

Late Gothic architecture in Scotland: Considerations on the influence of the Low Countries

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INTRODUCTION

Insofar as the surviving evidence will support any conclusion, it may be said that patrons of ecclesiastical building in the Scottish Lowland areas were largely dependent on England for architectural guidance during much of the 12th and 13th centuries. The unprecedented wave of building activity, which followed on the establishment of an effective network of dioceses and monastic houses under the leadership of the Canmore dynasty, created a need for artistic resources which Scotland was not at first equipped to meet, and it was natural that assistance should be sought in the neighbouring kingdom where the royal family and higher nobility had many connections. Despite a much later tradition that David I, who was the Canmore dynasty's most active patron of the Church, had called workmen from France and Flanders to his foundation of Holyrood (Fowler 1903, 24–5), it would be hard to find anything in the greater buildings erected either for him or for his contemporaries which was not essentially Anglo-Norman in inspiration. That is certainly not to say that Scotland was insulated from European influences. Anglo-Norman architecture itself was a complex synthesis of ideas of Rhenish, Burgundian, Lombard and other origins, and architectural solutions with their roots in eastern France, for example, were to be of great importance in the second half of the 12th century. But the evidence is consistent with the likelihood that the majority of these ideas were imported into Scotland indirectly through the medium of northern England—an area of advanced architectural thought, due to widespread Cistercian settlement, which almost certainly supplied Scotland with many craftsmen—rather than that they resulted from direct contact with mainland Europe.

In the course of the 13th century aspects of the design of several of the more important buildings, such as Dunblane and Inchmahome, suggest that some of the masons then working in Scotland were beginning to develop their own attitudes to design, presumably because there was a growing pool of craftsmen of native origin. Nevertheless, it would probably not be an exaggeration to suggest that these attitudes represent regional variants on essentially English themes, rather than anything more distinctive. Certainly, those major operations which were nearing completion when the Wars of Independence brought an almost complete halt to ecclesiastical building, including most notably the choirs of Glasgow, Elgin and Sweetheart, can only be fully understood against the background of English architecture.

From much of the century which followed Edward I's intervention in Scottish affairs there are so few firmly documented ecclesiastical buildings that it would be of little value to attempt generalizations for this period. Possibly all that can be said on the scant evidence of works such

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as the ruined refectory range at Dunfermline, which appears to have been started around 1329 on the basis of a royal gift of that year (*Exch Rolls*, I, 215), or the heavily restored upper parts of the choir of Dunkeld, which Myln says was rebuilt by Bishop William Sinclair who died in 1337 (Myln *Vitae*, 13), is that reliance on English sources seems to continue—although with a significant element of conservatism which presumably results from lack of contact with more recent exemplars. The suspension of most church building during these years was to be a major factor in the history of Scottish medieval architecture, since it was in the course of the same years that masons in England were experimenting with the ideas which were to carry English Late Gothic architecture along such a markedly different path from that of the rest of Europe. As a result Scotland had no part in these experiments, and thus did not acquire the experience which might have made the subsequent English developments on these ideas more readily acceptable.

Nevertheless, when rebuilding of the abbey church of Melrose was started after its destruction in 1385—it was possibly the first major campaign to be instigated for a very long time—it was initially designed in the current English fashion, and in fact the design of its presbytery provides a significant link in the developmental chain of northern English ecclesiastical architecture. On this basis it might be thought that Scotland was to resume its architectural dependence on England, even catching up on lost time; but this was not to be the case. Even before the shell of Melrose presbytery and transepts were complete there was a marked change in design, suggesting that the first mason had been replaced by another from a very different background. From this point onwards the contemporary English element at Melrose, and in Scottish architectural design as a whole, becomes far less important, and most later examples of ‘Englishness’ can perhaps be characterized more as a residual habit of thought than as a conscious and direct debt. In retrospect the design of those parts of Melrose which had been started in the last decades of the 14th century therefore appears notably exotic and there must be the suspicion that it was the work of an English mason, perhaps even working at the behest of Richard II himself, who certainly contributed to the first phase of the work in 1389 (Bain 1888, no 397).

The rejection of English architectural leadership did not mean that Scottish architecture simply marked time. Instead, there is evidence of a new willingness to look further afield for guidance, one of the earliest indicators of which may be noted in the importation of Robert I’s tomb for Dunfermline from Paris, by way of Bruges, in 1329 (*Exch Rolls*, I, cxxii). Even more significant are the two inserted inscriptions at Melrose itself, which refer to the presence of the Paris-born mason John Morow there and at several other major operations. His work is possibly identifiable in the supremely elegant detailing of the first two of the outer south chapels which flank the structural nave, and perhaps also in the choir of the collegiate church at Lincluden and a part of the north aisle of Paisley Abbey nave. Both of the latter show strikingly similar traits to the Melrose chapels, and the list of Morow’s works which is given in the longer of the two inscriptions at Melrose may be interpreted to include them (Fawcett forthcoming).

The late medieval phase of Scottish ecclesiastical architecture is therefore heralded by clearly documented cases of patrons looking to France for guidance on artistic matters. Since the Middle Ages also close with further recorded cases of the importation of French masons for James V in the 1530s (Mylne 1893, 45–58) it is tempting to assume that French influences were a major factor in the development of Scottish Late Gothic architecture, particularly in view of the periodically strengthened diplomatic ties between the two countries from the late 13th century onwards. However, although it would be unreasonable to question that French influences were at work, there can be little doubt that they were by no means the only ones, and they may not even have been the most important, since the wars with England left France unable to devote much energy to church building in the late 14th and early 15th centuries. The archi-

tectural evidence suggests that Scottish masons were never again to rely largely on a single channel of ideas, as they had in the 12th and 13th centuries; instead they and their patrons appear to have drawn inspiration from a wide range of sources, and the ideas they borrowed were grafted onto the native stock to create an eclectic manner of design which is, for the first time, identifiably Scottish rather than British. One of the major problems facing any student of Scottish Late Gothic architecture is the identification of these sources, a problem rendered more difficult by the transformations which were inevitably effected by Scottish masons in naturalising their borrowings. In this paper a preliminary attempt will be made to speculate upon some of the ways in which Scottish patrons and masons may have looked to one possible source of architectural ideas, the Low Countries, for guidance. This was the area which provided Scotland with its most important overseas market in the Later Middle Ages and artistic influence is commonly carried along lines established by commerce. The likelihood of architectural inspiration being derived from this area has long been recognized (MacGibbon & Ross 1896, 2), but little effort has so far been made to assess the extent of the role such inspiration may have played in the formation of the Scottish Late Gothic style.

SCOTTISH CONTACTS WITH THE LOW COUNTRIES

It must be said that there is virtually no documentary evidence for direct architectural contact between Scotland and the Low Countries in the later Middle Ages, other than such indications as the presence of craftsmen with the surnames 'Flemyng' and 'Flemisman' at Holyrood in 1531-2 and Falkland in 1538-39 respectively (Paton 1957, 76 & 256). However, the evidence for contact in the other arts is more telling. One indicator of Scotland's willingness to look to the Low Countries in artistic matters may be seen in the records which suggest that several Scottish craftsmen spent time, or even emigrated there. A case has been made for the outstanding illuminator Alexander Bening, who worked in Gent and Bruges in the second half of the 15th century being a member of an Edinburgh family, for example (McRoberts 1959, 94-6); and it has been suggested that several names listed in the Sculptors' Guild of Antwerp in the 1520s are of Scottish origin (Richardson 1928, 203). In addition, there are enigmatic references to an image maker and a painter from Scotland being in the service of the Duke of Burgundy, the overlord of much of the Low Countries, in the mid-15th century (Michel 1862, 9). In view of this it may be thought not unlikely that Scottish masons could also have visited parts of the Netherlands and come to know its buildings at first hand.

Of rather greater significance is the evidence which shows that the artistic products of the Low Countries were held in high esteem in Scotland. The most magnificent surviving manifestation of this is, of course, the altarpiece commissioned for Trinity College in Edinburgh from Hugo van der Goes at a date between 1473 and 1478, and the most recent study of this work has broadened our appreciation of Scotland's artistic debt (Thompson & Campbell 1974, 55-7). But records show that it was certainly not alone as a church furnishing which had found its way across the North Sea to Scotland. Amongst many others of which records have been traced were: a gilt altarpiece brought from Mechelen by William Knox of Edinburgh in 1439 (Asaert 1972, 48), a set of choir stalls ordered from Bruges by the Abbey of Melrose many years before 1441 (Delepierre 1846, 347), vestments and hangings bought for Holyrood from Bruges in 1494 (Eeles 1914, lxxxvii), and Flemish tabernacles imported for Dunkeld and Dundee by Bishop Brown at some date between 1505 and 1510 (Hannay 1915, 2). In addition the Low Countries appear to have been a favourite supplier of tombs and the Ledger of Andrew Halyburton records

several such imports from Bruges in the 1490's (Innes 1867, lxxvi), whilst a tomb was ordered from Antwerp for the Bishop of Dunkeld in 1537 (de Bosschere 1909, 159).

Since buildings could not be ordered for importation in this way it is perhaps hardly surprising that there is no comparably specific documentation for architectural debts. In the absence of such information, the most valuable clues to Scotland's architectural borrowings from the Low Countries may be looked for in the personal awareness of those areas which many of the major potential patrons of church building are known to have had, since it was only through this awareness that patrons could point their masons to the models on which they wished details of their own projects to be based. At the highest level, in the mid-15th century members of the House of Stewart were allied to rulers of a number of the provinces of the Low Countries by two important marriages, a clear sign of the close royal interest which was taken in Scotland's relationships with those areas. In 1444 Mary, daughter of James I, married Wolfert van Borselen, Lord of Campvere, a marriage which had important implications for Scottish trade; five years later her brother, James II, married Mary, the daughter of the Duke of Guelders and niece of the Duke of Burgundy.

At a rather less exalted level were the two groups of potential patrons which had the best opportunity of crossing the North Sea and gaining first-hand knowledge of the buildings in the Low Countries. These were the prelates of the Church, many of whom passed through in the course of their travels or had spent time at university there and the merchants, who occupied a prominent position in the social hierarchy of the maritime burghs. It will be seen below that the chief architectural evidence for debts to the Low Countries is to be found in many of the buildings for which these two groups were responsible, the cathedrals and burgh churches; consequently it is of some interest to consider briefly the areas which members of these groups are likely to have visited, although the available evidence is very patchy.

Amongst the bishops who studied at university in the Low Countries were two of the most important figures of the Scottish Church in the central decades of the 15th century: James Kennedy, successively Bishop of Dunkeld (1437-40) and St Andrews (1440-65) (Dunlop 1950, 7-8), and William Turnbull, Bishop of Dunkeld (1447) and then of Glasgow (1447-54) (Durkan 1951, 10-11). Both of these had spent part of their student careers during the early 1430s at the university of Leuven in the southern part of the Duchy of Brabant, around the time that the Scottish contingent at that university was sufficient for a Scot, John Lichton, to be elected rector in 1432 (Durkan 1951, 11). Bishop Kennedy is one of those prelates whose travels are relatively well documented, and we know that he was in the Low Countries again on several later occasions. In 1440, 1451 and 1459 he was at Bruges, in the County of Flanders, whilst in 1444 he was at Veere in the County of Zeeland; since on several of these occasions he was simply passing through he doubtless saw other cities of the Low Countries *en route* (Dunlop 1950, 40, 135 & 199).

Another bishop whose travels in the Low Countries are on record is Thomas Spens of Aberdeen (1457-80), who underwent a somewhat fraught diplomatic mission to the Duke of Burgundy, then at Gent. He was ship-wrecked off the coast of Holland, but eventually managed to reach the Duke before moving onto Bruges and then onto the Duchy of Guelders, where he had a commission to bring back Alexander, Duke of Albany. His return was as problematic as his outward journey, since he was captured by the English (Boece *Vitae* 42-5). Thanks to Boece we have a relatively full account of his travels, but, although it may be hoped that journeys such as that for which Bishop Walter Forrester of Brechin (1407-25) obtained a safe-conduct to pass through Flanders in 1423-4 were not so eventful (Dowden 1912, 184), it may be assumed that many cities were visited and many churches noted in their course.

