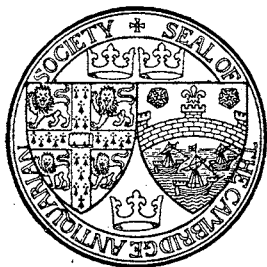


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OCTOBER 1933—OCTOBER 1934



VOLUME XXXV

Edited by E. A. B. BARNARD, M.A., F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S.

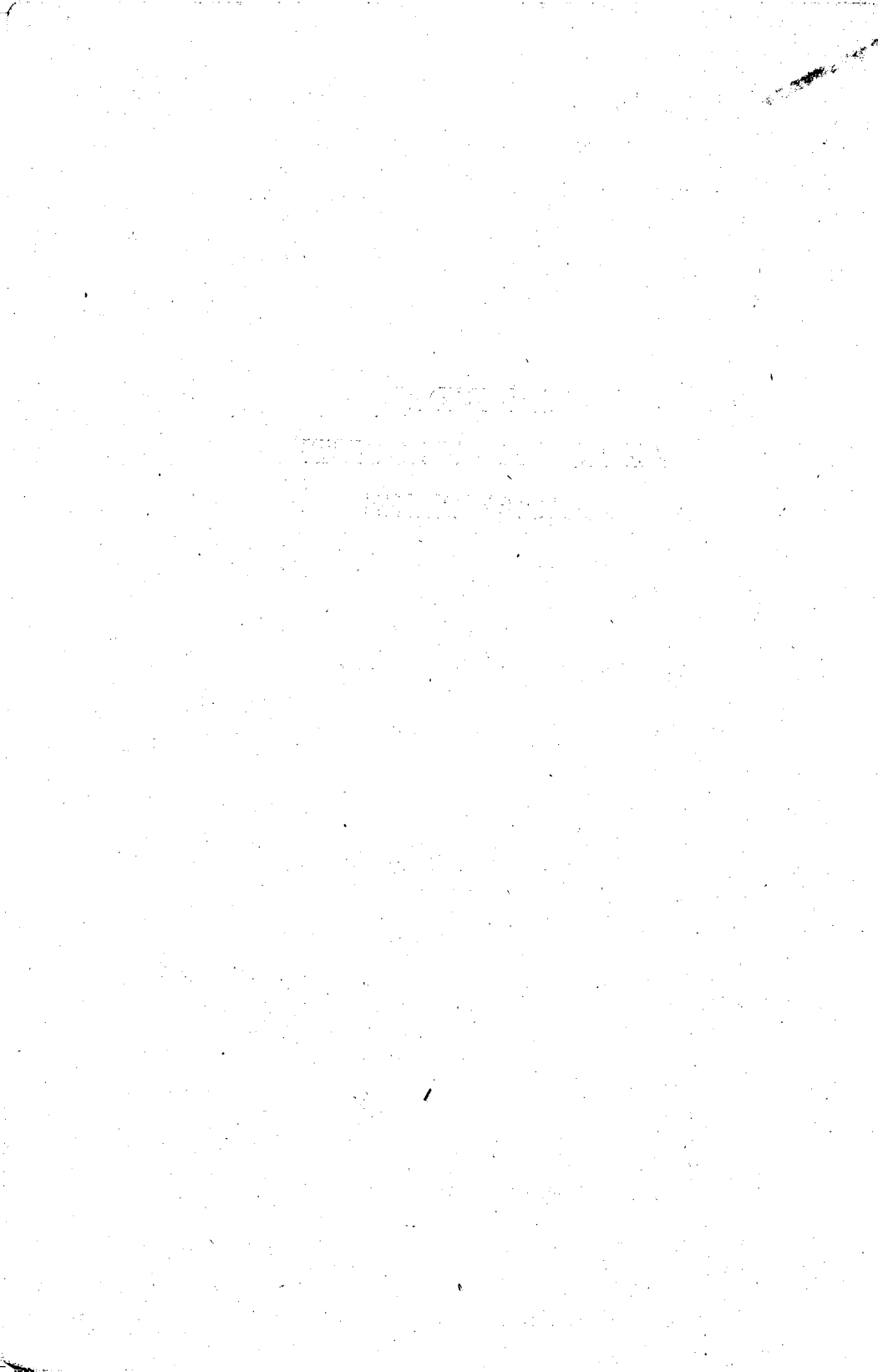
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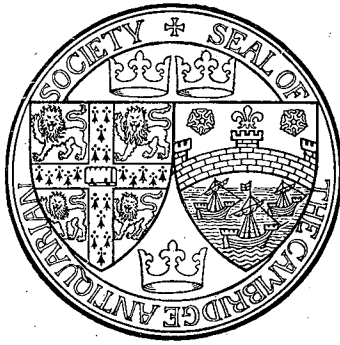
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THE FOLIAGE, FLOWERS AND FRUIT OF SOUTHWELL CHAPTER HOUSE

By A. C. SEWARD, Sc.D., LL.D., F.R.S.

(Read 16 October, 1933.)

The small country town of Southwell—the place of the south wells¹—lies between Sherwood Forest and the Trent, fourteen miles north-east of Nottingham and eight miles west of Newark. The Collegiate Church², worthy of more attention than it receives, was one of four foundations of Secular Canons in the diocese of York; the others were York, Ripon, and Beverley.

Professor Stenton of Reading kindly wrote for me the following historical note:

The Collegiate Church was certainly in being by the early eleventh century, and probably was founded soon after the manor of Southwell was given by King Eadwig to Oskytel, Archbishop of York, in 956. Like many other foundations of its kind, it was patronised by the Anglo-Norman kings, and charters in its favour were issued by Henry I, Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I. In the latter reign Southwell was the meeting-place of a great Council of the Kingdom, but the kings of this period, when visiting Sherwood forest, seem to have resided in their hunting-lodge of Clipston; and no royal charters were issued at Southwell before the reign of Richard I. Southwell was, in the technical sense of the phrase, the "mother church" of Nottinghamshire; it formed one of the official seats of the Archbishop of York, and, with its possessions, was exempt from the jurisdiction of the Archdeacon of Nottingham. The Archbishop of York was lord of the Manor of Southwell, and although the only surviving remains of an archbishop's palace belong to the fifteenth century, earlier registers show that the place was repeatedly visited by archbishops from at least the early part of the thirteenth century. The ancient Chapter of Southwell was dissolved among the other ecclesiastical charges of the reign of William IV, but in 1884 its church became the cathedral of the newly-founded diocese of Southwell.

¹ Hence the three roundels on the arms of the See.

² For fuller descriptions see W. Dickinson Rastall, who is quoted by authors as Dickinson (1787); Killpack and Clarke (1839); J. F. Dimock (1853); Livett (1883), who gives a very full account of the history of the Collegiate Church; A. F. Leach (1891); A. Dimock (1898); W. J. Conybeare (a pamphlet on sale in the Minster); the account of Southwell in the *Builder* Series of Cathedrals by H. H. S. (1894); J. Cox (1910).

The nave and transepts are massive Romanesque (c. 1114): the Choir (c. 1230-50) and two eastern transept chapels (slightly later than the Choir) were erected in the time of Walter de Gray, Archbishop of York, who pulled down the Norman Choir. The Archbishop exerted a considerable influence in ecclesiastical architecture; he was concerned also in the building of York, Ripon and Beverley¹. In its almost severe simplicity the Early English Choir affords a striking contrast to the later Chapter House; it has been called a perfect piece of architecture, the purest and most refined Early English. Professor Moore², on the other hand, described the plain moulded capitals characteristic of many English buildings as "monotonous in the extreme". It would, I venture to think, be difficult to find a more satisfying and attractive example of pure Early English architecture: deep-cut mouldings, dog-tooth and the conventional trefoil are the only adornment. Photographs of roof-bosses taken by my friend, Mr C. J. P. Cave, afford evidence of less restraint in the employment of ornament. Most of them are covered with intertwined branches bearing various forms of conventional Early English foliage; but on one of the bosses there is a dense mass of deeply lobed leaves with a few pairs of acorns borne on long stalks. Comparison of these oak leaves with those on the capitals and tympana of the Chapter House shows a much less faithful rendering of the actual plant than in the work executed about fifty years later. It is hoped that Mr Cave will describe the Southwell bosses in continuation of his account of those in Gloucester Cathedral³ and elsewhere.

