



THE GOSPEL LECTERN AND THE CHOIR LECTERN

MEDIEVAL BRASS LECTERNS IN ENGLAND¹

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Despite the extent of recent research on the history and art of medieval England, the study of the brass lecterns which remain in our churches can still claim to be fresh. Only two writers have approached the subject :—

Rev. C. R. Manning—*Ancient lecterns in Norfolk Churches*.²

Dr. J. C. Cox—*Pulpits, lecterns and organs in English Churches*.³

The former only professed to deal with a single county and concentrated on its wooden examples, but appended to his paper a list of early lecterns throughout the country. Dr. Cox devoted more space in his book to brass lecterns, but his list, which was compiled independently of his predecessor, suffers also by mistakes of omission and commission—by leaving out genuine examples and by listing others which prove to be non-existent. His dating of some examples is demonstrably wrong, whilst neither he nor his predecessor alluded to what is perhaps the most interesting question connected with the subject—the question of provenance. If the list given, herewith, is more complete than the previous, it is due principally to the unstinted aid lent me by certain persons to whom I shall refer later.

Of the 45⁴ examples here listed, and situated between Newcastle and Bovey Tracey, Wrexham and Lowestoft, I have visited 30 within the last four years

¹ Read at Burlington House, December 3rd, 1930.

² *Norfolk Archaeology*, vii, 1872, 122.

³ Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1915.

⁴ I have purposely omitted the magnificent example at Oscott College, Birmingham, brought to this country early last century from St. Pierre, Louvain.

for the purpose of this study. On the other hand it would seem optimistic to suppose that there are not other examples to which my attention has not been drawn.

USES OF LECTERNS

In the later Middle Ages there might be as many as three lecterns in an important church, their purposes being, as is stated briefly in the register of King's College, Aberdeen, 'unus pro evangelio cantando; alter pro epistola; et tertius pro legenda.'¹ As a matter of fact most churches do not seem to have had more than two lecterns. The Epistle and Gospel would both be read from the same lectern, standing to the north of the altar, as is shown in the drawing of the funeral of Abbot Islip (d. 1532), in the Islip Roll.² The second lectern would stand in the middle of the choir and hold the choir books. This arrangement is excellently illustrated in a Flemish manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Pl. i).³ The classic quotation for this usage is in the Rites of Durham⁴:—

'At the north end of the high altar, there was a goodly fine letteron of brasse where they sunge the epistle and the gospell, with a gilt pellican on the height of it, finely gilded, pulling hir bloud out hir breast to hir young ones, and the winges spread abroad wheron did lye the book that they did singe the epistle and the gosple, it was thought to be the goodlyest letteron of brasse that was in all the cuntrye, it was all to be taken in sunder with wrests every ioynt from another.

'Also ther was lowe down in the quire another lettorn of brasse (not so curiously wrought) standing in the midst against the stalls, a marveilous fair one, with an eagle on the height of it, and hir winges spread a broad wheron the monkes did lay their bookes when they sung their legends, at matins or at other times of service.'

¹ Aberdeen, New Spalding Club—*Fasti Aberdonenses*, 1424-1854, 1854, 561.

² *Vetusta Monumenta*, vii, 1906, Pl. xxii.

³ MS. Français 9198. Written at the Hague and completed on April 10th, 1465.

⁴ Surtees Society, cvii, 1902, 13-14.

Some parish churches certainly had two lecterns—Little Walsingham had two of brass¹—Redenhall still has one of wood and one of brass. When there was only one lectern in a church it would be the one at the altar for the choir-books.

In addition to these standard lecterns, brass reading-desks were sometimes attached to the stalls in Flemish churches at any rate, and to the eastern balustrade of the pulpitum in monastic and cathedral churches where it was usual to read the Epistle and Gospel from these on high festivals. The lectern would never stand in the nave as now.