The personal knowledge which Scottish traders gained of the Low Countries was chiefly

channelled through the medium of the principal ports. Before the mid-14th century Scottish mercantile attention seems to have been directed mainly towards Flanders, and particularly to Bruges; but events such as the seizure of Scottish goods in Flanders in 1347, along with periodic later troubles, led to a re-assessment of the situation by Scottish merchants and other ports made considerable and protracted efforts to vie with each other for their Scottish trade, despite the apparently inferior quality of Scottish goods. The most active in their efforts of these ports were Veere and Middelburg, both in Zeeland (Rooseboom 1910, 1-85), and the marriage of Princess Mary to the Lord of Campvere in 1444 seems to have swung the balance in favour of the former for a considerable period. Nevertheless, depending on the fluctuating political circumstances, much trade was still carried on with Bruges, and it was only in 1522 that the decision was taken to fix the Staple at Middelburg. Andrew Halyburton, Conservator of the Privileges of the Scottish Nation in the Low Countries at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, seems to have been chiefly resident at Middelburg. But he also had close commercial links with other places, including the great cities of Bruges and Gent in Flanders, and Antwerp in Brabant (Innes 1867, xxix ff), and there can be little doubt that he must have had to travel to fulfil the orders of his patrons. However, by the mid-16th century most Scottish trade appears to have been concentrated once again at Veere, and the elegant *Schotse Huizen* of 1561, on the quayside, testify to the importance of the Scottish merchants there (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 564).

On this evidence it may be seen that many Scots who were potentially patrons of architecture must indeed have been familiar with parts of the Low Countries. The surviving documentation tends to record little more than their landfall or principal stops, but it does not require an excessive effort of imagination to appreciate that additional towns and cities must have been perforce observed in the course of journeys in search of trade, or in the course of visits to popes, emperors and other rulers. It would be interesting to know how far the specific choice of models for the stalls at Melrose was based on personal knowledge of those at the sister Cistercian Abbeys of Ter Duinen (Dunis) and Ter Doest (Thosan) in western Flanders (Delepierre 1846, 347), since such exact requirements could suggest very close knowledge indeed.

ARCHITECTURAL INFLUENCE OF THE LOW COUNTRIES ON SCOTLAND

A prime difficulty facing any attempt to identify architectural debts is that of determining whether forms may be traced to a particular source or seen simply as part of a common architectural vocabulary. Thus, for example, although the use of polygonal apses to terminate the choirs of at least 13 major Scottish churches from the mid-15th century onwards is almost certainly due to continental rather than English influence, such eastern terminations were so universal throughout Europe that the evidence would hardly support an attempt to make a specific attribution of the debt to any one area. In other cases, however, ideas which are taken up in Scotland indicate an awareness of more localized usage, and consideration will now be given to a number of such cases in which there are reasons for supposing that the debts may be ascribed particularly to the Low Countries (fig 1).

CYLINDRICAL PIERS

Looking first at church interiors, we may start by considering the revived usage of cylindrical piers in major churches from the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries onwards. If Boece's account of the activities of Aberdeen's bishops may be accepted as completely accurate, the earliest of major arcades with such piers to survive must be those in the nave of Aberdeen Cathedral, which he credits to the 2nd Bishop Alexander Kininmund (1355-80) (Boece *Vitae*, 24).

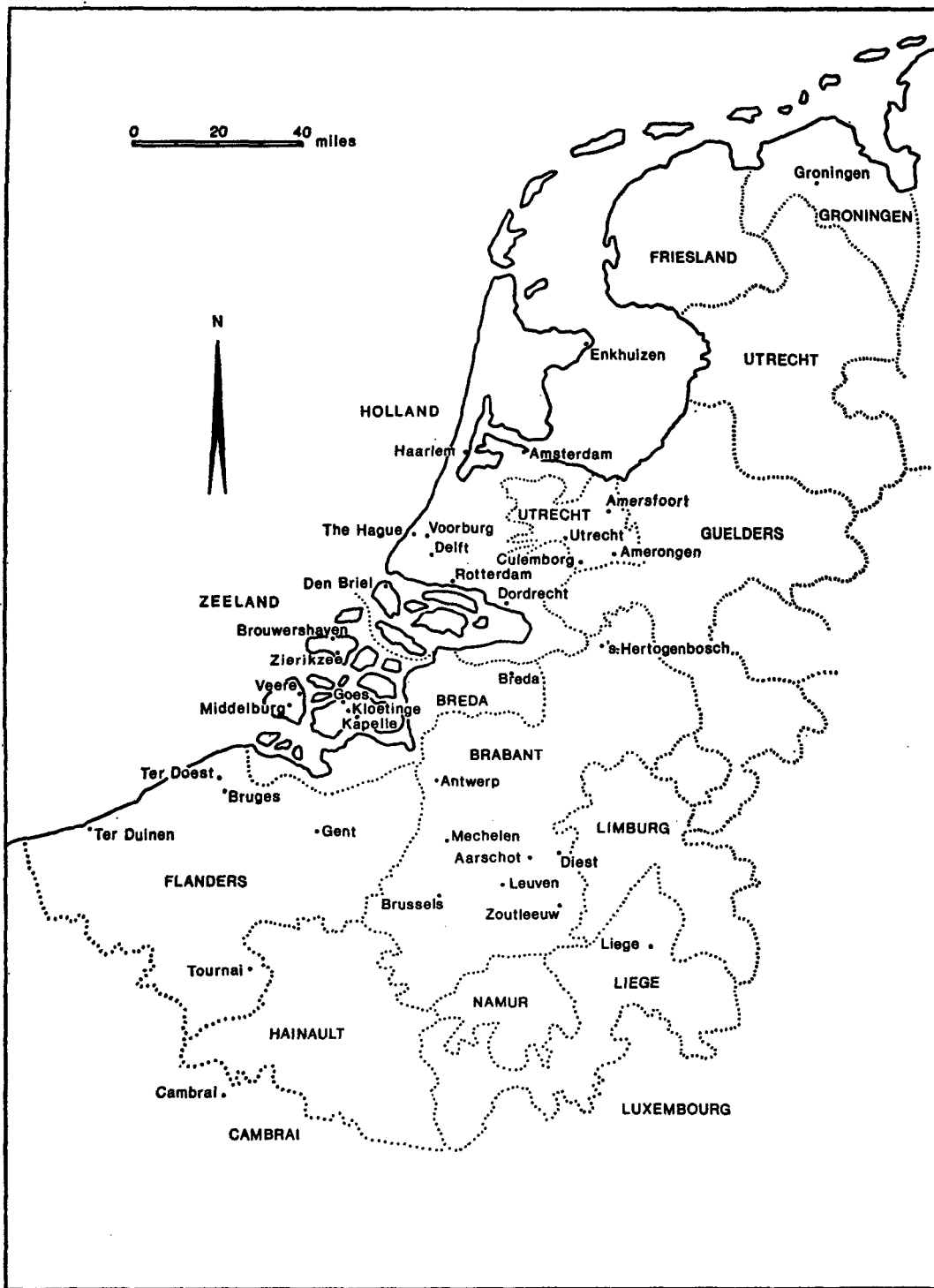


FIG 1 Map of places in Low Countries to which reference is made. Local usage for the names has generally been adopted except for places with accepted Anglicised names.

But other writers have already cast doubt on this ascription, and it is perhaps more likely that they were the work of Bishop Henry de Lichon (1422–40), to whom Boece gives responsibility for the continuing work of the nave (Kelly 1922, 19)—unfortunately the greatly simplified mouldings imposed by the intractable granite from which they are cut makes it difficult to assess their date on stylistic grounds, although a later date would certainly appear more acceptable.

If Aberdeen's primacy in the use of cylindrical piers is in doubt, the leading contenders are the nave of Dunkeld Cathedral and the S transept of St Andrews Cathedral. At Dunkeld Myln ascribes the first nave campaign to Bishop Robert de Cardeny (1398–1437), giving a specific commencement date of 1406 (Myln *Vitae*, 16). St Andrews is rather more problematic. In the S transept the surviving fragment of a semi-cylindrical respond strongly indicates that the reconstructed transept arcade there had piers of circular section, but the date of its reconstruction in that form is uncertain. Suggestions that it followed the collapse of the upper parts of the S gable in 1409 are attractive (Cant 1976, 31), yet it is at least a possibility that it followed the fire of 1378, and was therefore earlier than Dunkeld. The other major church with cylindrical piers is the nave of Holy Rude Parish Church in Stirling, which was undergoing reconstruction around 1456 on the evidence of a royal gift in that year (Renwick 1884, no xxiii). There is pictorial evidence that at least two other important churches also had piers of this form. One was the choir of St Nicholas at Aberdeen, which was started with the support of Bishop Thomas Spens (1457–80), and was being finished in 1507 when a contract for the stalls was made (Stuart 1844, 77–8); the other was the nave of Dornoch Cathedral, which had the remains of such piers before William Burn's restoration of 1835–37.

Inspection of the surviving examples of these arcades might at first suggest that they should be viewed in the context of the archaizing tendency which is a not inconsiderable factor in Scottish Late Gothic architecture. However, the notably advanced character of the mouldings employed at Dunkeld and St Andrews militates against this idea in at least these two cases, and strongly indicates an infusion of new ideas. In this connection it is essential to take account of the renewed popularity enjoyed by cylindrical piers in several N European countries from the second half of the 14th century onwards; indeed, such piers were to be a characteristic feature of both the *Flamboyant* of France and the *Sondergotik* of Germany. In view of this it may not be extravagant to see their usage in Scotland, especially in the more sophisticated versions at Dunkeld and St Andrews, as one of the first—albeit rather tentative—manifestations of a newly cosmopolitan element in Scottish architectural thought.

However, whilst the architects of France and Germany in particular were exploring the subtleties of complex interpenetrations between the constituent elements of the arcade, with mouldings of the type which have been aptly termed 'prismatic', Scottish masons chose to emphasize the clear separation of piers and arches, and to employ simpler mouldings. A comparison of the arcades of the Church of Notre-Dame at Caudebec-en-Caux in Normandy, started in 1426 (Sanfaçon 1971, 28), with those at Dunkeld, reveals radically different approaches to design. At the former the sharply detailed mouldings of the arches emerge progressively from the attenuated piers above the residual capitals, effectively disguising any expression of the width or mass of the supported wall, and integrating piers and arches into a unified entity. At the latter, although the repertoire of mouldings is unmistakably Late Gothic, the flat arch soffits leave no doubt of the weight imposed by the wall, whilst the squat proportions of the piers give an impression of robust support which is echoed in the distinct separation of pier and arch by strongly moulded caps (pl 29a).

Characteristics closer to those found at Dunkeld may be seen in arcades throughout the Low Countries, in most parts of which cylindrical piers had remained as the most common form

of arch support through the 12th and 13th centuries. But with the revitalization of architectural thought, which spread outwards from the Duchy of Brabant from the mid-14th century onwards, the use of such piers had acquired a new importance. Starting with the reconstruction of the choir of St-Romboutskerk at Mechelen in about 1335 (Lemaire 1949), and subsequently in a series of notable buildings, which included the naves of the Brussels churches of St Gudule and Notre-Dame-de-la-Chapelle, cylindrical piers were adopted into an architectural system which was to be a major influence in the Low Countries, particularly in the western provinces. This system was far more urbane and polished than anything which could have been achieved in Scotland, yet, in discussing the contrast between this system and contemporary work in France, a Belgian architectural historian has pointed in particular to the manner in which 'le pilier conserve sa masse individuelle dans la simplicité du fût cylindrique' (Brigode 1944, 32), a characteristic which has already been pointed out in the Scottish examples.