The Chapter House on the north side of the Choir was built at the end of the thirteenth century. In 1292 Edward I gave a licence for the gift of a plot of ground, 44 by 30 feet, for a Chapter House⁴: another indication of the date is afforded by a piece of old glass, preserved in one of the windows, on which is painted a castle said to be the Castle of Castile and agreeing

¹ Prior (1900), p. 163.

² Moore (1899), p. 344.

³ Cave (1931), (1932).

⁴ I am indebted to Mr W. A. James, Honorary Librarian of the Cathedral, for this statement taken from "*Inquisitiones post mortem*", John de Suthewell 1291-2, 24 Feb. 20 Edw. I; at Farndon near Newark.

closely with one on a shield in a panel of the Westminster tomb of Queen Alianor, the wife of Edward I, who died in 1290. A statute of Archbishop John de Romaine in 1293 addressed to the Chapter of Southwell directed that "the houses of alien Canons threatening ruin shall be duly repaired within a year, to which repair we will and command that they are to be compelled by you, under heavy penalty to be assessed by you, the Chapter, according to the defects; which (penalty) is to be applied to the fabric of the new Chapter House"¹. John de Romaine, who was Archbishop from 1286 to 1296, was concerned with the building of the Chapter Houses of York and Southwell: there is difference of opinion on the date of the Chapter House at York, which was perhaps begun some twenty years later than that at Southwell. The two share the distinction of having no central column.

A rood-screen, added in 1330, is described by Sir Thomas Jackson² as an example of curvilinear architecture at its best. In the fourteenth century five sedilia were placed against the south wall of the Chancel. A large west window and others with perpendicular tracery are later insertions. The pyramidal spires on the two western towers are comparatively recent and their removal both for structural and aesthetic reasons is now under consideration; they replaced pinnacles³ which were added after the destruction of taller spires⁴ of unknown date. A tympanum built into the north transept is one of a few fragments of the pre-Norman church, and below the floor of the south transept one can see remains of a Roman pavement. On the removal of the organ in 1933 from the Choir-screen some remarkable early twelfth-century capitals, which had long been hidden, were again brought to light⁵ and will in future be preserved as visible memorials of the older fabric.

We will now concentrate attention on the Chapter House, together with the walled-in Cloister and Vestibule which form the passage and are said to be slightly earlier⁶ than the

¹ Leach (1891), p. xvi.

² Jackson (1915), II, 63.

³ See illustrations in Killpack and Clarke (1839).

⁴ See view given by Rastall (1787).

⁵ Described and illustrated in *The Times*, August 15, 1933.

⁶ Dimock A. (1898).

Chapter House. An open archway divided by a central shaft into two subsidiary arches leads from the second bay of the north aisle of the Choir into a passage (four steps below the level of the Choir), the greater part of which is covered by a low, modern roof of wood. At the north end of the passage is a higher quadripartite stone vault separated by a low arch from the southern part, which leads by an archway on the east side into the Chapter House (Fig. 1). The Chapter House

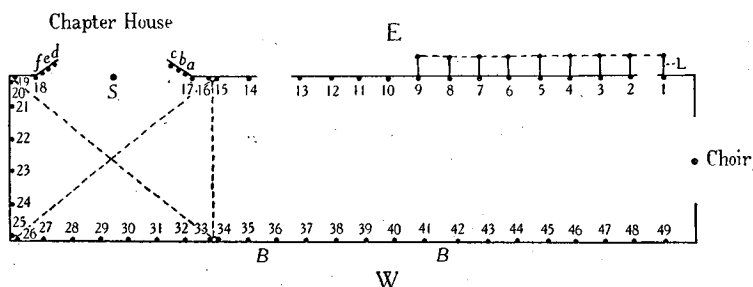


Fig. 1. Diagrammatic plan of the vestibule and passage from the Choir to the Chapter House. The numbers and letters (*a-f*) refer to capitals; *B-B*, blank-wall; *S*, pillar.

was formerly separated from the Choir by a small open court in which was one of the three wells. An open cloister with a double arcade flanked the west side of the court: as shown in the diagrammatic plan, on which the numbers mark the position of the capitals of the arcading, under the first arch is a wrought iron door to the Vestry, which was built on the site of the old court. The double arcade extends as far as capital 9: the spaces below the level of the capitals have been closed by masonry, but the cross-lintels connecting the pairs of capitals are still exposed. Between capitals 9 and 13 there is a blind arcade against the passage wall: between 13 and 14 a door leads to a staircase. The arch supported on capitals 16 and 17 is narrower and higher than the others and there is a corresponding arch (between 18 and 19) on the north side of the Chapter House entrance. The position of the shafts of the stone vault is shown by the broken lines in the diagram. The north end of the passage is mainly occupied by a geometrical window. A single arcade runs along the western side, interrupted at *B, B*, by a blank wall. The cross-lintels and the

great majority of the capitals are adorned with naturalistic plant-forms: single leaves or sprays of foliage are carved above most of the abaci of the capitals in both the passage and the Chapter House.

The open arch¹ of the entrance to the Chapter House is a triumph of naturalistic ornamentation; Mr Leach speaks of it as the crowning glory, the most perfect work of the most

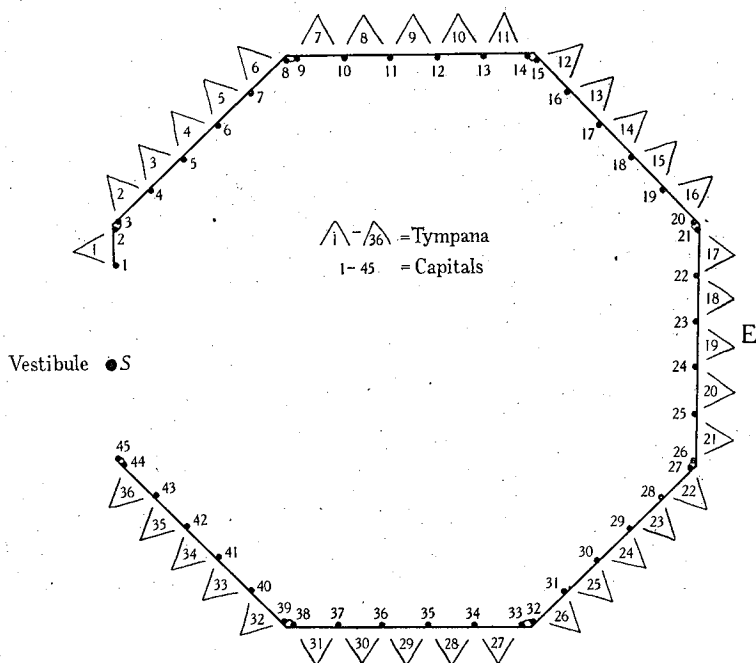


Fig. 2. Diagrammatic plan of the Chapter House.

perfect style of Gothic architecture². The outermost member rests on capitals (17 and 18) of shafts placed against the main wall; the other members rest on the capitals (*a-f*) of detached shafts of Derbyshire limestone in the jambs. A clustered central shaft supports two trefoil arches with a quatrefoil circle above.

The Chapter House (Fig. 2) is octagonal in plan, a form

¹ See p. 12.