ORIGINS

Great obscurity surrounds the question of the date at which lecterns came into general use in England and other northern countries. They were in effect a less cumbrous alternative to the pair of ambos which filled the middle part of the choir in southern churches. Though in the early Middle Ages the ambos in some northern countries became as imposing as those in the south, they do not seem to have retained the same hold on the ecclesiastical imagination, with the result that the choir was freed of them either by reading the Epistle and Gospel by the altar, or in monastic and cathedral churches, from the pulpitum, which was in reality a glorified and unified ambo at the west end of the choir. Though I have not found references to standard lecterns earlier than the thirteenth century, it would be rash to affirm that objects of such obvious utility might not go back to a considerably earlier date.²

DESIGNS

No canon, except of suitability, governed the choice of designs for lecterns, but as a matter of fact the range appears to have been very limited in this country. The most obvious—a double desk—is still represented by five examples of brass.

¹ *Norfolk Archaeology*, vii, 1872, 41.

² An eagle standard lectern stood in the middle of the choir at St. Dennis during the abbacy of the great Suger

in the first half of the twelfth century (Sugerius, *De rebus in administratione suae gestis* in A. Du Chesne, *Historia Francorum scriptore*, iv, 1641, 348).

The eagle—the emblem of St. John¹—was undoubtedly the favourite for gospel lecterns of which thirty-nine brass examples still survive. The use of an eagle book-rest antedates the introduction of the standard lectern by many years. Folcuin, abbot of Lobbes, near Charleroi, from 965 to 990, had a most elaborate ambo made for his church, in which the book-rest was formed by a bronze eagle with wings which expanded to support the book, and a head which could be filled with incense and twisted round so as to appear to be listening to the reader.² A standard lectern with an eagle with movable head is illustrated in the sketch-book of Wilars de Honecort³ and another example of brass, without this attractive feature, but bearing the date 1243, was once in Tournai Cathedral.⁴ In the Salisbury Cathedral inventory of 1214⁵ is mentioned 'tuellia una ad lectricum aquile,' but there is nothing to show whether this was a genuine standard lectern or a book-rest in the pulpitum.

Though the emblems of the evangelists had decorated the sides of ambos quite early in the Middle Ages, the idea of using them on a lectern with four book-rests, so that the gospel might always be read from the back of the appropriate beast, does not seem to have arisen till much later. A lectern of this type was presented to the Cathedral of Dunkeld by Bishop George Brown (1484-1514).⁶

By the munificence of the same bishop, Dunkeld Cathedral also possessed an epistle lectern in the form

¹ Durandus, Bishop of Mende (d. 1296), says, however, 'It is the custom to read the gospel on the eagle in accordance with the words of the 17th Psalm: "He did fly upon the wings of the wind"' (*Rationale divinarum officiorum*, iv, c 24.)

² Pertz, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* vi, 70, and comments by A. Pinchart, *Histoire de la dinanterie et de la sculpture de metal en Belgique*, in *Bulletin des Commissions royales d'art et d'archéologie*, Brussels, xiii, 1874, 321.

³ *Facsimile of the Sketchbook of Wilars de Honecort*, edited by J.-B. A. Lassus, J. Quicherat and R. Willis, 1859, pls. xii, xliii.

⁴ *Bulletin de la Societe historique et litteraire de Tournai*, xiii, 1869, 348.

⁵ Rock, *Church of our fathers*, 1853, iii, pt. ii, 102.

⁶ A lectern of this sort of Lübeck workmanship still exists in the cathedral at Lund, Sweden (ill. H. Luer und M. Creutz, *Metallkunst*, i, 1904, 372). Others of Flemish origin are in the cathedrals at Genoa (ill. A. Pettorelli, *Il bronzo ed il rame nell'arte italiana*, 1926, 115), and Messina, though the last practically perished in the earthquake (ills. Sir M. Digby Wyatt, *Metalwork*, 1852, pl. 35, *Messina prima e dopo il disastro*, 1914, 215; S. Bottari, *Il duomo di Messina*, 1929, 85).

of a figure of Moses, which was combined with a triple candelabrum.¹ Another example, given by the executors of Bishop Gavin Dunbar (d. 1532), appears in the 1549 inventory of Aberdeen Cathedral.² Though these references are both of late date, the idea of using the most majestic figure of the Old Testament to balance the emblem of the great mystic of the new dispensation, can be traced back to the thirteenth century.³

Lastly the pelican, which, according to medieval zoology, was wont to nourish its young with its own blood, was considered a very suitable alternative to the eagle as a gospel lectern. I have not as yet discovered any record of a pelican lectern earlier than the fifteenth century, but it is very probable that they were in use earlier.

