergyman.* Cartoon which predates that in Punch, The London Serio-Comic Journal 1895 courtesy of Mr Wilkinson.

November 1844: £10 towards curate of St.Martin's stipend. A further £10 was agreed in October 1847 and again in October 1848 and October 1851. October 1847: No more than £56 allowed for curate at Alderbury for *spiritual services to the inhabitants of the Liberty of*

Clarendon. October 1862: Fisherton Curate on less than £100 so reliant on a Cathedral contribution.

£10 given to augment the Perpetual Curacy of St. Peter, Cranborne. The Perpetual name is found in common use mainly during the first half of the nineteenth century. The legal status of perpetual curate originated as an administrative anomaly in the 16th century. Unlike ancient rectories and vicarages, perpetual curacies were supported by a cash stipend, usually maintained by an endowment fund, and had no ancient right to income from tithe or glebe. Lewis Carroll was a Perpetual Curate. Not all curates were treated the same however. January 1849: Reverend Charles King be appointed to serve the Cure at Stratford-Sub-Castle with a stipend at the rate of £100 per annum and that he be permitted to occupy the house and premises called Mawardens Court and the paddock belonging thereto called The Grove. October 1851: Dr Haggard advised about Stratford that *the Reverend Charles King be nominated thereto as a Perpetual Curate. The Chapter Clerk was directed to be prepared to advise the Chapter as to the propriety of endowing the Curacy with a house and income and the manner in which it should be done.*

GUÉDELON



Our Head Guide and his wife visited this Burgundian castle whilst on holiday and thoughtfully sent me a link to their website so I could follow its progress - www.guedelon.fr/fr/saison-2020_287.html. This is a prime example of *Experimental Archaeology* in which the 13th century castle is being built from scratch using local materials, tools and techniques. They raised money via

donations to get started but now the project is self-funding.

Above, Guédelon in 2017 *courtesy of Stephane D creative Commons*. As they hit problems it is fascinating to see how the various skill groups (originally guilds) come together to talk through the difficulties and find a solution (governments, please note). The archaeologists and historians are following these stories closely as they throw fresh light on how castles were actually built. The techniques would also have affected cathedrals which would have used the same masons and carpenters. It is also linked to Magna Carta as it was King John's defeat that motivated the King Philip II to build lots of castles, mostly to a standard pattern.

In the latest Youtube video they tackled the making of a window for which they used parchment in a wooden frame; apparently vellum was too thin. The skin was treated with linseed oil and alcohol which made it waterproof whilst allowing the light to come through. An artist then added a flower border using colours made from on-site earths.



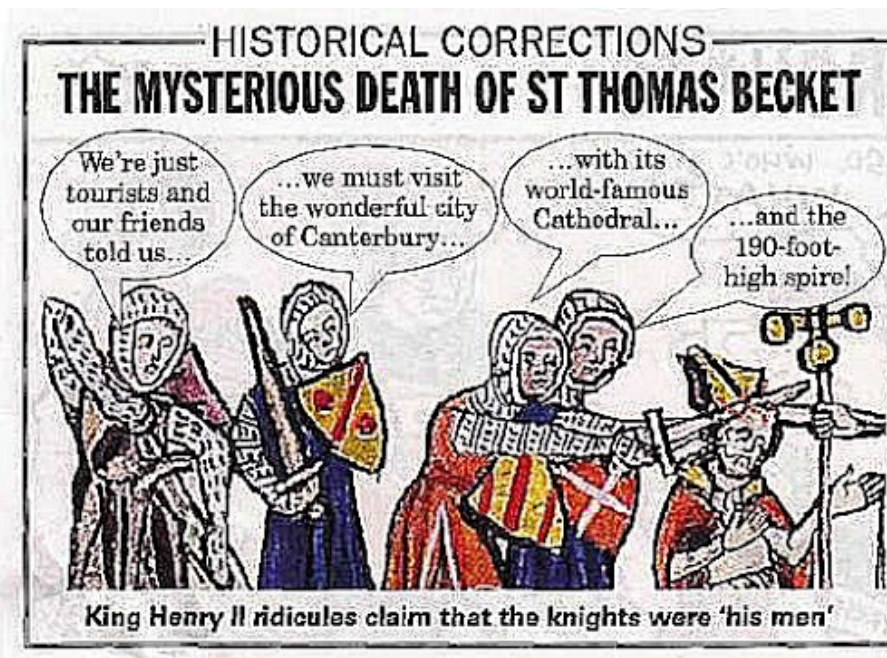
TOMB TALK - Edmund gheast

According to James Harris' *The Epitaphs in Salisbury Cathedral* of 1825, in the Morning Chapel is a brass: Edmund Gheast, Professor of Sacred Theology at Cambridge, Bishop of Rochester, High Almoner to the Queen for the space of 20 years, and afterwards by her most serene Majesty Queen Elizabeth translated to the see of Sarum, over which he presided more than five years, to the honor and glory of God, the benefit of his Church, and edification of his people; and to his great honor, to his great gain, but to the greater distress and sorrow of his friends, he exchanged his excellent life for a better death. Of the goods of this life (in which he did not abound) he bequeathed a great part to his relations, a greater to the poor, but most to his domestic servants. He left as many valuable books as the library could contain, for the perpetual use of the students of the Cathedral. Therefore, to this most honorable Elder and Prelate, having finished his pious life on the last day of February 1587, in the 63d year of his age, Giles Estcourt,

one of his executors, erected this monument, in remembrance of so great and so good a man, and to testify his respect and attention towards him. Above, engraved by Augustus Fox 1840 Public domain.

Bishop Edmund Gheast was born at Afferton, in Yorkshire, and formerly fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge: he was the immediate successor of Jewel, and every way worthy of his predecessor: he was buried in the choir between Wyvil and Jewel. Giles Estcourt lived at the College of St. Edmund's when he was executor to Bishop Gheast's will, it remained in his family 84 years. In 1660 it came to the family of Sir Wadham Wyndham, with whom it still remains, and long may it so.

COMMUNICATION



I have been without web or email for two months due to the entire staff of Plusnet going down with mad-cow-disease! I have now switched to BT and the e-mail is now with Outlook. So apologies if you have been trying to get in touch.

SALISBURY HUMOUR

For those of you who watched The Salisbury Poisonings on BBC 1, this cartoon should appeal.