² Leach (1891).

which seems to have been favoured by Secular Canons; it has an internal diameter of thirty feet. The vaulted roof is supported entirely from shafts in the angles; there is, as at York, no central column. A low stone bench along seven sides, and for the breadth of one bay on the side mainly occupied by the entrance arch, forms the seats of canopied stalls, five on each of the seven sides and one for the Chancellor on the side on

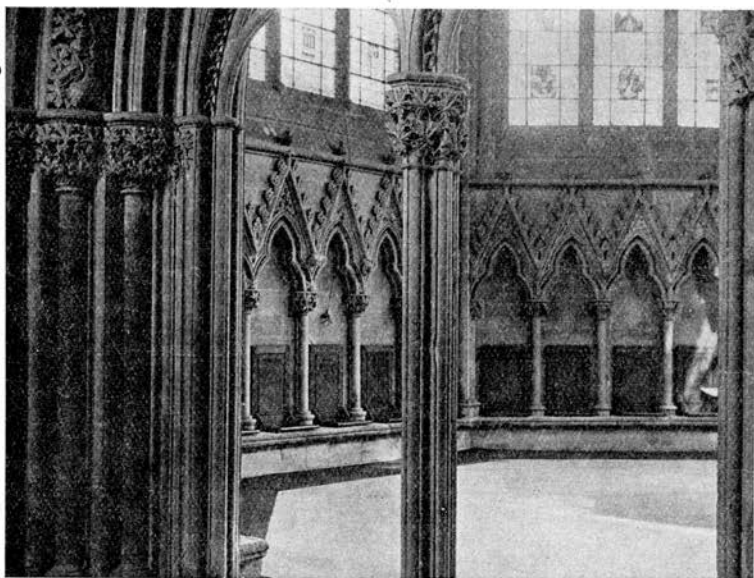


Fig. 3. A view of the Chapter House from the entrance.

Photo. by F. L. Attenborough.

the north of the entrance. Above the canopies is a moulded, horizontal string-course surmounted by the canopy finials. The canopies have large crockets and corbels of heads or foliage: the tympana (Fig. 2, 1-36; fig. 3) above the trefoiled arches are filled with foliage. Leaves, branches or heads are carved above the abaci of many of the capitals of the detached shafts. The south-west and west walls of the Chapter House are not glazed but relieved by geometrical tracery with crescentic panels of foliage above: the remaining six sides are

pierced by broad geometrical windows including some pieces of original glass. Mr Arthur Dimock¹ says that "the roof has been restored to its old lofty pitch; and all whose memories go back to the old flattened one, prior to 1881, will unanimously concur in approval". This sentence is puzzling in face of the fact that illustrations given by Rastall in 1787 and Killpack and Clarke in 1839 show a roof which appears to be identical with the present. The interior groined roof is undoubtedly original.

A noteworthy feature of the exterior of the Chapter House is a string-course above the corbel-table on which, in place of the ordinary dog-tooth ornament, groups of deeply-cut leaves, probably hawthorn, are arranged as four-sided pyramids. The stone used in the construction of the Chapter House and other parts of the Cathedral is a fine-grained dolomitic limestone of Permian age from the Mansfield quarries.

Many authors have enthusiastically praised the faithful rendering of natural form in the Southwell Chapter House, but there has been no attempt systematically to compare all the plants on capitals and tympana with trees and herbs growing in the fields, hedgerows and forest. It has been said that there are no two capitals or tympana alike², and this is in the main true. Animals such as boars, goats, hares, birds, and fabulous creatures are occasionally associated with the amazingly undercut foliage: here and there foliage shoots are twined round a human head or held in the mouth. Each capital appears to have been cut from the block of stone which forms part of the wall immediately behind it. Some critics are inclined to think that the sculptor's interest in the faithful rendering and ingenious grouping of leaves, flowers, and fruit interfered with his sense of values in the coordination of ornament and structural features, but for the most part the plants fit into the general design and are not mere superposed adornment which detracts from the general architectural unity. As Professor Hamilton Thompson writes: "If the foliage which is faithfully imitated in wonderful variety has less vigour than the conventional foliage of early Gothic

¹ Dimock (1898), p. 55.

² Bond (1906), p. 436.

sculpture, the skill and perfection of the work leave nothing to be desired."¹

Granting that in the later stages of Gothic architecture certain designs or shop-patterns were freely used by sculptors to whom little or no freedom of choice was permitted, I believe that the master craftsmen at Southwell looked to nature for their models. In this connexion reference may be made to some naturalistic carving (1330 or 1340) in Bristol Cathedral which Dr Coulton² cites as a clear example of "definite shop work". He writes: "There in the remarkable but uniform series of sepulchral niches, the artist has followed the fashion of his day in carving naturalistic foliage, hawthorn and maple and so on. But he has given to his hawthorn the characteristic winged seed of the maple, and, by a complementary error, may blossom to his maple. It seems evident that he had worked from patterns which were stocked in the shop, and that he had mixed them up, being no direct observer of leaves and flowers."

It is by no means certain that the Bristol craftsman worked from patterns and was not interested in the actual plants. The leaves associated with the maple fruit are not accurate copies of hawthorn; they may be modelled on the leaves of maple. The flowers on the other arch figured by Dr Coulton are more suggestive of *Potentilla* or *Ranunculus* than hawthorn, and the accompanying leaves agree more closely with those of some species of *Ranunculus* than with maple.

It is true that at Southwell and elsewhere the flowers of one plant are sometimes, though rarely, placed by the side of leaves from another (e.g. Plate I, fig. 1); and occasionally the form of a leaf is slightly altered to adapt it to the available space. Dr Joan Evans³ in her book, *Nature in Design*, refers to the "mixing of quite naturalistic flowers from one plant with quite naturalistic leaves from one of another order" as "a characteristic that recurs in apogees of naturalism, for instance, in the early thirteenth century of our era". She cites an instance from a fresco in the palace of Hagia Triada in Crete—white violets grouped with bramble-like leaves. The

¹ Thompson (1925), p. 91.

² Coulton (1928), pp. 206, 208.

³ Evans, J. (1933), p. 11, footnote 4.



Fig. 1. Capitals on the north side of entrance to Chapter House. Vine (on extreme left), hawthorn, maple leaves with flowers of another plant. Photo by F. L. Attenborough.

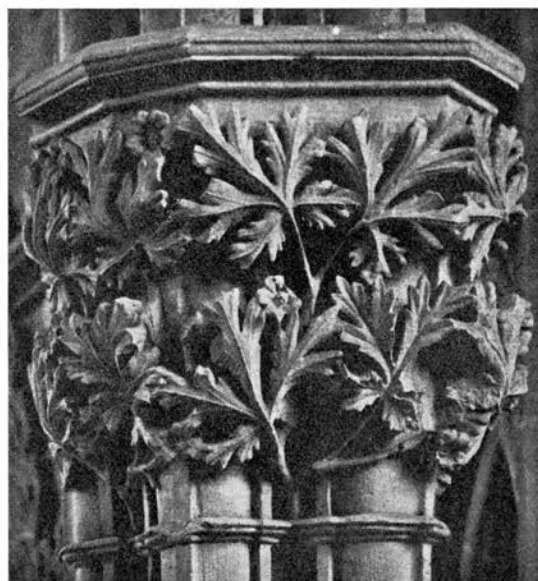


Fig. 2. Capital of central shaft of entrance to Chapter House. Ranunculus. Photo by J. Crowther Cox.

craftsmen were not bound by the strict tenets of a pre-Raphaelite artist; they drew inspiration from Nature, often copying with meticulous accuracy not only the lobes and venation but the finer detail. They allowed themselves some liberty in treating natural forms in a manner best suited to decorative design and to the production of a harmony in stone. In some instances leaves were obviously copied with careful attention to the characters of the actual plant; in many others the sculptor allowed a freer rein to his fancy and did not trouble to place flowers and leaves in their correct position on a branch, nor did he hesitate to alter the depth of lobing and the form of the marginal teeth.

It is popularly supposed that the head of a master craftsman was selected for one of the corbels in the Chapter House (above capital 9, Fig. 2). This tradition, though attractive, is open to doubt: the cap on the head above capital 9 and a similar one over capital 22 are not quite the same in shape as the headdress of men known to have been master masons depicted on memorial slabs and in old MSS.¹

As a French writer says, most of the disciples of what he calls the Interpretation School of architecture (the second half of the twelfth century to the end of the thirteenth) as opposed to the uninspired Imitation School are unknown; they sleep in some country cemetery, in the shade of some old cloister. The same writer² describes the sculptors' methods in terms which, I like to think, are in part applicable to Southwell: "The artist who wished to compose a capital went in the morning into the fields and woods and gathered the leaves which might serve as models. He chose them most frequently from among the smaller plants, preferring such as lent themselves best to a decorative scheme. On returning to the workshop he put his small bouquet into a vase with water and then began work." Viollet-le-Duc³, in the article "Flore" in his famous dictionary, refers, often with more imagination than scientific accuracy, to plants believed to have been selected by French sculptors. Mr J. K. Colling⁴, who took a keen interest in naturalistic plant forms, tells us that when

¹ Lethaby (1904), (1906); Coulton (1928).