MANUFACTURE

Before proceeding to examine the actual examples, it is necessary to give some sort of description of the way in which they were made.

The wooden appearance of so many of our brass lecterns has often been remarked on by persons who have not realised that they are, indeed, no more than metal replicas of wooden originals.

The first essential for the making of a brass lectern was the carving of a wooden pattern exactly as it was intended that the finished article should appear. This would, of course, be done by an expert wood-carver and not by the founder. The wooden pattern would be made in as many pieces as it was convenient to cast it in. A brass eagle, for instance, is commonly composed of thirteen pieces—the head and body all in one piece, the two wings, the two legs, and eight claws. The stem and base of the ordinary example is made up of a succession of simple pieces of joinery, mostly turned on the lathe.

The actual process of sand-casting has altered

¹ For both Dunkeld lecterns see *Rentale Dunkeldense*, 1915, 6, 314.

² *Registrum Episcopatus Aberdonensis*, ii, 1845, 189.

³ An example was in Tournai Cathedral in the thirteenth century, and another in the Carmelite Church in Bruges in the fourteenth (A. Pinchart, *op. cit.* 361, 525).

little since the Middle Ages. The following is a very untechnical outline of what takes place.

The actual casting is done in an iron vessel called a flask. In this the wooden figure of the eagle is placed upside down. The workmen then build round it with blocks of sand closely pressed so as to obtain the impression of the model. The blocks are then carefully unpacked and the wooden figure withdrawn and a slightly smaller duplicate made of hardened sand put in its place. The sand-blocks are then carefully replaced around this dummy which is prevented from making actual contact with them by being supported on two iron bars running through the middle at right angles to each other.

It is not necessary to go into details about the making of the passages for running in the metal, the vents for the escape of the gases, or the other proceedings for the casting. After the casting has been done and had time to cool, it is unpacked and the sand core withdrawn through the holes through which the iron cross-bars passed. It only then remains to proceed with the burnishing and engraving.

I do not propose to continue with a description of the casting of the less complicated stem and pedestal, as my aim has been to kill a legend which has grown up around most of the eagle lecterns. It is constantly stated that they were used as alms-boxes—the coins being put in at the beak and withdrawn through a slot in the bird's tail. This is clearly an ignorant attempt to explain the hole in the tail which is blocked up in the better preserved examples by an inserted piece of metal. This hole is no more than the place where one of the iron bars passed through the sand core before the casting. As a matter of fact a coin placed in the bird's beak would almost certainly lodge in the interior of the legs and never reach the tail.¹

The great advantage of sand-casting over the

¹ The Abbe Texier relates that up till the Revolution at the Cathedral of Limoges the canon on duty for the week had the right to nominate to any benefice which fell vacant. It was the custom for him to place a note

with the name of his candidate in the beak of the fourteenth-century brass eagle lectern, which had been made by Gauthier, pewterer of that town. (*Dictionnaire d'orfèvrerie*, 1857, 47, 1289.)

'cire-perdue' process is that in the former the model is not destroyed in the casting. It will be seen in the course of this study that not only were the same wooden patterns used a second time, but that some remained in use for the best part of half a century.

It must also be remembered that a lectern is a composite affair made up from a large number of independent castings, so that there was nothing to prevent the combination of the castings of one set with those of another, as long as they fitted. Many of the lecterns with which we have to deal can be proved to be the products of the same workshop because they can be seen to be made with the identical set of patterns, but in other cases a single detail provides the connecting link. Thus two lecterns will be found to have eagles cast from the same pattern but fitted with different wings, whilst another pair are entirely dissimilar but share the same lion-sejant feet.

It must not be forgotten that much can be done in the burnishing and chasing to alter the appearance of a casting. By giving the eagle's beak a tweak or by engraving the feathers in a different way it is possible to give castings from the same set of patterns quite a different appearance. In making comparisons, therefore, it is necessary to concentrate on the features obtained during the casting and not on those added subsequently.

EXAMPLES

It is now time to discuss in detail the 45 medieval brass lecterns remaining in this country. Though brass standard lecterns had been in use in Flanders since the thirteenth century, only two datable examples remain prior to the year 1400¹—the lectern at Tongres made by Jean Josés of Dinant in about 1370, and the example dated 1383 formerly in the church

¹ A number of other examples resembling these two still survive, but by reason of the undoubted traditionalism of the wood-carvers

and of the re-use of old patterns it is impossible to date any of them definitely before this year.

of Saint Nicholas, Tournai, and now in the Musée de Cluny.