Comparisons between Dunkeld and many approximately contemporary examples in the western Low Countries, such as the choir of OL Vrouwekerk at Breda of about 1400–10 (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 591–5), or the nave of the New Church at Delft of 1420–34 (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 420–1) reveal a number of similarities. A possibly even closer likeness may be observed in the rather smaller early 15th-century choir of St-Petrus en Pauluskerk at Brouwershaven in Zeeland (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 519–20), which is situated close to the ports of Middelburg and Veere (pl 29b). In all of these the massively cylindrical piers are plainly separated from the superstructure by widely projecting caps, a broad arch soffit flanked by mouldings of relatively large section is clearly in evidence, and the tall bases are of two distinct stages above a polygonal sub-base. At the same time it would be perverse not to see considerable differences, most notably in the much squatter proportions of the Scottish example and in the use of non-foliate caps, although such transformations are perhaps to be expected in the emulation of models which are only partly understood and which have been generated within a very different tradition. If Dunkeld nave can indeed be accepted as showing the influence of the Low Countries it is rather more difficult to assess whether the other examples of such piers could have been the result of further contacts with the Low Countries, or whether they are likely to be copies at second hand. In at least one case, that of St Nicholas at Aberdeen, the presence of a major patron who had travelled in the Low Countries, Bishop Spens, may provide some grounds for suspecting further contacts, and what is known of the design of the choir roof of that church reinforces this suspicion.

WAGON CEILINGS

In general Scottish masons and patrons in the later Middle Ages seem to have been relatively little influenced by the various approaches to the articulation of internal elevations which were pursued by their European contemporaries: it appears to have been individual details rather than the overall picture which stimulated their imagination. However, there is a possibility that one other aspect of internal design, the use of timber wagon ceilings in certain churches, may have its roots across the North Sea. Unfortunately, our knowledge of Scottish church ceilings is slight: we have detailed information on very few and, since ceilings do not leave such clear evidence of their form as do stone vaults, we can have no idea how many unvaulted churches which now survive only in fragmentary state had ceilings rather than open-timber roofs. The evidence of the slightly cusped wall rib in the E wall of Glasgow Cathedral indicates that wagon ceilings covered some major Scottish buildings from at least the mid-13th century, although the form of the present ceiling there is largely the product of reconstructions of 1735 and 1910–11 (Oldrieve 1911, 412–15); but we know very little of other ecclesiastical wagon ceilings before the later 15th and 16th centuries.

The finest surviving wagon ceiling is that of Bishop Elphinstone's King's College Chapel at Aberdeen (pl 30a), which was presumably constructed at some time after the completion of the roof, for the leading of which there is a contract of 21 October 1506 (Innes 1854, lvii). But this ceiling was not the only one of its kind in Aberdeen. The choir of the Parish Church of St Nicholas, to which reference has already been made, was also receiving a ceiling around this date, and a view which was published before its destruction in 1835 shows that it was strikingly similar to its counterpart at King's College in its depressed section and application of ribs to the pattern of quadripartite vaulting. The St Nicholas ceiling is recorded as having had a cornice with the dates 1510 and 1515, whilst provision for the roof which contained it, and which was presumably built first, was made by the Town Council as early as 1495; it was therefore very close in date to the example at King's College. The carpenter of the Parish Church roof was 'Ionhe Fendour', a craftsman of considerable importance in Aberdeen, who was also the author of the stalls of St Nicholas, as well as of the 'grat stepile' of the Cathedral (Kelly 1934, 359–60) and who may reasonably be postulated as responsible for the design of both the ceilings of King's College and of St Nicholas.

A claim has been made that Fendour may be of Flemish or French extraction (Kelly 1934, 364) and whilst there is no convincing evidence to support either of these possibilities it is certainly attractive to suspect that these two Aberdeen ceilings may derive their form at least partly from the Low Countries. A dearth of good building stone, particularly in the coastal provinces, fostered a strong tradition of timber ceilings in the Low Countries throughout the later Middle Ages; as a result the area had a higher concentration than any other part of north-western Europe of timber ceilings designed either in imitation of stone vaulting, or of tunnel section with an application of ribs. There was, of course, ample opportunity for the patrons of both St Nicholas and King's College to know many of these ceilings. The merchants of the busy port—whose wealth lay behind the grand scale of the Parish Church—looked to the Low Countries for the most important part of their trade, whilst the founder of King's College, Bishop Elphinstone, had been at Bruges and elsewhere in Flanders in 1495 (Macfarlane 1962, 12), shortly before he started to prepare the site for his college. It is perhaps also worthy of note that Halyburton's Ledger shows that in 1497 and 1498 he sent Elphinstone what appears to be some of the necessary equipment for his building operation from his base at Middelburg (Innes 1867, 182–5).

Of the many wagon ceilings which the patrons of these works might have seen it is perhaps sufficient to cite two relatively modest examples from the western provinces which were newly built at the time that work was starting on the Aberdeen ceilings. One is over the choir of Voorburg on the mainland of the County of Holland (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 507–8), and the other is over the N chapel of the church at Kapelle (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 532–3), on land which used to be an island adjacent to that occupied by Veere and Middelburg, but which is now part of the same peninsula (pl 30b). Both of these ceilings are of a similar scale as the Aberdeen examples although, as was usual in the Low Countries, they are more steeply pointed.

The case for seeing Netherlandish influence behind these two Aberdeen ceilings therefore appears to have much in support of it, although a note of caution must be introduced at this point. In the absence of closely comparable Scottish ceilings we now see the Aberdeen examples divorced from any native context they may have had. That there was a tradition of wagon ceilings is strongly suggested by that over the surviving aisle at Guthrie, which has been dated on heraldic grounds to between 1472 and 1490, and by the indications of a similar ceiling on the remains of the painted tympanum from above the screen at Foulis Easter (Apted & Robertson 1962, 262–79). However, it is now impossible to assess how far those at Aberdeen were part of this tradition. It is also now impossible to determine if ceilings of the Aberdeen type could have resulted from a

cross-fertilisation of wagon ceilings with the characteristically Scottish stone-ribbed barrel vaults, which cover a significant proportion of our 15th-century church buildings. Because of our ignorance on these points it would be unwise to make a dogmatic claim that the particular form of these two ceilings was inspired by examples seen in the Low Countries, although this must certainly remain a possibility.

LATERAL GABLES

Similar caution must also be applied in considering certain aspects of the external design of Scottish churches for which there is some reason to suspect Netherlandish inspiration, since we cannot know how far the small numbers of surviving examples typified what has been destroyed. One such aspect is the employment of a series of more or less uniform gables to aisles or side chapels in at least two major churches for which the evidence survives and very probably in a number of others where the evidence is less certain. The harsh treatment meted out by post-Reformation parishes to the external fripperies of their churches has left many in a simplified and denuded state, and unfortunately this was usually accomplished before any record was made of the excised forms. The survival of a triplet of gabled chapels on the N side of Edinburgh St Giles up to the time of William Burn's re-casing of 1829-33, despite the depredations that church had already suffered, was one example of this treatment which was recorded, whilst the lateral gables at Elgin Cathedral have only survived because no-one was sufficiently interested to remove them (pl 31a). Elsewhere, as at Stirling Holy Rude, there are indications of less systematic additions of individual gabled chantry chapels along the aisles, which progressively enveloped parts of the already existing structure.

Few of these laterally gabled chapels can be closely dated, although their popularity seems to have extended through the 15th century. At St Giles the three gabled bays which survived into the 19th century were to the E of the Albany Aisle, and one of them was built over the earlier N porch, but there is no firm evidence for their date; only the even pitch of their gables and similarity of their buttresses showed them to be the product of a single campaign. However, one other gabled chapel which is known to have existed at St Giles, the Chepman Aisle to the E of the S transept, can be dated to between 1507 and 1513 (Laing 1859, 203-7). At Elgin the two surviving gabled bays are on the S side of the nave, where they owe their form to the reconstruction of existing chapels necessitated by the Earl of Buchan's attack on the Cathedral in 1390 (Innes 1837, no 303), although there are reasons for assuming that the reconstruction was long delayed. Of the various chapels which are known to have flanked the nave of Stirling Parish Church, the only one to survive complete is that thought to have been built by Matthew Forestar, now known as St Andrew's aisle, which was probably erected at some date before 1483 (RCAMS 1963, 134).

The European vogue for lateral gables to aisles or flanking chapels goes back at least to the 12th century, although it was in the *Rayonnant* Gothic of northern France that they found their most elegant expression. From there they passed to many parts of Europe, including the adjacent parts of the Low Countries, where they were employed in the choirs of Cambrai (destroyed in 1796) and Tournai Cathedrals, started in about 1220 and 1243 respectively (Branner 1965, 23), and later in the choir of Gent, which was commenced around 1300 (de Smidt 1959, 85-117). They were subsequently to remain a *leit-motif* of Late Gothic architecture in the Low Countries, despite passing out of general usage in France except in the residual form which is seen at Louviers Notre Dame, and suffering a greatly diminished vogue in much of the rest of western Europe. They were to be taken up with particular enthusiasm by the masons who brought new life into the architecture of Brabant from the mid-14th century onwards. In the greater churches of that region and its surrounding areas the gables were usually given a rich relief by groups of

decorative niches or tracery patterns, whilst the base of the gable was strongly defined by a horizontal moulding approximating to the ridge of the internal vault. But in the smaller churches of Brabant and above all in the the predominantly brick-building coastal provinces to the west, lateral gables were usually treated far more plainly, rarely with any differentiation between lower wall and gable and with the window arches penetrating up into the area of the gable. It was to these simpler variants on the theme that the architectural evidence suggests Scottish masons are more likely to have looked. In Brabant itself churches such as OL Vrouwekerk at Aarschot, where the S nave aisle was under construction through the late 14th and early 15th centuries (van Molle 1952, 27–79), could have provided the idea (pl 31b). Further N, in the County of Holland, are possible parallels such as the late 14th-century nave chapels of OL Vrouwekerk at Dordrecht (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 428), or the much later S chapels of the Dominican Kloosterkerk at the Hague which were added in about 1500 (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 454).

WEST FRONT DESIGN

Because of the low survival rate of our churches, to which reference has already been made, we cannot know how far the magnificent W front of the Parish Church at Haddington was representative of that feature at other churches in the major burghs (pl 32a). It is now without parallel in Scotland, and it is possible it may always have been so. Certainly, many of the wealthier parishes chose to give emphasis to the western ends of their churches by the more usual parochial means of a tower, as at Dundee, Linlithgow and Stirling; although we know that others, including Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Elgin and Perth, had central towers which left the W fronts free to be exploited as a frontispiece. However, since the W fronts of all these latter had been destroyed or altered beyond recognition before having been properly recorded in their late medieval state, we cannot be certain if the builders of any of them attempted the same sort of flourish as the burgesses of Haddington, which thus now stands alone as a major parochial W front.

Its proportions were considerably modified when the aisle walls were raised by several feet in 1811, but the frontispiece remains essentially as completed after the late medieval general rebuilding of the church. This rebuilding almost certainly commenced around the time of a grant of 1462 towards the choir by the Priory of St Andrews, to which the church was appropriated (Stevenson 1834, 75–6), although it was probably several decades before the W front was reached. The salient characteristic of the facade is the simple geometry of its basic design, which is articulated only by massively plain buttressing, and by the parapet which runs in front of the set-back gable. The large window and door on the central vertical axis of the facade tend, if anything, to emphasize the dominance of the main wall plane because of the way in which they have been simply located, with no attempt to link them into a unified design by architectural devices such as surmounting gablets or elaborated string courses. Such a facade appears to owe very little to the major churches of either England or France, where unity of composition was usually achieved by a more or less complex network of inter-linked lines. It is yet again to the Low Countries that we must look for an approach to facade design more attuned to that of Haddington.