² Lambin (1899).

³ Viollet-le-Duc (1868).

⁴ Colling (1874).

he saw the maple leaf at Southwell he "was so struck with its delicate crispness and beauty of form, united to its wonderful freedom and artistic balance of light and shade" that after thirty years he retained a vivid remembrance of its brilliancy and elegance. He says that the leaves are not a literal copy of nature, but "there is in these stones an enduring life, which has been transplanted from the very hedgerows and fields that surround the old Minster". Mr Samuel Gardner¹ in his stimulating book on English Gothic foliage acknowledges that the work at Southwell is "so cleverly done that it almost disarms criticism"; he goes on to say that the leaves "are of the nature of applied ornament rather than architecturally part of the building. They suggest a temporary adornment like beautiful clothing which is removable rather than a permanent portion of the structure. They do not impart a sense of rest and strength, but look as if a strong gust of wind might blow them away". The capitals mentioned as examples may, however, be regarded in another light. The ornament is not a necessary part of the structure; it was executed as an enrichment of the capitals by men who delighted in their art and were influenced by a real feeling for architectural fitness in the composition of their schemes. Leaf-stalks curve upwards over the bell from stems trailing horizontally above the necking, and the clusters of leaves become denser and more spreading as they reach and cling to the projecting abacus. As the author of the brief description of Southwell in the *Builder* Series of Cathedrals² says: "it is evident that there was an original genius at work here, who did not run in the accepted paths of conventionalism, and who, by his own individuality and love of nature, anticipated by a considerable period the style of naturalism which was afterwards to develop in English architectural carving, and not only anticipated it, but surpassed it beforehand."

If the plant-forms on the Southwell capitals and tympana were copied from shop-patterns as was the custom at a later date we should expect to find a much greater uniformity in the shape and dissection of the leaves, and we might reason-

¹ Gardner (1927), p. 35.

² H. H. S. (1894).

ably expect to meet with precisely the same form in other buildings erected at or about the same period. Certain plants recur on different capitals, but the rendering is not identical. It is, moreover, significant that though *Ranunculus* seems to have been a favourite genus the species chosen are not always the same. The leaves on the capital of the central shaft of the entrance to the Chapter House (Pl. I, fig. 2) can be closely matched with those of *Ranunculus acris*; the leaves on capital 8 in the Chapter House bear a very close resemblance to those of *R. repens*. Other leaves, e.g. those on tympana 5 and 8, are probably based on *R. repens*; they are closer to a *Ranunculus* than to any species of *Potentilla*. There are no recognizable leaves which cannot be more or less closely matched with the foliage of native flowering plants still living in the neighbourhood. Mr Gardner includes the fig in the list of plants in the Chapter House, but I have not found any evidence of its occurrence. The work is unequal in merit, some of it by inferior sculptors, or possibly a later insertion. On a few of the capitals the trefoil, cinquefoil or 'stiff-leaf' ornament with prominent ribs is an accurate reproduction of the motif which is characteristic of English thirteenth-century work. There is little or no gradual transition from convention to realism: the craftsmen had almost completely broken away from the old tradition though some of them, possibly those who had been trained in the earlier style, occasionally reverted to the conventional symbol of an honoured past.

On another occasion a more general and comparative account of Gothic plant sculpture may be attempted: my immediate aim is to describe and as far as possible name the plants which for more than six centuries have delighted generations of visitors to one of the noblest monuments of English architecture. It may safely be assumed that some of the plants which were accessible to the Southwell masons are now rare or lost to the locality: we know that several species recorded in the earliest published lists for the county have disappeared¹.

¹ Carr (1906).

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITALS AND TYMPANA.

Identification of even the most naturalistic sculpture is by no means easy: experience has taught me that a decision reached during one visit is discarded at the next and possibly adopted once more on a third occasion. The names in the following lists express my present and in not a few instances a confident opinion, though some are given rather as tentative suggestions which may induce other visitors to the Chapter House to co-operate in a reconstructive effort. In the following description the capitals are referred to by the numbers given in the two diagrammatic plans (Figs. 1 and 2); those in the Vestibule as *V. 1*, *V. 2*, etc.; those in the Chapter House as *C. 1*, *C. 2*, etc. The tympana in the Chapter House are cited as *T. 1*, *T. 2*, etc.

The Vestibule (including the old Cloister).

The arch leading to the Vestibule is divided by a central shaft into two subordinate arches separated by a trefoil opening. On the capital of the central column are leaves and flowers of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*): the centre of the flower is a simple, undivided boss (see Note III, p. 25). On the eastern capital of the main arch are five-lobed leaves of maple (*Acer campestre*) in contrast to the three-lobed leaves of hawthorn. Hawthorn covers the western half of the hood-mould; over the eastern half maple leaves are interspersed with the double, horizontally-extended winged fruits.

- V. 1.* Hawthorn, as on the capital of the central column of the entrance arch.

The soffit of the arch above the gate into the Vestry, between *V. 1* and *V. 2*, is covered with rectangular diaper work: on one square is a naturalistic rose; on all the others conventional leaves in groups of four.

- V. 2.* } Maple. (See Note I, p. 22.)

- V. 3.* }

- V. 4.* Oak (*Quercus robur*). (See Note II, p. 24.)

- V. 5.* Hawthorn.

- V. 6.* Hop (*Humulus Lupulus*), cf. *C. 10*, *C. 14*, etc. In the absence of fruit and tendrils it is not always easy to distinguish hop from other deeply-lobed leaves, e.g. vine and bryony, of similar shape, but the leaves of the hop are usually represented as transversely ribbed, a feature noticeable in living and in recently pressed leaves.

V. 7. *Ranunculus*. Nearest to *R. repens* though not an accurate copy. The same foliage is continued over the cross-lintel. (See Note IV, p. 25.)

The leaves on the abaci of several capitals, e.g. V. 1–V. 7, are most of them hawthorn or forms suggested by hawthorn.

V. 8 and the cross-lintel. The leaves with a maple fruit (*cf.* the fruit on the left, Pl. II) are probably based on maple though they by no means faithfully represent the proportions and segmentation of the model. The flowers with notched petals and a simple centre agree with those of *Potentilla* and in a less degree with *Ranunculus*; they differ from the flowers of maple. (See Note I, p. 22.)

V. 9. Oak. Resting on the abacus is a multilobed leaf with wavy segments of a conventional type which became common in later work. (See Note V, p. 26.)

V. 10. Vine (*Vitis vinifera*).

V. 11. Hawthorn.

V. 12. } Maple.

V. 13. }

V. 14. Damaged.

V. 15. Vine.

Between the shafts of V. 15 and V. 16 is an engaged vaulting shaft with a large capital on which is the head of a bull with broken vine leaves and grapes. The bull's head recalls much more ancient types.

V. 16. *Ranunculus*.

V. 17. Hawthorn with fruit. This capital supports one end of the outermost member of the entrance-arch of the Chapter House. (*Cf.* Pl. I, fig. 1.)

V. 18. Vine.

V. 19. *Ranunculus*. The flowers have a simple centre and entire, unnotched petals. Usually the flowers associated with *Ranunculus* leaves have a multiple centre, divided by intersecting grooves into small bosses, and notched petals.

On one of the capitals of the shaft in the north-east corner of the Vestibule which supports the hood on the east side of the geometrical window in the north wall there are sprays of hawthorn with a bird holding a fruit in its beak: these leaves are less deeply lobed than the foliage of hawthorn on most of the capitals; they agree more closely with *Crataegus oxyacantha* than with the other species. (See Note III, p. 25.)

V. 20. Badly damaged.

V. 21. The capital is much damaged: on the abacus is a rose flower in side-view with two alternating series of notched petals; also broken leaves.