I know of no documentary evidence of the use of brass lecterns in England before the first quarter of the fifteenth century. One actual example must, however, date just about this time. Though the lectern in the church of Holy Rood, Southampton (Pl. ii), follows the general type of Flemish lecterns of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, it is not possible to claim it as the product of any particular town or workshop. A feature which should be noted especially is the little winged demon between the eagle's claws, which was a peculiarity of Flemish eagle lecterns right down to the example 1713 in Notre Dame, Courtrai.¹ The rather clumsy little lions which support the pedestal are not unlike those on the lectern dated 1411 in the church of St. Jacques at Tournai.

No other brass lectern which survives in this country can be dated before the middle of the fifteenth century. The next to be considered, but perhaps not the next in date, is the magnificent pelican lectern in Norwich Cathedral (Pl. iii) which has often been attributed quite erroneously to the fourteenth century. It is also necessary to disavow the statuettes—a bishop, a priest, and a deacon—which were added to the base in 1845. This lectern is closely associated with a number of other Flemish pelican lecterns scattered about the Continent. The tracery around the globe is found on the example in the Cathedral, Cordova,² which still preserves the statues round its base.

The wings of the Norwich pelican have each two projecting feathers on the outer side of the wing and ten graduated feathers on the inner side. Wings of identical form are found on the pelican lecterns at Bornival (Pl. ii), near Nivelles, and in the Museo Nazionale, Messina.³ It will be seen that the Norwich pelican has a crest formed of three pairs of small projecting feathers and four single feathers down the

¹ Ill. *Art flamanol et hollandais*, iii, 1905, 60.

² Ill. Cahier et Martin, *Nouveaux melanges*, iii, 1875, 227.

³ Ill. *Cronache d'arte*, ii, 1925, 17-18.