A 17th-century view of St-Bavokerk at Haarlem by Gerrit Berckheyde, in the National Gallery in London, shows a very similar approach to the design of a W front in a major church in the County of Holland (pl 32b). (It should perhaps be mentioned that the post-Reformation elements clearly visible on this painting have been superseded since 1876 by rather inaccurate detail.) The Haarlem W front, where the nave was started about 1470 and must therefore be approximately contemporary with that at Haddington (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 380), shows a similar predominance of wall surface, broken only by massive buttresses and the recession of the gable (in the Berckheyde view the buttresses and parapet in front of the gable have been partly dis-

mantled, but they have since been restored). As at Haddington, there is also a marked absence of any architectural devices to involve the window and door openings into an elaborately integrated design. The merchants of Haddington, operating through their port of Aberlady, would have been able to see many similar expressions of this approach to the design of terminal facades in the coastal provinces of Holland and Zeeland. Other examples which might be cited are the transepts of the New Church at Delft, which were started in 1384 but much remodelled in the next century (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 420-1), the W front of the New Church at Amsterdam, started around 1435 and rather heavily restored in 1908-14 (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 353-4), the transepts of O L Vrouwekerk at Dordrecht, which owe their present form to repairs after the town fire of 1457 (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 428), and the S transept of Maria Magdalenakerk at Goes, started in about 1505 (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 524).

MASSIVE SUB-DIVISIONS OF THE TRACERY FIELD IN WINDOWS

One further detail which all of these Dutch churches have in common, and which is reflected at Haddington, is the sub-division of the tracery field by inordinately massive sub-arches carried on a central mullion of similar or even larger section. (In the Berckheyde view of Haarlem the sub-arches and upper oculus are shown as the only part of the W window's tracery to have survived into the 17th century.) This slightly ungainly feature is seldom found with quite such strong emphasis in major churches outside the Low Countries and Scotland and is perhaps therefore one of the most obvious illustrations of the architectural links between the two areas. The employment of sub-arches of greater section than the other form-pieces had, of course, always been a common method of introducing strength along with an orderly hierarchy of forms into larger windows; but the disproportionate enlargement which they underwent in the Low Countries may have been initially a response to the apprehension which masons there naturally felt in trying to construct large traceried windows of brick, a material more friable than stone. Certainly, sub-arches of this type tended to be given their most massive form in windows of brick-constructed tracery. In Scotland, where tracery was invariably stone-built, there is no obvious reason why patrons and masons should have wished to copy this feature, other than that it attracted their attention and struck a sympathetic chord, since even the largest of our windows were hardly large enough to justify such caution. Nevertheless, it is to be found in a number of our churches, including the transepts of Seton Collegiate Church, which were built by Lady Janet Seton in two phases in the first half of the 16th century (Durkan 1962, 72), the E window of the choir of Stirling Holy Rude, which was started in 1507 (Renwick 1844, no xxxvii), and the W window of the tower of Dundee Parish Church. There is also pictorial evidence that it was employed in a number of destroyed windows, including that of the S transept of Edinburgh St Giles.

It has been commented upon by earlier writers that a related feature employed in one Scottish church may have been inspired by a prototype in the Low Countries: that is the provision of a major buttress-like central mullion rising up to the window arch apex in several windows at King's College Chapel in Aberdeen (MacPherson 1890, 423). It has been pointed out that a similar treatment is found in many of the windows at the Church of St Jacques in Liège, where the reconstruction had been started around the same time as the Aberdeen Chapel, although a major part of that church was the work of Arnold van Mulken between 1513 and 1533 (Brigode 1944, 21). Objections to this as a possible case of contact between Scotland and the Low Countries have been made on the grounds that Liège is an isolated case of this feature (Kelly 1949, 54), and in addition the relevant detail is probably of a later date than at Aberdeen. But in fact this same feature is also to be found at other churches, including a chapel projecting from the S transept of

Utrecht Cathedral, where it can be dated to about 1497 (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 318–9), within tracery which certainly bears comparison with the rather loosely organized forms found in the northern windows of the Aberdeen Chapel (fig 2). Mullions extended up to the arch apex may also be seen elsewhere, as in the transepts of 's-Hertogenbosch Cathedral of about 1420–70 (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 619), and in the same position at Notre-Dame-du-Sablon in Brussels, which is of a similar date. The arguments for seeing a debt to the Low Countries in the Aberdeen extended mullions therefore seem stronger than has generally been considered and this may in turn strengthen the case for considering its wagon ceiling to be similarly indebted.

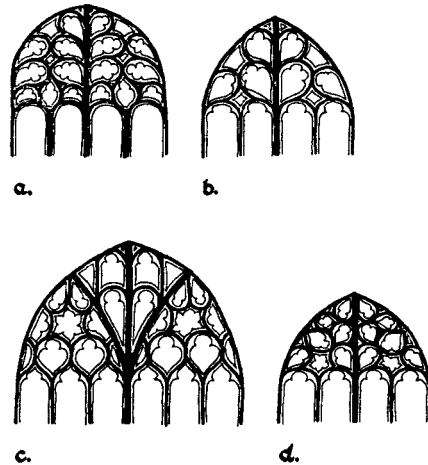


FIG 2 Diagrammatic sketches of windows with central mullion extended up to arch apex. a. Aberdeen King's College Chapel, west window; b. Aberdeen King's College Chapel, north window; c. St Jacques Liège, nave clerestory; d. Utrecht Cathedral, Domproosten Chapel off south transept.

WINDOW TRACERY

The likelihood of these means of reinforcing the tracery field being derived from the Low Countries may be thought to gain additional support from a number of debts which Scottish tracery design appears to owe to that area in other respects. It is possible that the earliest instances of such debts may be seen in the employment of tracery with 'spherical' figures at several of the most elegantly detailed buildings of the first decades of the 15th century, including the nave of Dunkeld Cathedral, where it has already been suggested the arcades are indebted to the Low Countries. However, since such forms were in use throughout Europe, it is equally possible that in some cases their use in Scotland is attributable to other influences.

We are on more certain grounds in considering other tracery types. One significant case is tracery in which the predominant element is one or more circlets containing spiralling *mouchettes*, an element which is found universally through the Low Countries and also in as many as 14% of the surviving types of 15th-century Scotland (Fawcett forthcoming) (fig 3). The possibility of the former having stimulated the latter is perhaps corroborated by the evidence that the constraints imposed by the containing circlets tended to mean that such forms were used only seldom in the *Flamboyant* tracery of France, whilst the disruption of axial symmetry created by spiralling forms had made them almost equally abhorrent in 14th-century England, except where used independently in circular windows (Etherton 1965, 176–7). Curvilinear forms had, in

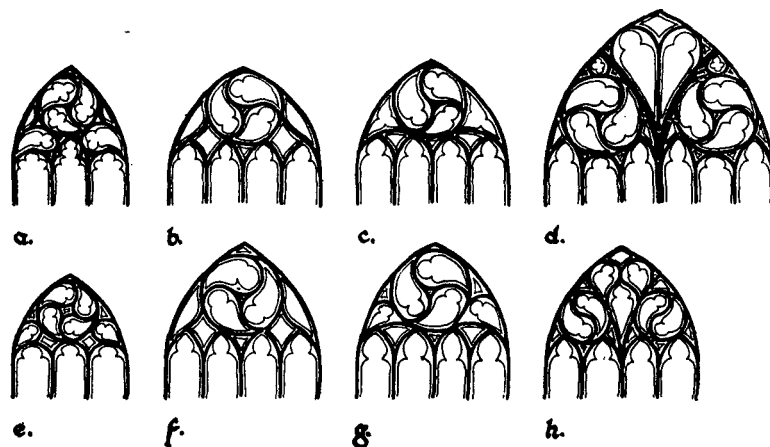


FIG 3 Diagrammatic sketches of windows with spiralling mouchette tracery. a. Melrose Abbey; b. St Michael Linlithgow; c. Holy Rude Stirling; d. St Mary Dundee; e. St-Leonarduskerk Zoutleeuw; f. St-Gommaruskerk Enkhuizen; g. New Church Amsterdam; h. St-Catharijnekerk Den Briel.

any case, been generally abandoned in England considerably before they were taken up in Scotland. Similar arguments, in which the balance of possibilities points to a source in the Low Countries, could be extended to other tracery types but perhaps the most convincing case is that of Late Gothic uncusped loop tracery.

A strand of thought, which was found in varying degrees in the last decades of Gothic architecture throughout north-western Europe, took expression in a tendency towards simplification of tracery, with enlargement of its constituent forms and a reduction in cusping. In France, for example, this is seen in the choir of St Severin in Paris, which was started in 1489 (Sanfaçon 1971, 90–1), whilst the nave aisles of St George's Chapel at Windsor show an approximately contemporary English manifestation of the same tendency in a very different tracery context. In Scotland there are several churches in which the window tracery shows this preference for simplification and the evidence of early views suggests there were others (fig 4). An ostensibly early pair of windows with such tracery could be those in the transepts of Tullibardine Church, which are usually taken to be of a date before the death of Sir David Murray in 1451–2 from the presence of a plaque with his arms. However, the arms of Murray of Arngask and Barclay on the skew-putts of the S transept almost certainly refer to the marriage of Sir Andrew Murray in the 1490's and strongly suggest the windows should be dated into the 16th century, along with most other datable examples of this type of tracery. In the Blackfriars' Church at St Andrews, for example, related windows must be subsequent to 1516, when the Provincial Chapter allocated funds left by Bishop Elphinstone of Aberdeen to that new foundation (Innes 1845, 311–2), whilst at Mid Calder a deed for completion of the Parish Church of 1542 shows that the windows there were even later (Robertson 1860, 160–5). There are dates well into the 16th century for related windows in the N sacristy at Pluscarden Priory, the vault of which bears the arms of Prior Alexander Dunbar who died in 1560 and in the apse of Linlithgow Parish Church, which must presumably have been completed around the time of the contract of 1532 for the parapet (Ferguson 1905, 33–4).

All of the Scottish windows of this type are related to forms which had been current in Scottish ecclesiastical architecture since the early 15th century, but there is a refinement in

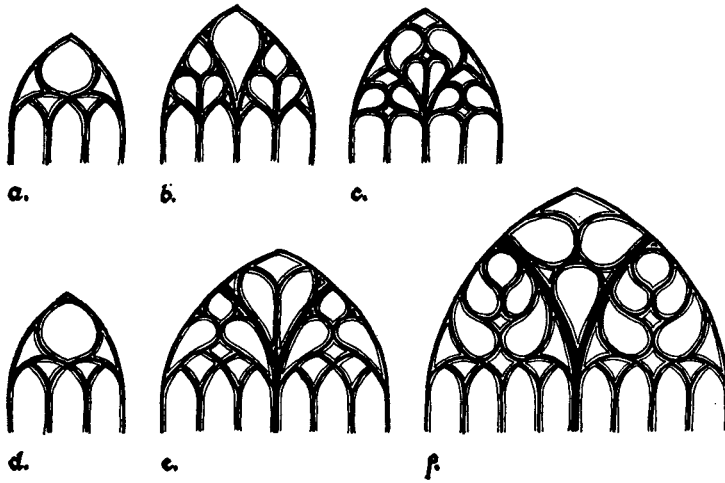


FIG 4 Diagrammatic sketches of windows with uncusped loop tracery. a. St Andrews Blackfriars' Church; b. and c. Mid Calder Church; d. Kloetinge; e. St-Jacobskerk the Hague; f. Kloosterkerk the Hague.

the simplification of the designs which suggests that masons were responding to a new impetus and not simply paring down their existing repertoire. The choice of tracery designs suggests that this new impetus is unlikely to have come from either England or France, but many windows of related forms were under construction in the Low Countries at the same time and, as with enlarged sub-arches, it was in those provinces along the coast which relied on brick as a principal building material that forms closest to those used in Scotland seem to have first emerged. There is an attractive possibility that tracery of this type could have been introduced into Scotland from the Low Countries at St Andrews, by the Dominican friars. It was the Scottish Provincial of the Order, John Adamson, who was largely instrumental in establishing the Blackfriars' House at St Andrews, and he seems to have been in close contact with the thinking of his counterparts in the Low Countries, since it was after a visitation by the Congregation of Holland that he was placed in office in 1510 (Ross 1981, sec 2) (pl 32c). Windows similar to those in the surviving chapel of the Blackfriars' Church are to be found in varying scales at many Low Countries churches. On a parochial scale they may be seen at churches such as Kloetinge in Zeeland, where the work can be dated to about 1500 (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 534); more elaborate developments on the same themes may be found in the S chapels of the Dominican Kloosterkerk at the Hague, which are of about the same date (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 454). Amongst the Scottish examples of this type of tracery, perhaps the most satisfying are those at Mid Calder and, of various Low Countries parallels which could be given, two churches at the Hague will probably suffice. The first is the Dominican Church, which has already been mentioned, and the second is St-Jacobskerk, where most of the windows appear to have been rebuilt after a fire of 1539 (Vermeulen 1928, 392). The similarity of the loop forms in all of these examples, which results from the rejection of all secondary decoration, is probably sufficiently pronounced to require no further analytical discussion.