V. 22. } Badly damaged.

V. 23. }

- V. 24. Maple.
- V. 25. A single broad and deeply-lobed leaf with the three-pronged tip bent slightly over below the abacus. It resembles some forms of *Ranunculus*, e.g. *R. acris*, but is larger than most of the carved leaves of that genus.
- V. 26. *Ranunculus*.
- V. 27. Ivy leaves (*Hedera Helix*). On the abacus is a spray of five-lobed leaves of uncertain origin.
- V. 28. Maple, with hop (leaves and catkin) above the abacus; the latter is the same type of leaf as that above C. 10 and C. 40.
- V. 29. Conventional foliage of the typical Early English form showing the usual prominent ribs. Above the capital is a leaf identical with those on V. 8; it is probably *Ranunculus*.
- V. 30. Maple with vine above.
- V. 31. Oak: a twig of maple above the abacus. (Cf. the maple leaves on capital 5 in the Chapter House: Pl. II.)
- V. 32. Maple leaves and fruit: hawthorn above.
- V. 33. Maple.

On the capital of the vaulting shaft between V. 33 and V. 34 is a man's head with oak leaves.

- V. 34. Oak.
- V. 35. Maple.
- V. 36. A large-lobed leaf, probably hawthorn.
- V. 37. Hawthorn: hop above the abacus.
- V. 38. Hawthorn leaves and fruit.
- V. 39. Oak, with hop above.
- V. 40. Vine: oak on the abacus.
- V. 41. Oak: maple on the abacus.
- V. 42. Hawthorn.
- V. 43. Vine: the leaf on the abacus is of the type described in Note V, p. 26.
- V. 44. Maple: hawthorn above.
- V. 45. Maple on both capital and abacus.
- V. 46. Oak: maple leaf on the abacus, also flowers with notched petals which are probably *Ranunculus* or *Potentilla*. (Cf. V. 8.)
- V. 47. Ivy; maple above.
- V. 48. Vine; ivy above.
- V. 49. *Ranunculus*; with maple above.

The Chapter House.

In 1787 Rastall described the entrance-arch as "modern", possibly designed and presented by the "magnificent Wolsey" and the same opinion was repeated by Killpack and Clarke. Later authors, so far as I know, regard the entrance-arch as

contemporary with the rest of the Chapter House: there is no evidence to the contrary.

Deeply undercut vine leaves and grapes cover the hood-mould supported on *V.* 17 and *V.* 18. On the capitals *a*, *b*, *c* are respectively oak leaves, vine leaves and grapes, and a *Ranunculus* with flowers. The hollow moulding of the member of the arch above capital *b*, covered with sprays of maple (see Note I, p. 22), is a triumph of craftsmanship. On capitals *f*, *e*, *d* are respectively hawthorn, maple, with flowers of *Potentilla* or *Ranunculus*, and a *Ranunculus* (Pl. I, fig. 1). Some of the *Ranunculus* leaves are only partially unfolded from the buds. By the side of the outermost shaft, and capital *f*, a spray of vine leaves and grapes runs along a vertical hollow. The capital of the central shaft (Pl. I, fig. 2) is wreathed with deeply-lobed *Ranunculus* leaves intermixed with flowers: these leaves may have been copied from *R. acris*.

In the following list the capitals and tympana are arranged as in Fig. 2. The nature of the ornament, if any, on the abacus is given in the middle column; the absence of any such ornament is indicated by —.

Croquets on the canopies of the Chapter House stalls.

These are good and early examples of the type of leaf which afterwards became a stock pattern. The leaves are probably derived from hawthorn foliage with which liberties were taken by increasing the length and number of lobes. (See Note V, p. 26.)

*Capitals of the vaulting shafts and bosses on the
Chapter House roof.*

In treatment and in the selection of material the capitals of the eight groups of window and vault-shafts agree very closely with those of the arcade: the leaves on both sets of capitals differ from those on the bosses of the roof in the absence of bulbous swellings.

Capitals	Ornaments on abaci	Tympana
C. 1. Ivy, leaves and fruits; imperfect.	Head	T. 1. Imperfect. Probably a spray with simple, broadly oval leaves: cf. scurvy grass (<i>Cochlearia officinalis</i>), lady's smock (<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>) and box. It is hardly determinable and may represent-clustered fruit, e.g. elder, and not leaves.
C. 2. Maple leaves and one damaged fruit.	—	
C. 3. Vine. The lateral veins are omitted.	—	
C. 4. <i>Ranunculus</i> ; cf. <i>R. acris</i> , with flowers.	—	T. 2. Oak; imperfect.
C. 5. Maple leaves and fruit (Pl. II).	<i>Ranunculus</i> with good venation.	T. 3. Large, deeply-lobed leaves which may be a <i>Ranunculus</i> or possibly a <i>Geranium</i> , e.g. <i>G. pusillum</i> ; two of the leaves are held in a man's mouth; one is attached to his forehead.
C. 6. <i>Ranunculus</i> . Leaves with flowers as in C. 4, but differently treated.		T. 4. Vine.
C. 7. Ivy.	Hawthorn.	T. 5. Hop and a <i>Ranunculus</i> (cf. <i>R. repens</i>) from a man's mouth.
C. 8. <i>Ranunculus</i> . The leaves differ from those on C. 4 and C. 6 in the more contracted bases of the major lobes, a feature characteristic of <i>R. repens</i> and some other species. The flowers have a simple centre and the petals are unnotched: in many of the flowers, associated with leaves believed to be <i>Ranunculus</i> , the centre is multiple and the petals are notched. See Note IV, p. 25.		T. 6. A large, deeply dissected leaf, probably based on oak.

C. 9. Rose (double) (Pl. III, fig. 1). Leaves broken: they appear to have three leaflets as occasionally in wild roses, though there are usually seven. In one flower the centre is simple, in the others compound—the more usual form. See Note VI, p. 27. The corbel of the canopy above this capital is the head supposed on doubtful evidence to be a portrait of the master craftsman.

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C. 10. Hop. The leaves are smooth: usually the carved leaves of hop are transversely ribbed (cf. C. 14). The catkins (fruits) show the characteristic overlapping triangular scales (bracts). Cf. leaf above V. 28.

Hop: the lobes are blunter than those of the capital leaves. (Cf. V. 28.)

C. 11. Vine. This is similar to the hop on C. 10, but the fruit is that of the vine.

Ivy.

C. 12. Oak with acorns, and galls on the leaves.

Oak twig with terminal buds.

C. 13. *Ranunculus*. Flowers with compound centre and unnotched petals.

Maple.

C. 14. Hop: the leaves show transverse folds; catkins. On the capital of the vaulting shaft between C. 14 and C. 15 a goat with ivy.

T. 7. Large oval leaves, with oblique transverse folds, radiating from a central boss divided into four segments. Probably a slightly conventionalized twig of beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) as seen from above, the boss representing an unfolding bud. The lateral ridges or folds suggest beech leaves.

T. 8. *Ranunculus* (probably *R. repens*). Cf. T. 5.

T. 9. Large, coarsely toothed leaves with central bud surrounded by three smaller leaves: probably based on oak.

T. 10. Oak with stalked acorns.

T. 11. Imperfect: the same leaf as on T. 7.

- | | Capitals | Ornaments
on abaci | Tympana |
|--------|--|-----------------------|--|
| C. 15. | Bryony (<i>Bryonia dioica</i>): tendrils, fruit, and leaves. | — | |
| C. 16. | Maple. | Head. | |
| C. 17. | Conventional leaves with very prominent ribs in deep grooves overlapped at the ends by leaf lobes. | <i>Ranunculus</i> . | |
| | | | T. 12. <i>Ranunculus</i> . Cf. C. 13; also cf. <i>R. acris</i> and <i>R. auricomus</i> . Two sprays from a man's mouth; one on his head; two birds. |
| | | | T. 13. Ivy from a man's mouth; two birds, one with a young bird. |
| | | | T. 14. Two sprays held in a man's mouth: that on the left resembles some species of <i>Pyrus</i> , e.g. <i>Pyrus malus</i> , the wild apple, also species of <i>Prunus</i> , e.g. <i>P. Cerasus</i> (cherry) and <i>P. spinosa</i> (blackthorn), but neither in the form of the leaves nor in the relation of fruit to leaf does it agree very closely with any of the plants examined. One or two of the fruits show a slight apical depression. The spray on the right is probably black bryony (<i>Tamus communis</i>); it may be compared also with convolvulus and the bitter sweet (<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>). See Note VII. |
| | | | T. 15. Long deeply dissected leaves and a central bud with unfolding leaves, which may be compared with <i>Artemisia</i> (wormwood). |
| C. 19. | Maple. | Conventional | |
| | | Early English leaf. | |
| C. 20. | Vine and an animal eating grapes. | — | T. 16. Oak. |
| C. 21. | Vine with fruit. | — | T. 17. Ivy. |