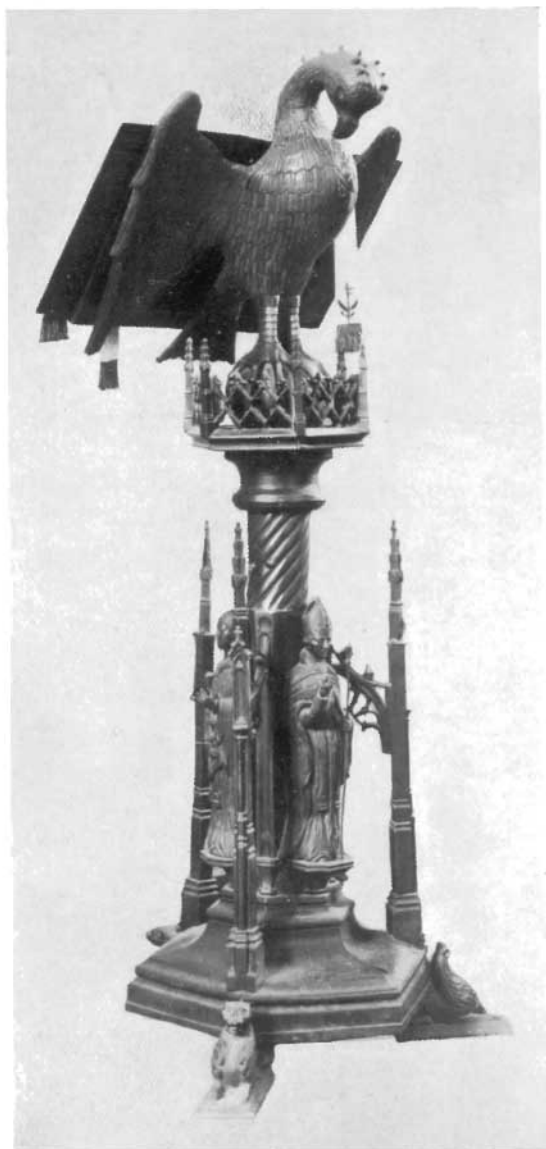


A. BORNIVAL, BELGIUM



C. C. O.

B. SOUTHAMPTON, HOLY ROOD



NORWICH CATHEDRAL

back of the neck. The Bornival pelican is identical, except that it has four pairs of feathers on the head instead of three. The Messina pelican only differs from this in having four feathers projecting down the back of the neck. The Bornival lectern has lost its stem and base, that of the Messina example is of Renaissance design and clearly of the date of the inscription recording that it was sent from Antwerp in 1545 by Fra Ottaviano de Preconio to the church of S. Francesco at Messina, where it remained till the earthquake. The identity of the wings and the general similarity of the birds seems to make it clear that these are all cast from models by the same pattern maker. It is not necessary to believe that the Messina lectern is composite, for the bird may quite well have been cast from a pattern which formed part of the stock of an old-established foundry, probably at Malines.¹

It is much to be regretted that the historians of Windsor Castle have failed to throw any light on the date² and origin of the double-desk lectern in St. George's Chapel (Pl. iv). The four other lecterns of this type in England have desks of sheet brass pierced and engraved and show no resemblance to the St. George's example, the desk of which is decorated with elaborately cast tracery. I have not been able to discover any double-desk lectern of this type anywhere on the Continent. Candelabra supporting book-rests decorated in this manner were produced in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century both in Flanders and North Germany. It seems wise to suspend judgment on this important piece.

By following the method of attempting to identify the patterns from which these lecterns were cast it will be found that the remaining 42 lecterns are the products of not more than four separate workshops. This does not mean that each foundry made all its lecterns alike, but that they each possessed a stock of patterns which is recognisable in all its products.

Two of these workshops seem to have lasted for a

¹ Mr. G. Van Doorslaer suggests that the Bornival one is Malines work. *Bull du cercle archéologique de Malines*, xxviii, 1922, 164.

² First mentioned 1552—W. St. John Hope, *Windsor Castle*, 1913, 446.

comparatively short time and used quite a limited range of patterns. The third must have been active for at least forty years and possessed a large stock of them. The existence of the fourth must remain uncertain. Its surviving output consists of a single piece—the fine desk lectern at Yeovil—which cannot be identified as a product of any of the other shops.

Though the existence of at least three of these workshops may be considered certain, all the lecterns with which we have to deal show a strong family resemblance, particularly in the form of the stem and pedestal, so that it may be conjectured that the workshops from which they emanated were probably not far distant from each other. Other reasons for supposing this will be adduced later.

A certain amount of dating material is provided by inscriptions but it is deplorably meagre. Most examples are uninscribed, the remainder bear the name of the donor and occasionally the date, but never the name of the founder as appears on some examples abroad.

Previously comparisons have been sought and found with other pieces on the Continent. From this point such comparisons virtually fail us. Only two lecterns—both in Italy—have been identified as being from the same workshops as the 42 examples in England. To the significance of this I shall return later.

The careers of many of these lecterns have not been uneventful. I propose to keep these stories of transportation and mutilation for an appendix, confining myself here to the descriptions of the pieces and avoiding biographies wherever possible.¹

SERIES I

An exceedingly fine and rather naturalistic bird. The lower part of the wing composed of five conjoined and graduated feathers and one projecting edge feather. The head erect with 'tooth' on upper half of beak. Globe with three ribs of equal thickness.

¹ Inscriptions are mostly in expanded form and references prior to 1600 are given in the footnotes.

Except where otherwise mentioned, they are inscribed in black letter on the middle moulding of the stem.



WINDSOR, ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL



F. E. H.

3. KING'S LYNN, ST. NICHOLAS



F. E. H.

SERIES I.

2. BILLINGFORD

All except two examples (6, 7) have lion feet of Type A which is peculiar to this series. Four have four lions (1-4), two have three lion feet.

The earliest example might date from as early as 1471, and the latest might date about 1505. It is probable, however, that they were really made in a much shorter time.

Lions—Type A—Facing right, carefully cast and without much chasing.

1. Peterborough Cathedral.
2. Billingford, Norf. (Pl. v).
3. King's Lynn, St. Nicholas (Pl. v).
4. Thorverton, Devon.
5. Isleham, Cambs. (Pl. vi).
6. Venice, St. Mark's.
7. Cambridge, Christ's College (Pl. vi).