TOWERS OF TELESCOPIC FORM

The last instance of a Scottish building betraying the impact of ideas developed in the Low Countries which will be discussed is that of the tower of St Mary's Church at Dundee (pl 33a). This extraordinary structure appears to have been unique in the Scottish burghs and, indeed, is

without close parallel in Britain. It rises through five stages constructed of markedly fine ashlar and its most remarkable feature is that the walls of the upper two stages are set back from the lower faces to allow a walkway to pass around the tower at that level. Certain features of the design, such as the sunken corner mouldings employed only at the fourth stage, might suggest that the tower assumed its striking final form as the result of a series of distinct campaigns; but the homogeneity of the reveal mouldings of the second, fourth and fifth stages indicates that, however long its construction may have required, the basic design we now see, apart from the roof, was intended from the instigation of the work.

The date of the tower is not known with certainty, but there is an indenture of 1442–3 with the Abbey of Lindores, to which the church was appropriated, by which the burgh undertook to build a new choir, probably as part of a general remodelling of the church started around then. The tower is unlikely to have been a priority in the work, at least not before the leading of the choir in 1461, but a gift of 1495 towards ‘ane gryt bell’ indicates that it may well have been nearing completion by then (Maxwell 1891, 9–14). It is not known if the crowning corona, which the design of the top storey clearly anticipates, was ever completed; if it was it may have been lost in the course of an English attack on the burgh in 1547. The tower roof subsequently underwent major repairs in 1570, from which time the present saddle-back roof appears to date and in 1643 John Mylne, who had earlier been Master Mason to the Crown, extended the existing spiral stair ‘two roundis’ to reach the top of the tower (Mylne 1893, 127).

In determining upon the design of their tower the burgesses of Dundee were evidently concerned to create more than a nine day’s wonder and, as one of the most important of the E coast burghs which enjoyed a thriving relationship with the Low Countries, it is perhaps to be expected that they should have sought their inspiration there. However, rather than looking to the coastal areas, where towers such as the magnificent twins of Zierikzee and Veere began to rise in the 1470s (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 572–3 & 563–4), the burgesses looked inland to an already well-established group of towers. The members of this group all share the telescopic form seen at Dundee and most of them are centred in the area around Utrecht, although with an outlier as far afield as Martini-kerk at Groningen (near the western part of the bishopric of Utrecht) and a derivative further S at St-Laurenkerk in Rotterdam. The formula employed in these towers varied considerably in its decorative veneer, but the basic design remained surprisingly constant from its most magnificent expression at the Cathedral of Utrecht to a very simple parochial variant such as St-Barbarakerk at Culemborg. The earliest of the group was probably that at Utrecht itself, which was built between 1321 and 1382 (Haslinghuis & Peeters 1965). Like many others of the group the Utrecht tower eventually acquired a lofty octagon at its summit, which the burgesses of Dundee strove to emulate with the intended corona. Most towers of the group are of the later 15th century, such as the splendid example of the OL Vrouwetoren at Amersfoort, which is known to have been well in hand by 1471 (*Kunst voor Ned* 1977, 292). The most appropriate comparison for Dundee is probably with a medium-sized member of the group such as Amerongen, to the south of Utrecht (pl 33b); although this tower could be slightly later in date than Dundee, the absence of a crowning octagon allows easier comparison.

The most striking point the towers have in common is, of course, the basic telescoped format, along with the ratio of lower to upper stages of about two-to-one. A further significant point may be noted in the treatment of the intermediate parapets, which are punctuated by a series of small pinnacles—a most unusual treatment in Scotland, but one which is found in most of the Netherlands examples—whilst it is also possible that the three windows of the fourth stage at Dundee are reminiscent of the almost invariable tripartite articulation of its Low Countries counterparts. It is certainly true that, in the final analysis, there could be no doubt that the Dundee

tower was the work of a Scottish mason; but, equally, there is little room for doubt that he is unlikely to have been able to design such a tower without external inspiration and it appears that the only area from which such inspiration could have been derived is the Low Countries. Inevitably, a mason who was not familiar with the traditions which lay behind the design of this Netherlandish group of towers departed from his chosen models at many points and not least because his budget cannot have been as large as that of his Netherlands counterparts. Yet the details of his tower show him to have been a mason of considerable skill and credit may be given for his transliteration being as closely based as it is. In passing it should perhaps also be noted that the fine W door and to a lesser extent the W window, bear comparison with the corresponding features at Haddington St Mary, where it has been suggested above the frontispiece may owe a debt to the Low Countries.

It has already been said that the Dundee tower is of a design unique in Scotland, although there is a possibility that it may have influenced the design of one other tower, that of Holy Rude at Stirling. The lower stage of this latter tower, up to roof level of the nave, can be seen as part of the same building campaign as the nave on the evidence of the continuity of the base course and it thus probably dates from the third quarter of the 15th century (RCAMS 1963, 132). Above this level, however, there is a discernible change in the character of the masonry and it is likely that the design of the upper parts represents a considerable modification on the original scheme. Although no date is known for the completion of the tower, it is generally assumed it was approximately contemporary with the construction of the choir, for which there is an indenture of 1507 between the burgh and Dunfermline Abbey, which had appropriated the church (Renwick 1844, no xxxvii). Significantly, the design of the new work on the tower made allowance for the raising of the central vessel of the nave to a greater height, although this was never accomplished.

The most conspicuous aspect of the later superstructure at Stirling is the manner in which the N and S flanks of the two upper stages are set in from the lower stages to allow wall walks along those sides at an intermediate height, in a manner similar to that seen at Dundee. This similarity is reduced by the absence of walks along the E and W faces, but, since the first designer of the tower had given its lower stages a plan which is elongated along the N-S axis, it would have been difficult for the second mason to contrive a regular complete circuit at the intermediate level if he had wished to do so. In view of the limitations imposed on the design of the upper parts by what had already been built and in the absence of any more likely prototypes, it may not be unreasonable to suspect that its designer could have drawn inspiration for his design from Dundee, but that the form of the lower stages enforced a somewhat uncomfortable compromise.

CONCLUSION

Inevitably, it must be accepted that, without relevant documentation, identification of the sources of ideas exploited by our late medieval masons depends to a considerable degree on an assessment of the balance of possibilities and there is a clear risk of confusing coincidental formal similarities with real inter-relationships. For the 12th and 13th centuries it has been suggested that the main direct source of inspiration for the major churches of Scotland was England and most frequently northern England. But by the later 14th century this source was decreasingly looked to and we have to search elsewhere for the derivations of the many new motifs which were introduced into our architecture from that time onwards. We must instead look to those areas with which it is likely that Scottish patrons and masons were well acquainted and where sufficient new building was taking place to excite attention. Although there is no doubt that Scottish travellers penetrated far into continental Europe (Davidson & Gray 1909,

94ff), those parts which bordered the North Sea were particularly accessible to potential patrons and there was building taking place in many of those areas. But for Scotland it is apparent that the Low Countries assumed a particular significance. The great cities of Flanders were the most important markets of northern Europe and, conveniently, its ports were amongst the closest landfalls for the merchants of the Scottish E coast burghs. In addition, from the mid-14th century onwards, the wealth of the Low Countries had fostered an outburst of architectural activity which was still continuing at the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries, at the time that Scotland was beginning to undertake church building with renewed enthusiasm. By comparison, it was not until around the second quarter of the 15th century that France was sufficiently recovered from the debilitating wars with England to be able to offer much architectural guidance and in the later Middle Ages it never fully regained the European architectural leadership it had once enjoyed.

On this basis there are good *prima facie* reasons for presupposing that the Low Countries are likely to have been a major source of architectural ideas for Scotland, although certainly not the only source. However, since the traditions which lay behind the development of the architecture of the two areas were very different, it is not to be expected that Scottish masons would have been able to copy ideas which they saw there with full understanding, even if it is supposed that is what they would have wished to do. Instead, it seems more reasonable to assume that it would have been individual elements, rather than an overall approach to architectural design, which might attract the attention of patrons and masons, and that these elements would provide the stimuli for ideas which might find their concrete expression in a more or less transformed state. It is this process which may be thought to have been behind the design of such as the arcades of Dunkeld and the tower of Dundee: they are both unmistakably Scottish in appearance, but the balance of possibilities strongly points to the Low Countries as the original home of the ideas they represent. This balance is less clearly tipped in some other cases, such as the use of ribbed wagon ceilings, although even in this case it may be felt that the arguments for concluding that the idea came from the Low Countries appear inherently stronger than those which point elsewhere.

How far the architectural evidence may be interpreted to identify particular areas within the Low Countries, or even specific buildings, to which our masons looked requires more detailed research. There are some indications that particular areas might indeed be identifiable in some cases, as for example with the Dundee tower. There is also reason to suspect that, in the course of the 15th century, Scottish architectural interest tended to shift along with mercantile interest from Flanders to Holland and Zeeland. Further research may well clarify these aspects, although, without more detailed documentation, it may be doubted how far specific buildings may be confidently advanced as the immediate sources of ideas taken up in Scotland.