- C. 22. Hawthorn leaves: also a slightly damaged shoot bearing four leaves in opposite pairs which may be the white dead nettle, the stinging nettle, or possibly mint (*Mentha sativa*) (Pl. III, fig. 2). See Note VIII, p. 28.
- C. 23. Oak: imperfect. Head with cap similar to that on the head of the corbel above C. 9.
- C. 24. Ivy; also hare and hounds. Oak with acorns.
- C. 25. Hop: imperfect. Head of an animal.
- C. 26. Probably hop; badly damaged. Also a cock. Head.
- C. 27. *Ranunculus* and broken flower. Cf. 13. —
- C. 28. Ivy: the fruits have a circular apical depression. Cf. C. 18. Maple.
- C. 29. Vine. Conventional leaf.
- C. 30. Oak and acorns. A partially destroyed bird and claws of others. Conventional leaf.
- C. 31. Hawthorn with clusters of flowers with simple centre and entire petals. Head and hawthorn.
- C. 32. Oak leaves with galls; also acorns being eaten by two boars hidden among the leaves. —
- C. 33. Hawthorn with part of a bird, and a small mammal. —
- T. 18. As on T. 15: probably based on hawthorn.
- T. 19. Oak: damaged.
- T. 20. Destroyed.
- T. 21. A five-lobed type of leaf similar to that of V. 27, but hardly identifiable.
- T. 22. Maple with fruit; from a man's mouth.
- T. 23. Hawthorn: cf. T. 15, T. 18.
- T. 24. Large double rose.
- T. 25. Oak.
- T. 26. Hawthorn and two fabulous animals*.
- T. 27. Oak.

* Figured by Gardner (1927), Pl. 59.

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Capitals</p> <p>C. 34. Hop. Cf. C. 14.</p> | <p>Ornaments
on abaci</p> <p>Hawthorn.</p> | <p>Tympana</p> |
| <p>C. 35. <i>Ranunculus</i> with flowers. Cf. C. 4, etc.; not the same species as on C. 8.</p> | <p>Deeply lobed with overfolded tip, as on V. 25. Cf. also T. 3. Possibly a <i>Geranium</i>.</p> | <p>T. 28. Simple leaves; flowers with notched petals, some in side view showing the calyx and ovary; possibly <i>Prunus Avium</i> (wild cherry) or <i>P. Cerasus</i> (dwarf cherry).</p> |
| <p>C. 36. Vine.</p> | <p>Maple.</p> | <p>T. 29. Destroyed.</p> |
| <p>C. 37. Hop; no transverse ribbing.</p> | <p>Oak and acorns.</p> | <p>T. 30. Simple, coarsely toothed leaves. Cf. T. 28: probably a <i>Prunus</i>.</p> |
| <p>C. 38. Hawthorn.</p> | <p>—</p> | <p>T. 31. Oak.</p> |
| <p>C. 39. Maple.</p> | <p>—</p> | <p>T. 32. Destroyed.</p> |
| <p>C. 40. <i>Ranunculus</i>.</p> | <p>Hop. Cf. leaf above C. 10.</p> | <p>T. 33. Hawthorn held in the hands of a man. On some of the fruits there are five small knobs at the apex; on most four. Hawthorn fruits (haws) have five small knobs formed of the remains of sepals.</p> |
| <p>C. 41. Oak and stalked acorns.</p> | <p>Animal.</p> | <p>T. 34. Oak.</p> |
| <p>C. 42. Bryony (<i>Bryonia</i>). Cf. C. 15.</p> | <p>Maple.</p> | <p>T. 35. Ivy.</p> |
| <p>C. 43. Hawthorn.</p> | <p>Oak.</p> | <p>T. 36. Badly damaged.</p> |
| <p>C. 44. Maple: some leaves in overlapping pairs.</p> | <p>—</p> | |
| <p>C. 45. Maple.</p> | <p>—</p> | |

Capital 1 (on the left of the entrance). Oak; *Ranunculus* with flowers; conventional Early English leaf-ornament.

- „ 2. Maple leaves in pairs; oak; conventional.
- „ 3. Ivy and goat; man blowing a horn.
- „ 4. Maple; oak; vine.
- „ 5. Hawthorn; maple.
- „ 6. Maple; oak; ivy.
- „ 7. Oak; hawthorn; conventional.
- „ 8. Vine and maple.

A possible meaning of the goat eating ivy on capital 3 was suggested to me by Dr Daniel V. Thompson of Harvard, who, on a recent visit to Cambridge, saw my collection of Southwell photographs. He kindly copied for me extracts from a twelfth-century or earlier text of Heraclius or Eraclius entitled *De coloribus et artibus Romanorum* quoted by Mrs M. P. Merrifield in her original *Treatises...on the Arts of Painting* (London, 1849). It appears that glass or precious stones placed in the blood of a goat which had been killed after eating ivy were softened and could be easily cut. In one of the extracts it is stated that the goat should be starved for three days before eating the ivy. The goat on the capital has an emaciated appearance!

The modern Choir benches.

A word must be said in praise of the carving on the panels and bench ends of the oak Chorister Stalls by an exceptionally skilful and artistic craftsman from North Walsham. It was a real pleasure to have my attention drawn by the Provost of Southwell (the Very Reverend W. J. Conybeare) to a tablet which in his wisdom and kindness of heart he had caused to be attached to the end of one of the benches stating that "Charles Henry Simpson carved these stalls A.D. 1886". After some correspondence on the plants used as models, through the kindness of Mr Gaymer of the firm Messrs Cornish and Gaymer of North Walsham, I had a talk with Mr Simpson, who showed me the original working drawings made by him for the work at Southwell: he is a sculptor in whom there survives the true artistic spirit of the mediaeval craftsmen

whose work he rivalled and surpassed in the wider range of plants selected as models. With few exceptions, notably the men who wrought in Westminster Abbey, the number of mediaeval craftsmen whose names are known is lamentably small. As Ruskin said: "In no art is there closer connexion between our delight in the work, and our admiration of the workman's mind, than in architecture, and yet we rarely ask for a builder's name." It would be well if the Provost's example had been more frequently followed in the past as one hopes it will be in the future.

NOTES ON CERTAIN PLANTS.

I. *The maple* (*Acer campestre*). It may be that there was some special reason apart from aesthetic considerations for the widespread choice of the maple by mediaeval sculptors and illuminators of manuscripts: the resemblance of the stalked fruits to a T-cross is a possible though perhaps not a very probable reason. The mazer bowls carried by pilgrims are said to have been made of maple. The maple occurs also in fourteenth-century work as, for example, in the nave of Beverley Minster (1308-30) where leaves and fruit occur in some of the spandrels of the aisle arcading, on the canopies of the Southwell Choir screen, and in many other places.

My friend Sir Sydney Cockerell, to whom I applied for help in the examination of medieval MSS. which might throw light on contemporary carving, showed me photographic reproductions of the Ormesby Psalter (c. 1300) in which I found maple leaves and fruits on some of the folios. Sir Sydney also drew my attention to an account by the Rev. W. W. Lillie¹ (to whom I am indebted for a reprint of his paper) of a Retable at Thornham Parva in Suffolk: on two of the spandrels of the Retable (between 1300 and 1500) winged maple fruits are clearly depicted.

Maple and Ranunculus. There is one form of leaf which was freely employed and resembles both the leaves of maple and some species of *Ranunculus*; it may be described as a synthetic type based on maple and having features possibly

¹ Lillie (1932).