1. Inscribed: 'Haec tibi lectrina dant Petre metallica bina, Joh'es Maldon, prior et Will's de Ramiseya.' William Ramsey was Abbot from 1471-96.
5. First mentioned in the Edwardian Inventory.
6. The lion feet of this example are unique. They differ from the other examples of Type A in that the mouths are open (ill. A. Pasini, *Il tesoro di S. Marco in Venezia*, 1885, pl. 61).
7. Supported on four couchant greyhounds (allusive to the heraldic supporters of Lady Margaret Beaufort, foundress of the college). They are of a more reddish metal than the rest of the lectern so that it is possible that they are subsequent additions, and that the lectern may have belonged to the earlier foundation of God's House. Mentioned in college accounts 1540. An inscription beginning 'Orate pro animabus . . .' was obliterated by William Dowsing in 1644.

SERIES II

The three pieces which form this group are all very finely executed, but at first sight they do not appear to have anything in common. This is a result of the heads of the eagles all being different. The bodies are all of similar build and are perhaps from the same wooden pattern, though not chased up in exactly the same way. It would be very easy to decapitate the original wooden pattern and to replace it with another, or, in the case of the Redenhall example, two other heads. The proof of the identity of this group lies in the fact that the globe and stems are all from the same moulds. Two (9, 10) have lion feet of Type B, peculiar to this class, the third has three greyhounds

sejant. The wings of two examples are the same (8, 9), with five conjoined feathers and one projecting edge feather. The wings of the Lynn example are now heavily restored but were apparently always different. There is no material for dating.

8. Clare, Suffolk (Pl. vii).
 9. Redenhall, Norfolk (Pl. vii).
 10. King's Lynn, St. Margaret (Pl. vii).
9. Another lectern with a double-headed eagle, from the church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo is in the Museo Correr, Venice. It has no resemblance to the present example and is undoubtedly of Flemish workmanship. No record of the Redenhall lectern is extant earlier than the churchwarden's account for cleaning in 1585 (C. Candler, *Notes on the Parish of Redenhall and Harleston*, 1896, 63).
 10. The wings are composed of seven graduated feathers and one very small edge feather.

SERIES III

This series comprises no less than 33 examples. Though these are not all from the same models they can all be connected together and are evidently the products of a single workshop which was active over a considerable space of time. Some are practically identical and may be presumed to date from the same time, others show the same eagle but with different wings, whilst others, including a group in which the lectern is a double desk, are connected by the lion feet of the pedestal. Altogether this workshop appears to have used at least four different models for eagles and four for lions. These cannot be arranged in any strict chronological sequence owing to the confused manner in which the patterns are mixed. It is clear not only that certain models remained in use for a long time but also that the adoption of a new model did not mean the definite supersession of all the previous ones. It is sometimes difficult to feel certain of the identity of a model owing to the different ways in which a casting could be finished. Not only does the artistic merit of the models vary greatly, but also the skill of the craftsmen who engraved and burnished the castings. The workshop appears to have had its ups and downs. Though the castings from the best models are for the most



Country Life.

7. CAMBRIDGE, CHRIST'S COLLEGE



C. C. O.



C. C. O.

10. KING'S LYNN, ST. MARGARET



F. E. H.

SERIES II.
8. CLARE



F. E. H.

9. REDENHALL

part well finished, the less attractive appearance of some of the castings from the worse models is modified by the careful way in which they have been finished.

The following classification is based on the models used for the bodies of the eagles. This seems on the whole to be a more practical method of division than the different types of the bird's wings or the varieties of lion feet.

Brackets enclose examples which are so closely similar that it may be supposed that they are contemporary.

Lions.—The characteristics of the types of lions which accompany this series are as follows:—

- C. Facing right, of rather coarse workmanship, the mane produced almost entirely by chasing (Pl. viii, 1).
- D. Facing right, with open mouth, mane mostly moulded and slender body (Pl. viii, 2).
- E. Larger and sturdier than the above, facing right, with almost human face (Pl. viii, 3).
- F. Smaller than any of the previous, facing almost to front, and with mane mostly chased (Pl. viii, 4).