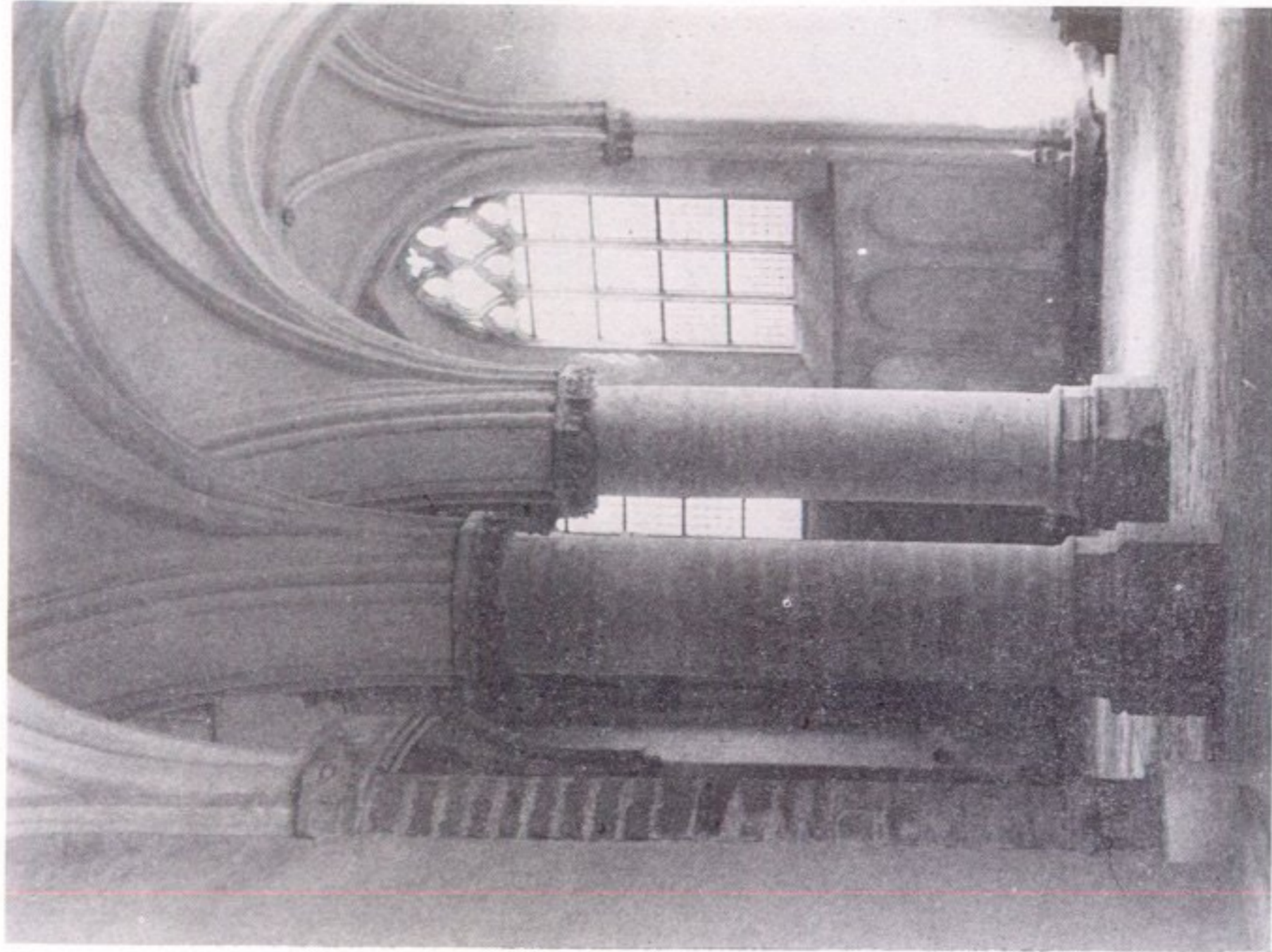
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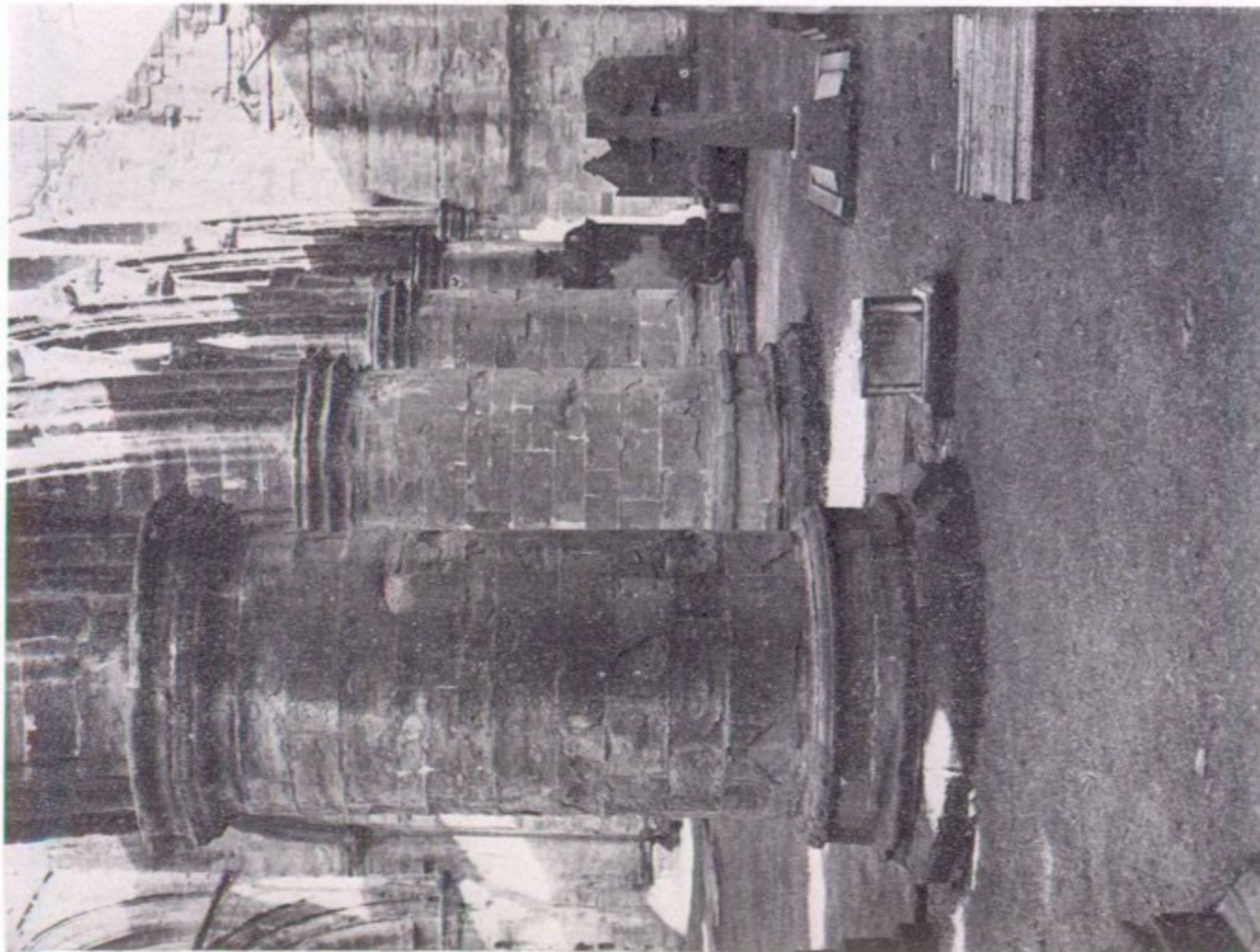
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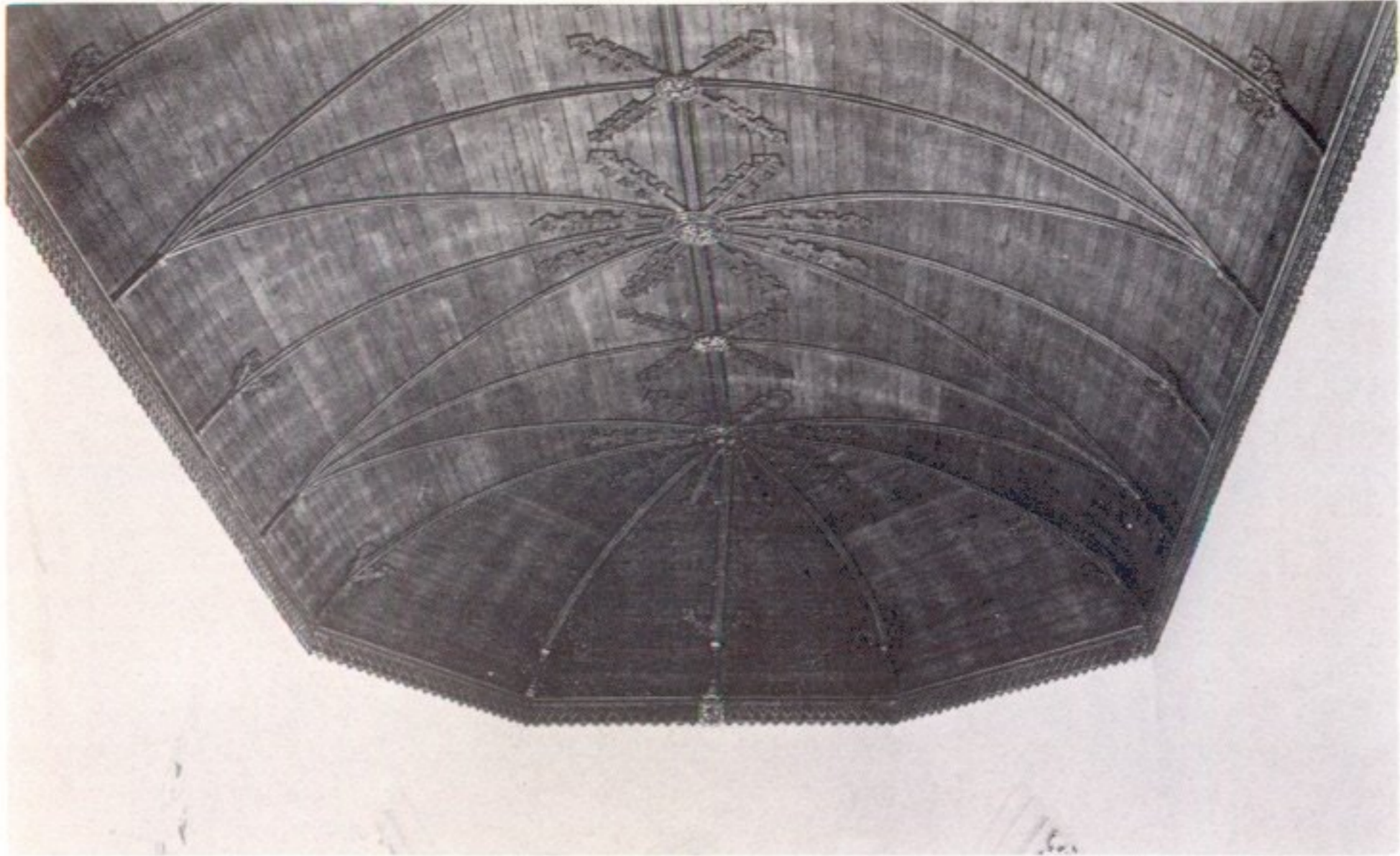
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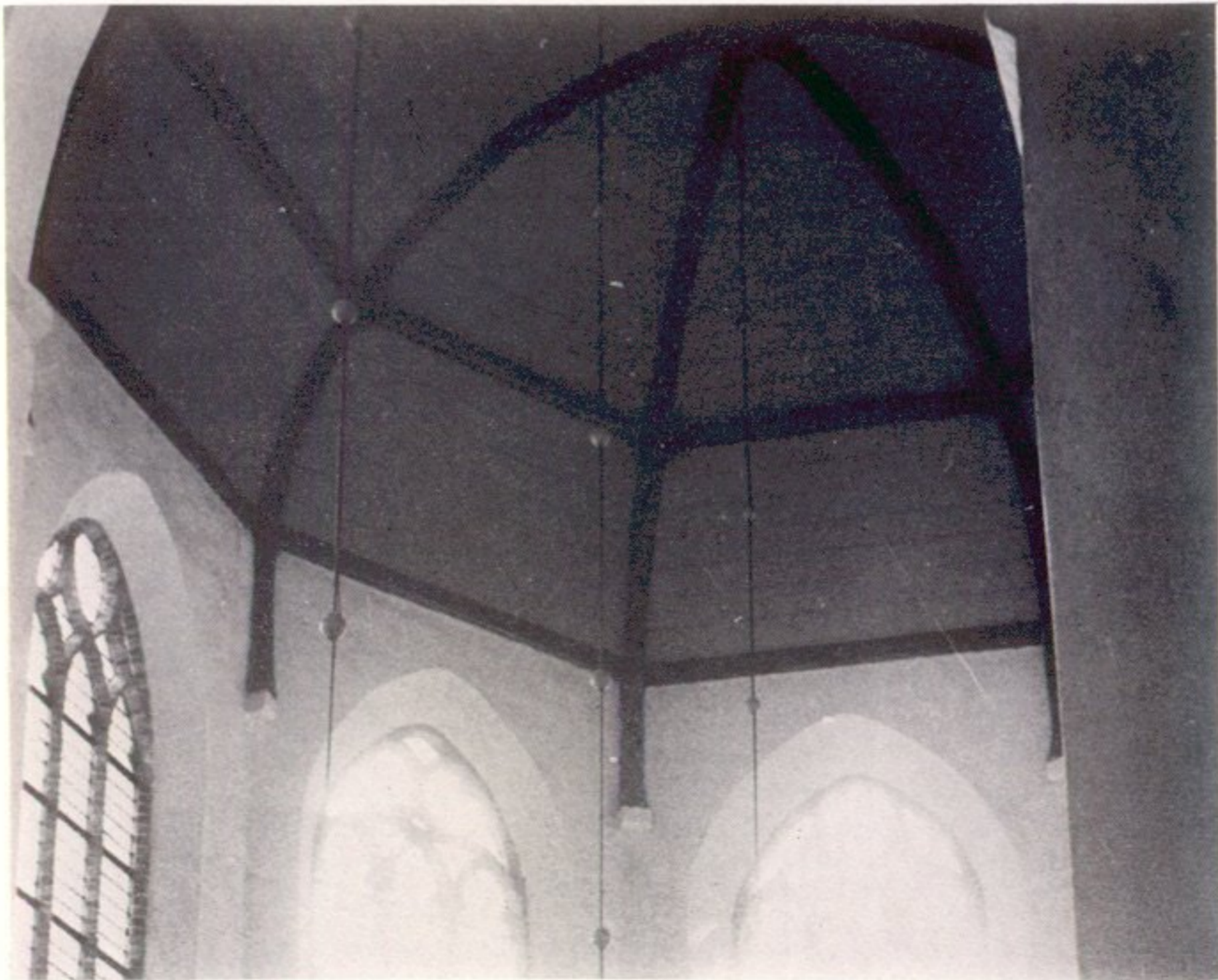
b St-Petrus en Pauluskerk Brouwershaven, choir arcade