PLATE II



Capital 5, Chapter House. Maple with fruit; hawthorn above.
Photo by J. Crowther Cox.

derived from *Ranunculus*. This form is seen in the vestibule capitals V. 2, V. 3; the same form of leaf fills the lower foliated arch-member of the entrance door to the Chapter House and occurs on capital *e* (Pl. I, fig. 1) on the north side of the entrance; it has five lobes separated by deep sinuses and each lobe has three teeth. On capital V. 2 symmetrically five-lobed leaves are associated with flowers which in the number of petals and in other features resemble those of *Potentilla* and *Ranunculus* much more closely than the flowers of the maple; on the left-hand side of the lintel near the window there is a maple fruit with wings shorter than in the actual plant. It is clear that leaves, flowers and fruit cannot be referred to a single source. My view is that the leaves and fruit were taken from the maple though neither is represented with complete accuracy; the flowers were copied from a *Ranunculus* and *Potentilla* as being more decorative and easier to reproduce in stone than the flowers of the maple. One of the best examples of maple, undoubtedly copied from nature, is seen in Pl. II; a short, winged fruit and leaves which differ from those in the Vestibule in having three lobes with three teeth and two shorter lobes with two teeth—a form common in the maple—also in the deeper sinuses and the narrow waists of the lobes. An examination of a large number of maple leaves reveals a fairly wide range in the depth of the lobing, the breadth of the lower part (waist) of the lobes, and in the occurrence of two or, rarely, three teeth on the basal lobes. The branch above the abacus of capital 31 in the Chapter House bears leaves intermediate between those on capital 5 (Pl. II) and the vestibule capital: the branch was certainly copied from a maple though not accurately; all the leaves should be in opposite pairs. A typical *Ranunculus* leaf (? *R. acris*) is seen on the capital of the central shaft of the Chapter House entrance (Pl. I, fig. 2); it is more subdivided than any maple leaf. In other species of *Ranunculus* the leaves are more like those of maple. It is clear that both maple and *Ranunculus* were favourite models; both were sometimes copied with remarkable accuracy. On the other hand, it would seem that a form of leaf was adopted by some sculptors which is not a faithful representation of either *Ranunculus* or

maple; it is perhaps nearer to maple, and in some instances the stems appear to be woody rather than herbaceous though the deeper sinuses and narrower waists of the lobes are features more suggestive of a *Ranunculus* model. It would seem that while many of the leaves at Southwell are definitely naturalistic and copied from nature, others are slightly conventionalized and based on more than one model. It is possible that something of this sort may have occurred: having faithfully copied maple leaves in his work on capital 5 (Pl. II) and perhaps *Ranunculus* leaves on some other capitals (e.g. capital 6, Chapter House), the master mason said to himself or to his colleagues, "let us have a leaf of slightly more slender proportions than those of the rather squat leaves of the maple, with more deeply-cut and narrower lobes and all the lobes with three teeth as in some of the *Ranunculus* leaves". A composite type was the result. It is impossible to be absolutely consistent in venturing to name the leaves in stone, and in the descriptive part of this paper I have referred the typical maple leaves as well as those which in their form may have been partly based on *Ranunculus* to maple (*Acer campestre*) despite the fact that some of them are rather stylized than realistic.

The carving on the capital reproduced in Pl. II is not only much more naturalistic than that on some of the vestibule capitals (e.g. V. 2, 3), it is artistically superior.

II. *The oak*. There are two well-defined species of *Quercus* native to Britain which are by far the commonest—*Quercus robur* (= *Q. pedunculata*) and *Q. sessiliflora*. The former is the more abundant and was a dominant tree in the forests of the Midlands: the acorns are borne on long stalks and the leaves have small ears (lobes or auricles) where the stalk joins the blade. In *Q. sessiliflora* the stalks of the fruit are much shorter, or absent, and the blade of the leaf tapers gradually towards the base. The Southwell oaks on both capitals and tympana combine comparatively long fruit stalks with tapered leaves; they show features of both the common species. It is possible that the sculptor did not accurately copy the leaf-base; or, on the other hand, the leaves chosen as models may

have come from a natural hybrid having the stalked fruits of one parent and the leaf-form of the other. The latter supposition receives some support from the fact that on a corbel in the Choir of Exeter Cathedral¹ there are oak leaves in which basal auricles are clearly shown.

III. *Hawthorn*. The common hawthorn includes two forms which are often regarded as distinct species: *Crataegus monogyna* characterized by deeply dissected leaves, with 5-7 lobes and narrow sinuses, and *C. oxyacantha*, in which the very variable leaves have usually three shallower lobes. Most of the Southwell leaves correspond more closely with those of the commoner *C. monogyna*, but the foliage on one of the vaulting shafts in the Vestibule is more like that of *C. oxyacantha*. The Glastonbury-thorn is a variety of *C. oxyacantha* (var. *praecox*). The hawthorn was undoubtedly a favourite plant possibly because of its use in festivals or from its connexion with Glastonbury legends. Mr R. U. Sayce² says that May Day customs "almost certainly date from pre-Christian times".

IV. *Ranunculus*. A comparison of many leaves in the Vestibule and Chapter House with the foliage of *Geranium*, *Geum*, *Potentilla*, *Malva* and other genera convinced me, after no little hesitation, that species of *Ranunculus* were freely used as models for the multilobed leaves which differ unmistakably from vine, hop, maple, and bryony. Sir Thomas Jackson³ described the carving at Southwell as exquisitely natural, and added "the rendering of the wild *Geranium* (*G. pratense*) cannot be surpassed for truthfulness, combined with a suitable decorative quality". The leaves shown in his drawing were almost certainly copied by the sculptor from a *Ranunculus*; they are not accurate representations of a *Geranium*. Leaves of *Geranium* were in all probability used in some instances, but on the whole the carved forms agree more closely with *Ranunculus*.

It is worthy of note that many of the flowers associated with leaves attributed to *Ranunculus* and a few of those with

¹ Gardner (1927), Pl. 63.

² Sayce (1932).

³ Jackson (1915), II, 49, Pl. XC.

leaves of hawthorn have five petals with a median notch (emarginate) in the outer edge as in the wild rose, some *Potentillas*, *Geraniums*, and other familiar plants.

While it is by no means uncommon to find notched petals on flowers of *Ranunculus* such a feature is not constant and is frequently absent, whereas in such common *Potentillas* as *Potentilla verna* and *P. torminalis* the petals are always notched. Moreover, the more cup-like form of *Potentilla* flowers as compared with those of the buttercup (*Ranunculus*) is another character represented by the Southwell craftsmen. It may well be that *Ranunculus* leaves and *Potentilla* flowers were both used and on the same capitals: species of these genera frequently grow side by side and in collecting specimens in fields I have often gathered leaves and flowers of both plants at the same time. A careful comparison of the foliage of the two genera has convinced me that the forms in the Chapter House and Vestibule were copied from leaves of different species of *Ranunculus*, not *Potentilla* nor *Geranium*. The flowers, as I have said, more closely resemble those of *Potentilla* though one cannot be certain of the actual source.

The flowers associated with hawthorn leaves have, as a rule, entire petals as in may blossom, also a single central boss; whereas in the flowers of *Ranunculus* and *Rosa* the boss is compound and divided into several small bosses which are often described as representing stamens. In the rose they no doubt represent stamens; but in *Ranunculus* they were probably suggested by the group of seed-vessels (carpels) which form a conspicuous feature in the centre of the flower.

V. *The leaf above the abacus of V. 9.* This, with some other leaves at Southwell, is a type which became common in later work: the lobes are long and often numerous, spreading and waved—alternating flat and swollen. Viollet-le-Duc and several other authors compare this form of leaf with the “fronds” of a seaweed, presumably the common bladder-wrack (*Fucus*). Few of the mediaeval craftsmen would have seen a rocky beach at low tide. On the Percy Shrine (1335) in Beverley Minster there are abnormally long hawthorn leaves with fruit, and a similar though much more elongated

PLATE III



Fig. 1. Capital 9, Chapter House, Rose. The upper half only is reproduced, in side-view. Photo by J. Crowther Cox.



Fig. 2. Capital 22, Chapter House, Hawthorn and, below, a stem with opposite leaves. Photo by J. Crowther Cox.

type occurs on the vaulting bosses of the fourteenth-century altar screen. The so-called seaweed ornament¹ may be a derivative of the much simpler leaves of hawthorn or possibly of some other land-plant.