FIG. 1. SERIES III, WING TYPES

Group I

This is a somewhat conventionalised bird. The head has a distinct forehead rising perpendicularly above the eyes. In some examples a slight curve intervenes between the beak and the forehead, but in others this amounts almost to a knob. I do not think that this is the distinguishing mark of another model, but rather a feature which was probably present on all the rough castings but which some craftsmen pre-

ferred to file away. This feature, which varies much in size, seems to be most prominent in the examples of later date.

Two types of wings are peculiar to this group, but a third appears on a single example (23) and helps to link it to the next group. The normal wing consists of a lower part composed of six conjoined and graduated feathers and an upper part with a single projecting feather, which in five examples (11-17) is pointed (Fig. A) and in the remainder rounded (Fig. B).

All four of the types of lions which are found with this series are represented in this group. Seven examples have Type C (11-17); two have Type D (18, 23); one has Type E (19); and two Type F (21, 22). One has lost its lions (20).

11. Oxburgh,¹ Norf. (Pl. ix.)
12. Lowestoft¹ (Pl. ix.)
13. Coventry, Holy Trinity² (Pl. x.)
14. Wolborough² Devon (Pl. x.)
15. Norwich, St. Gregory³ (Pl. ix.)
16. Oundle.¹
17. Little Gidding,² Hunts.
18. Southwell Cathedral⁴ (Pl. x.)
19. Urbino Cathedral² (Pl. x.)
20. St. Alban's, St. Stephen.²
21. Long Sutton,² Lincs.
22. Southampton, St. Michael.²
23. Newcastle Cathedral¹ (Pl. xii).

11. Inscribed: 'Orate pro anima Thome Kypping quondam rectoris de Narburgh.' Thomas Kypping died in 1489; he also held the chantry at Oxburgh (Blomefield, *History of Norfolk*, 1807, vi, 180).
13. First mentioned in the churchwarden's accounts for 1560 (F. W. Woodward, *Churches of Coventry*, 1909, 73).
15. Inscribed: '+ Orate pro animabus Willim Westbrok Rose et Johanne uxorum eius A dni mdcccclxxxiii.' Mentioned in an inventory of 1555-6 (*East Anglian New Series*, i, 1885, 290).
16. Ill. Cox, op. cit. 166.
17. Presented to the church in 1625 by Nicholas Ferrar who described it in a manuscript as 'a pillar and eagle of brass for the Bible.' Its previous history is unknown, but can it have been the eagle lectern mentioned in the dissolution inventory of the neighbouring Sawtry Priory? (see Appendix C). Ill. *Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, Huntingdonshire*, 1926, pl. 59.

¹ Globe with a single rib.

² Globe with a thick rib between two thin.

³ Globe with three thick ribs.

⁴ Globe with three thin ribs.

LIONS



I. TYPE C
OXFORD, MERTON COLLEGE



II. TYPE D
OXFORD, CORPUS CHRISTI
COLLEGE



III. TYPE E
URBINO CATHEDRAL



IV. TYPE F
SOUTHAMPTON, ST. MICHAEL



F. E. H.

12. LOWESTOFT



F. S.

SERIES III, GROUP I.
11. OXBURGH



F. E. H.

13. NORWICH, ST. GREGORY

18. Inscribed: 'Orate pro animabus Radulphi Savage et pro animabus omnium fidelium defunctorum.' Found in the lake at Newstead Abbey about 1750, purchased from a Nottingham dealer in 1778 by Sir Richard Kaye, prebendary of Southwell, and presented to the church by his widow in 1805 (H. Shaw, *Dresses and Decorations of the Middle Ages*, 1843, ii, 46-7; A. Dimock, *Cathedral Church of Southwell*, 1898, 84).
20. Inscribed: 'Georgius Creichtoun Episcopus Dunkeldensis.' On the globe, twice repeated, a coat of arms (a lion rampant) and a mitre with crozier behind. George Crichton was Bishop of Dunkeld from 1524 to 1543, having previously been Abbot of Holyrood from 1515 to 1524. It is supposed that this lectern was looted from Holyrood by Sir Richard Lee, of Sopwell, during the Earl of Hertford's invasion of Scotland in 1544. He is recorded to have presented St Alban's Abbey with a brass font which had been given to Holyrood by Abbot Bellenden, and which was subsequently melted down during the Civil Wars. The lectern escaped a similar fate by being buried under the chancel whence it was disinterred about 1750 (R. Clutterbuck *History and Antiquities of the County of Hertford*, 1815 i, 232; W. Galloway, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 1879, xiii, 287; *Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, Hertfordshire*, 1910, 19 ill, 196).