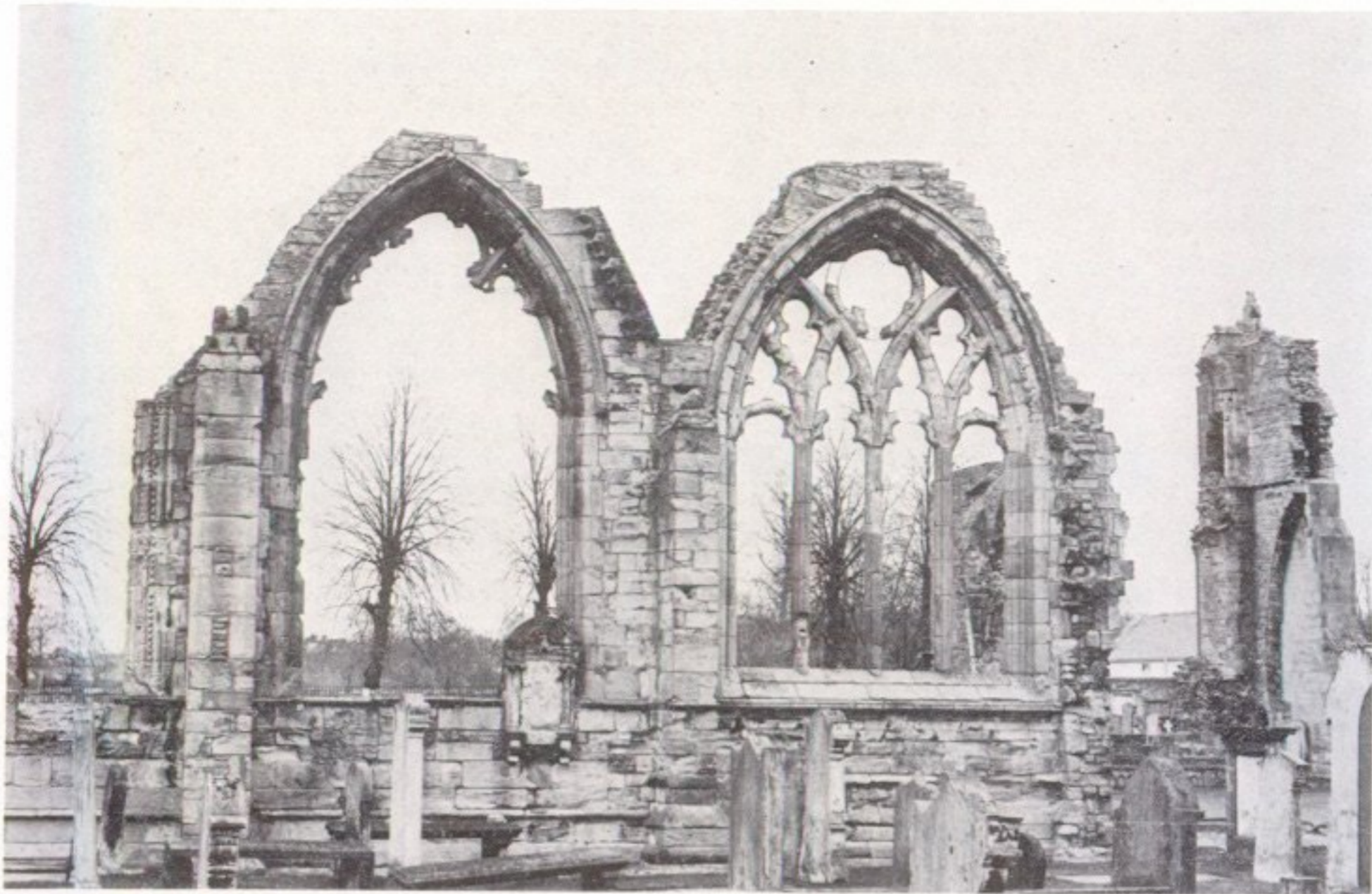
a Dunkeld Cathedral, nave arcade



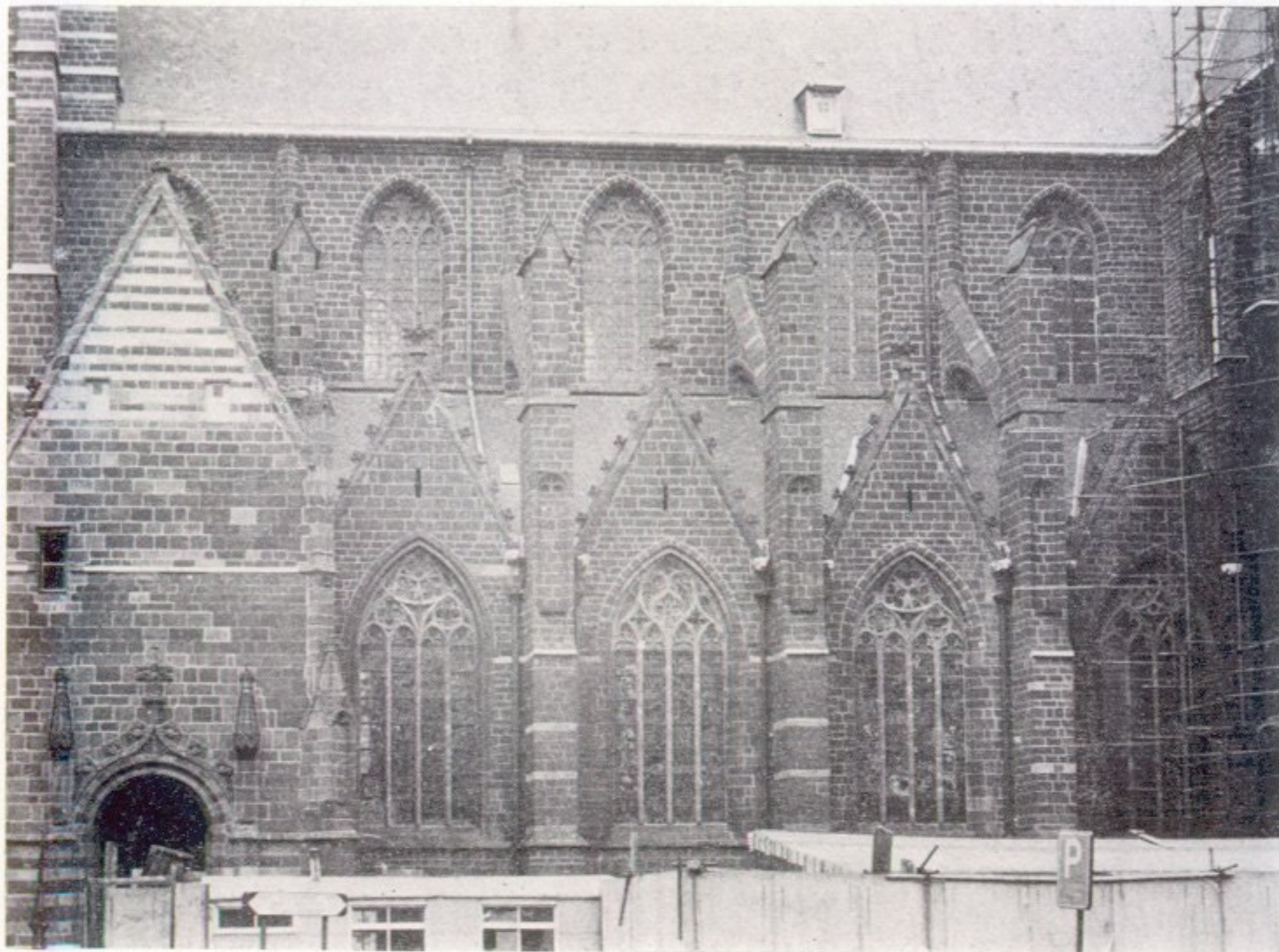
a Aberdeen King's College Chapel, choir ceiling