VI. *The rose.* Flowers of roses are almost invariably represented in Gothic sculpture—from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century and into the Renaissance period—as double flowers: in the Southwell roses there are ten petals in two alternating series (Pl. III, fig. 1); in later work the petals are often in several series as, for example, in the Tudor rose. I have never seen a wild rose with more than five petals, but as the number of flowers examined is comparatively small it would be rash to assert that doubling does not occur in the wild state. In cultivated roses, e.g. some forms of Dorothy Perkins, the occurrence of two series of petals is not uncommon. The rose was the badge of Eleanor of Provence, Queen of Henry III, and one of the badges of her consort: a golden rose was the badge of Edward I. Late in the thirteenth century roses were brought to England from Provins (Seine-et-Marne), a place long celebrated for roses. Provins roses have been incorrectly spoken of as Provence roses, and are said to have been brought by Crusaders from the Holy Land². It would be worth while to trace in more detail the history of the cultivated rose, but this is one of many attractive enquiries suggested by Gothic sculpture which must be left for the present. The main point is that the Southwell flowers were probably copied from a cultivated and not from a native, wild rose.

VII. *Note on tympanum 14.* The Provost of Southwell in his delightful account of the Minster³ suggests that the sprays from the mouth of a man's head on T. 14 may be intended to represent a healthful and a poisonous plant, illustrating perhaps the verse in the Epistle of James: "Out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing." It is hardly possible confidently to identify these sprays: the ovate leaves and stalked fruits may be wild apple or pear, or other species

¹ Gardner (1927), p. 40.

² Lethaby (1906), p. 54.

³ Conybeare (n.d.).

of *Pyrus*; they may be the wild cherry or the sloe (*Prunus spinosa*). My preference is wild apple; they are certainly not birch as Mr Colling¹ supposed. On one of the folios of the Tickill Psalter, an early fourteenth-century MS. from Worksop Priory and now in New York, photographs of which I had an opportunity of examining through the kindness of Professor Egbert² of Princeton University, there are two trees by the side of Adam and Eve representing the Tree of Life: the foliage is like that on the left-hand side (observer's left) of T. 14. Precisely similar leaves are shown on a Tree of Life in a photographic reproduction of an early fourteenth-century MS. from Ramsey Abbey in the Fitzwilliam Museum.

The leaves on the other side of the tympanum, though possibly taken from *Convolvulus*, *Polygonum Convolvulus*, or *Solanum dulcamara*, are still nearer to leaves of the black bryony (*Tamus communis*). The poisonous bittersweet would be more in accord with the Provost's suggestion.

VIII. *Capital 22 (Chapter House)*. On this capital (Pl. III, fig. 2) leaves, believed to be hawthorn, are associated with the stem of another plant characterized by toothed leaves borne in opposite pairs, possibly the white dead nettle (*Lamium album*), the mint or some other member of the Labiatae, one of the families in which opposite pairs of leaves are an obvious feature. This Labiate, as I believe it to be, is of exceptional importance as evidence of direct copying from nature: it is a type which, so far as I know, does not occur in other Gothic carvings and may have been chosen merely as a novelty or possibly as a plant having some symbolic or mystical significance.

CONCLUSION.

Estimates of the relative beauty and fitness of architectural designs are largely based on personal taste. My aim has been to look back through the centuries into a Chapter House in course of erection, standing by the side of a mason, in company, let us suppose, with a group of scholars from the Southwell Grammar School³, which is justly proud of a history

¹ Colling (1874), Pl. 49, fig. 2.

² Egbert (1932).

³ James (1927).

extending over nine centuries, and watching him as he glances from time to time at a twig conveniently placed by the side of an unfinished carving. One sees in progress a new art, the beginning of a short period of barely twenty years when nature supplied the inspiration that had previously been derived from a long succession of conventional patterns. It is true that natural forms were copied at an earlier date, particularly in the Ile de France, but in England thirteenth-century carving of a date prior to that of the Southwell Chapter House is mainly conventional. Naturalism reached its culminating point in the closing years of the thirteenth century (1280-1300) and in the early part of the fourteenth century; it then became modified through a return to another form of conventionalism characteristic of the latter part of the fourteenth century and the whole of the succeeding century. At Southwell we see the break with an old tradition; we share in the enthusiasm for an idea new to England and pay homage to the men who, as Professor Lethaby says, wrought the marvels of Gothic art and "adventured into the unknown". Whether we prefer the simple style of the Southwell Choir or profuse decoration of moulding and capital with naturalistic foliage, we wish we could grasp the hands of the nameless artists in stone whose work fills our hearts with gratitude.

What, it may be asked, is the object of studying the man-made plants in stone as specimens to be described and named; why not enjoy them as things of beauty and demonstrations of human skill and not worry over speculations which can never be converted into established fact? It is at least a harmless and fascinating hobby which quickens appreciation of the craftsman's art. Identification of the objects may incidentally throw some light on the history of our wild plants, and it is possible that a comparative study of naturalistic carving may enable us to form opinions on the motives which influenced choice of material. One wonders whether certain plants were selected simply for their beauty and adaptability to an architectural and decorative scheme, or whether they expressed some religious or secular beliefs, emotions or customs. The idea of mystic representation may

have been in the minds of the masons who, as Prior and Gardner suggest, studied Nature "not merely as the work of God, but as the symbol of God"¹. Symbolism, however, was probably in many instances a secondary consideration: the craftsmen were artists and not antiquarians. My own view is that symbolism, though it had a share in influencing choice of subjects, was a relatively unimportant factor in the age when Southwell Chapter House was being built. As Sir Thomas Jackson said: "a growing art, looking to nature rather than tradition, would chafe against the fetters of symbolism, and try to shake them off. The love of beauty and the desire to teach are two wholly different motives, and interfere with one another."²

It is a pleasure gratefully to acknowledge assistance and friendly encouragement received from the Provost, who is always ready to welcome those who share his love of the Minster, also from Mr McMicken, the Head Verger, and his colleague, who have afforded me all possible facilities.

In my excursion into a fascinating and unfamiliar branch of systematic botany I have derived much assistance from photographs: the large collection on sale at Mr Loughton's shop at Southwell; also several photographs generously supplied by my friends Mr J. Crowther Cox of Rotherham, an enthusiastic lover of the Cathedral; Mr F. L. Attenborough, Principal of University College, Leicester; Mr C. J. P. Cave, from whom I obtained photographs of the bosses in the Chapter House roof. The photographs reproduced in the plates, with the exception of Pl. I, fig. 1, given to me by Mr Attenborough, were taken by Mr Crowther Cox. I am also indebted to other friends: to Dr Lloyd and Dr Hamshaw Thomas of Cambridge, who respectively made possible my two most recent visits to Southwell; to the Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum, who sympathetically guided me in the inspection of illuminated MSS.; and to colleagues in the Botany School with whom comparisons of the carvings with living plants were discussed.

¹ Prior and Gardner (12). On the subject of symbolism, see also Lambin (1899).

² Jackson (1915), II, 313.

This record of indebtedness would not be complete without a word of cordial thanks to my wife for her most helpful co-operation.

My excuse for rashly venturing into unaccustomed ways is that having spent most of my life in endeavouring to decipher the plant records of the rocks, I have found recreation in establishing a friendly relationship with mediaeval craftsmen who derived inspiration from the living plant.

Addendum. Attention is called to Miss M. D. Anderson's book *The Medieval Carver* (Cambridge, 1935) which was published after this paper was written. One short chapter is devoted to foliage sculpture. Symbolism is discussed in Chapter IV.

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EXPLANATION OF PLATES

PLATE I.

- Fig. 1. Capitals on the north side of entrance to Chapter House: vine (on extreme left), hawthorn, maple leaves with flowers of another plant. (Photo: F. L. Attenborough.)
- Fig. 2. Capital of central shaft of entrance to Chapter House: *Ranunculus*. (Photo: J. Crowther Cox.)

PLATE II.

- Capital 5, Chapter House: maple with fruit; hawthorn above. (Photo: J. Crowther Cox.)

PLATE III.

- Fig. 1. Capital 9, Chapter House: rose.
- Fig. 2. Capital 22, Chapter House: hawthorn and a stem with opposite leaves. (Photos: J. Crowther Cox.)

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