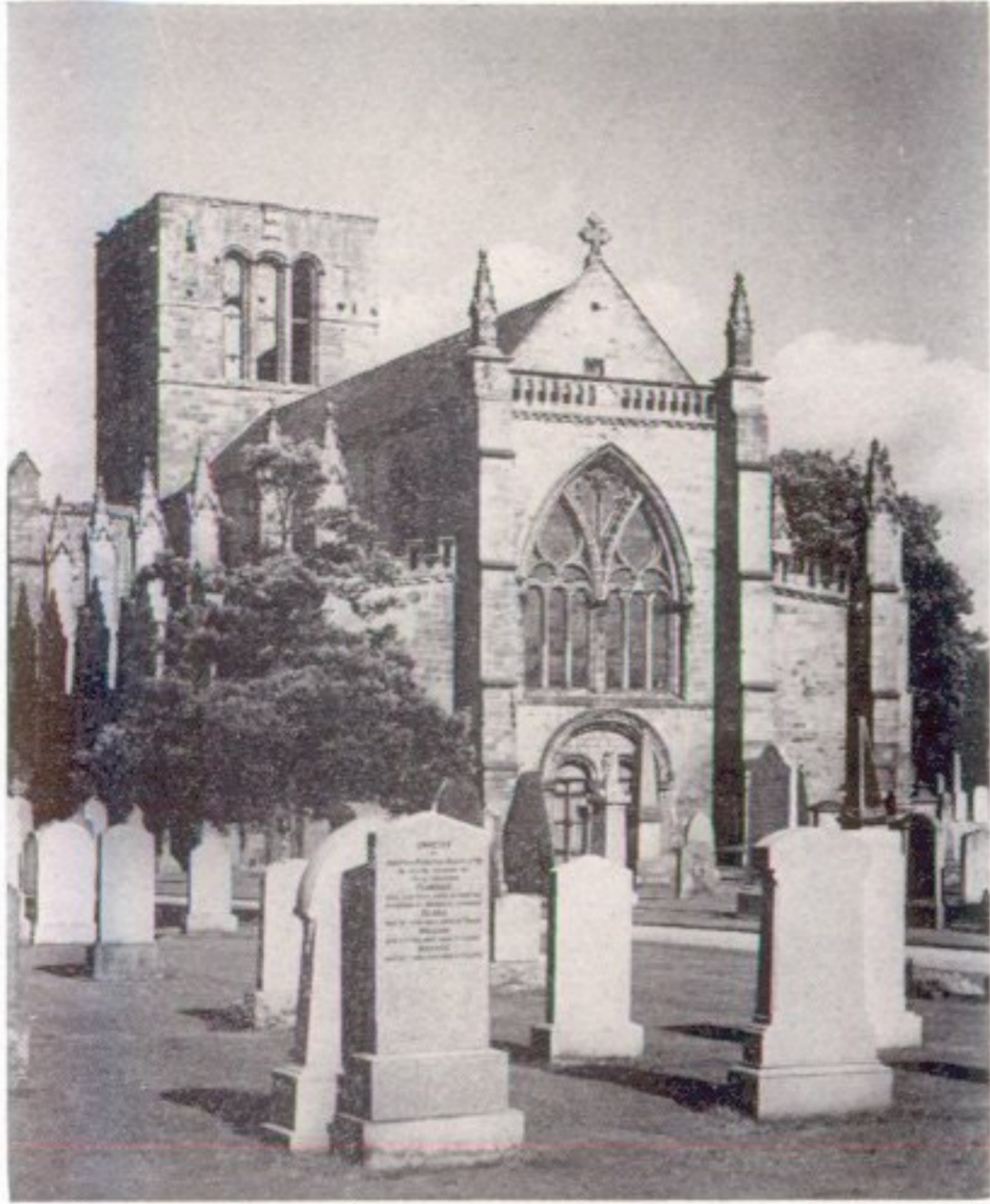
b Kapelle, north choir chapel ceiling



a Elgin Cathedral, south nave chapels



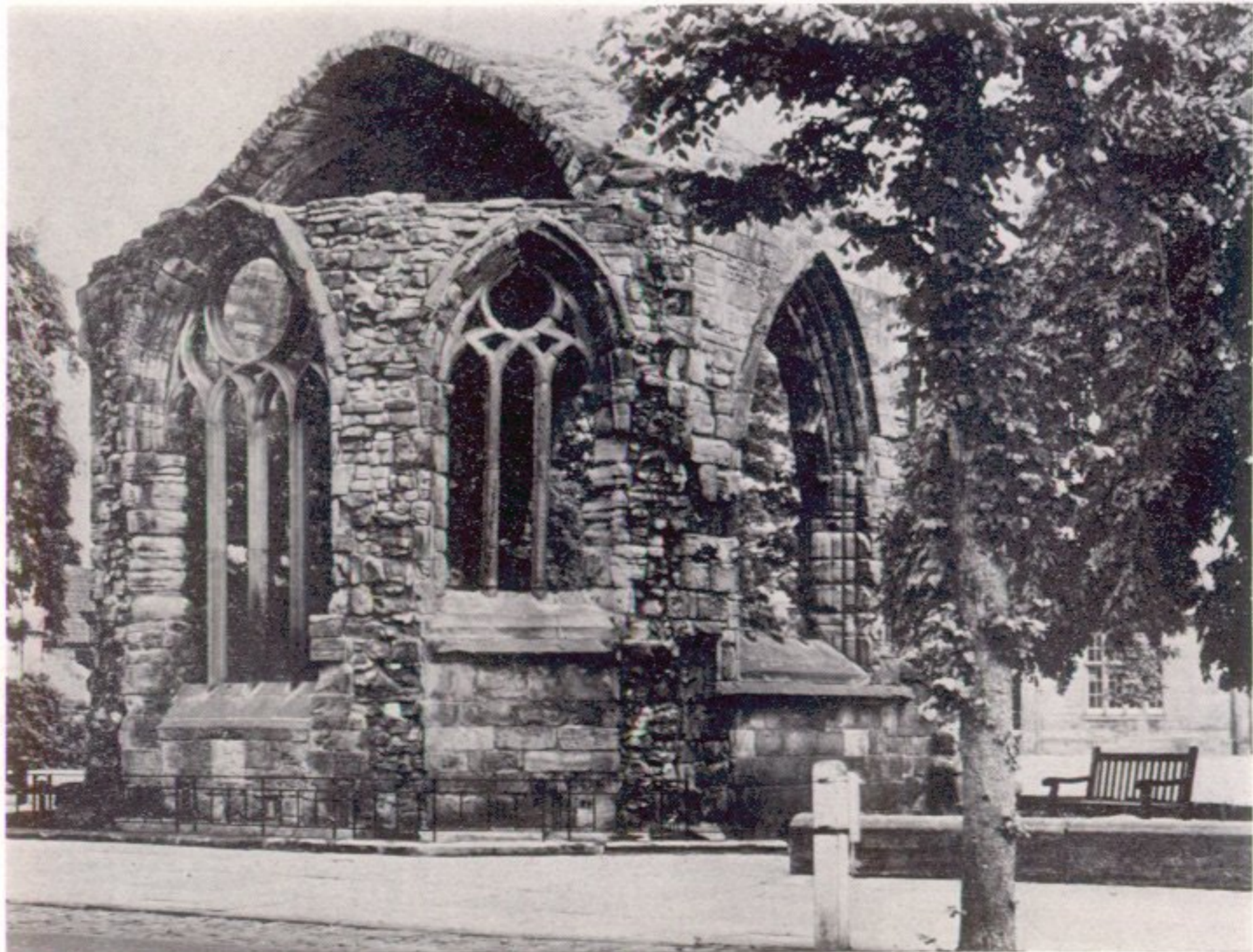
b OL Vrouwekerk Aarschot, south nave aisle



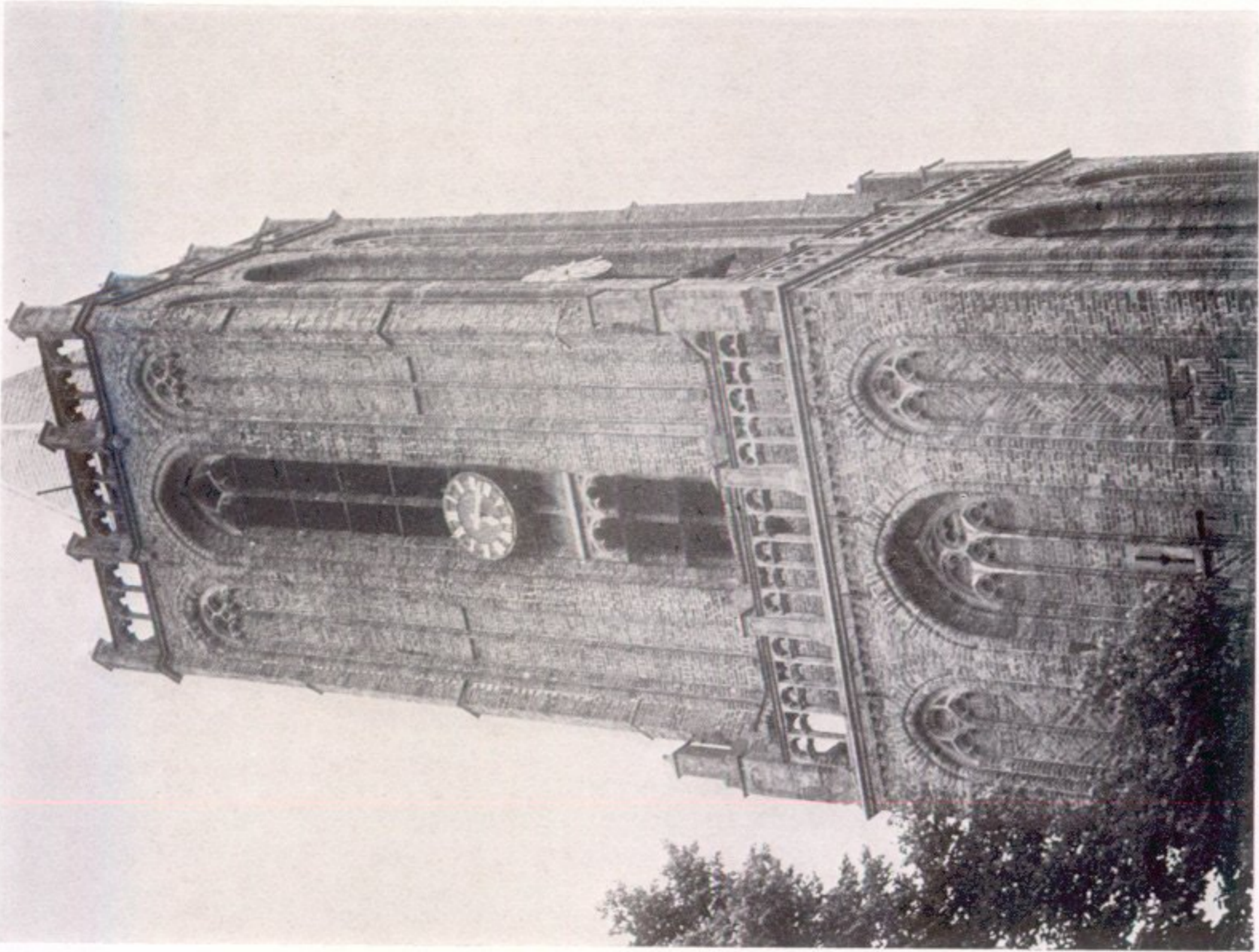
a St Mary Haddington (before restoration of eastern parts)



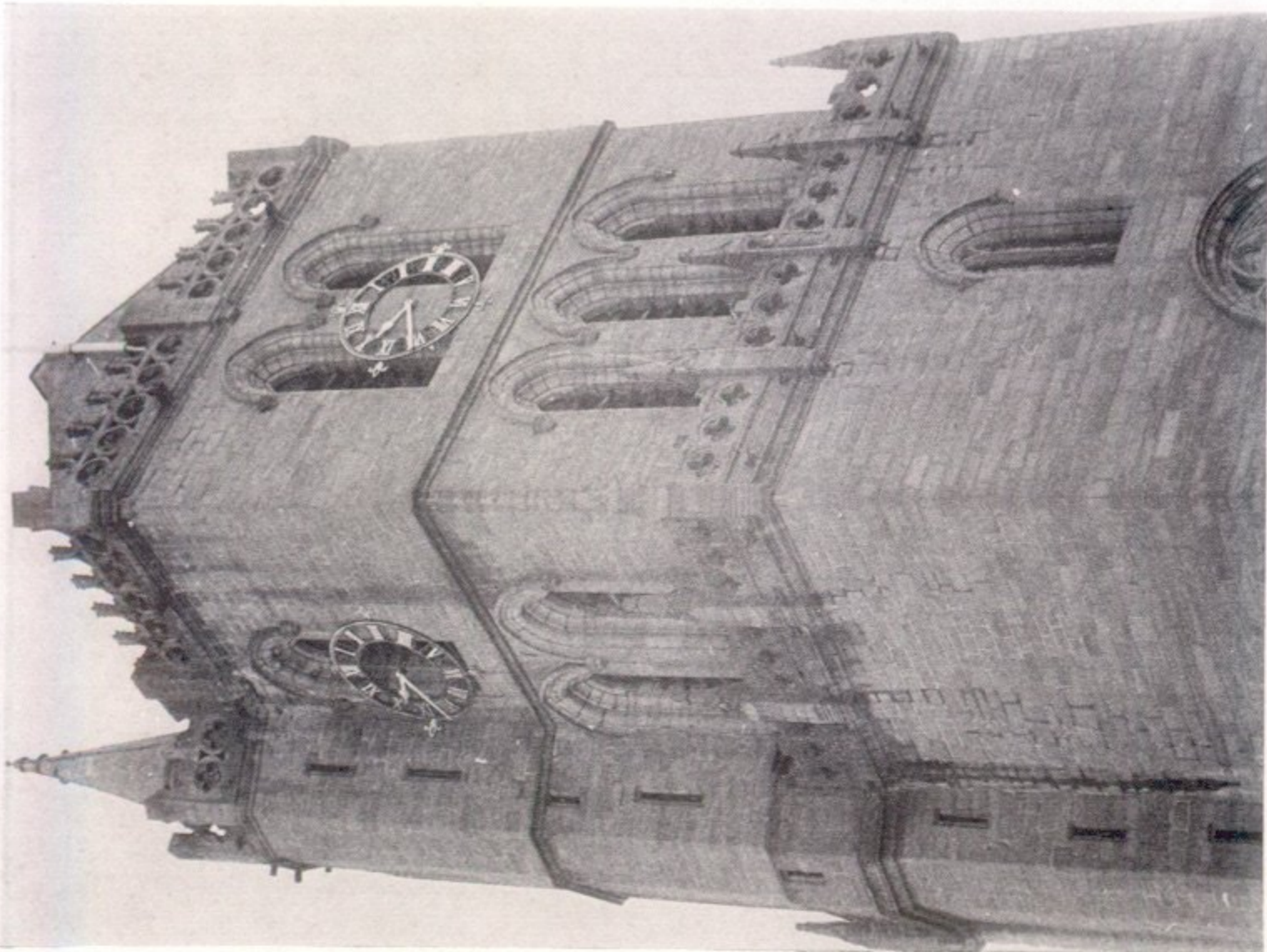
b St-Bavokerk Haarlem, detail of painting by Gerrit Berckheyde



c St Andrews Blackfriars' Church, north chapel



b Amerongen, tower



a St Mary Dundee, tower