Group II

A much conventionalised bird, usually somewhat coarsely engraved. The head is without the pronounced forehead of the last group, but usually has a slight knob between the eyes (except at Bovey Tracey).

Two types of wing accompany this group, one of which has already been encountered on the Newcastle example and has its lower part composed of five separate feathers, two of which point outwards, the others inwards, whilst the upper part has one projecting edge feather with rounded point (Fig. C). The second type differs in having four (28) or five (29) small edge feathers on the upper part of the wing and six long feathers on the lower half.

Two examples have lost their lion feet (25, 26); three have lions of Type C (24, 28, 29), one of Type D (27). All have globes with three equal ribs. In the stem of two examples (28, 29) the octagonal moulding three quarter way down is set askew.

24. Bovey Tracey, Devon (Pl. xiii).
25. Bristol, St. Nicholas (Pl. xii).
26. Salisbury, St. Martin.
27. Croydon.

28. Wigginhall, St. Mary the Virgin, Norfolk
(Pl. xii).
29. Cropredy, Oxon.
27. Does not appear in the Edwardian Inventory.
28. Inscribed: '+ Orate pro anima fratris Roberti Barnard gardiani Walsingham Anno Domini 1518.' Lettering reserved on a hatched ground.

Group III

A conventionalised bird from a poor model and very poorly finished. The head has a very marked forehead which protrudes instead of rising perpendicularly as in Group I. The knob between the eyes appears again.

Two types of wings are found, one being the type already noted at Newcastle, and on the majority of the examples in Group II, the other (36) differs only from the type shown at Cropredy (28-9) in having four instead of five edge feathers.

Four examples (30-2, 34, 36) have lions of Type D, two of Type F (34-5) whilst the whole of the bottom of the pedestal and foot of another (33) is wanting.

All examples have globes with three equal ribs. The octagonal mouldings of the stem are set askew, except on two examples (35-6) on which there are only circular mouldings.

30. Croft, Lincs (Pl. xiv).
31. Wrexham¹ (Pl. xiv).
32. Woolpit, Suff.
33. Cavendish,¹ Suff.
34. Upwell,¹ Norf.
35. Chipping Campden,¹ Glos. (Pl. xv).
36. Oxford, Corpus Christi College (Pl. xiv).
31. Inscribed in Roman capitals: 'John Griffiths (or ap Gryffyd), of Placey-Stewart, near Wrexham, by his last Will and Testament, Anno 1524, gave the Brazen Eagle, worth six pounds, to the Altar in Wrexham Church.' Extracted from a very old manuscript belonging to Thomas Meredith, M.B., Wrexham, Oct. 9th, 1789.
34. Ill. Architectural Association Sketchbook, 1891.
35. Inscribed: 'Ex dono Baptistae Hikes militis anno domini 1618' and 'Restored November 1881, by M. F. H.' In the 'Catalogue of Noble

¹ See Appendix B.



F. S.

13. COVENTRY, HOLY TRINITY



F. H. C.

SERIES I. GROUP I.

14. WOLBOROUGH



F. H. C.

18. SOUTHWELL CATHEDRAL



SERIES I. GROUP I. 19. URBINO CATHEDRAL

and Charitable Deeds' appended to the donor's funeral sermon it is referred to as 'A brass falcon cost 26 l' (*Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society's Transactions*, xlv, 1923, 22). Its previous history is unknown.

36. Inscribed: 'Johannes Claymond primus praeses.' John Claymond was President from 1516 to 1537.

Group IV

A very fine and realistic bird which will bear comparison with the best of Series I and II. The body is slight, the upper part of the beak is very curved and overlaps the lower. It has the same sort of 'tooth' noted in Series I.

The wings have the lower part formed of five conjoined and graduated feathers and the upper part with a single pointed edge feather. The Exeter Cathedral example, however, though answering this description, is very different in character and lacks the sweeping outline of the remainder.

That these are from the same workshop as the remainder of Series III is proved by the fact that two examples have lions of Type D (37, 38), one of Type E (40), and one of Type F (39).

The stems are particularly tall and thin, and of the globes three have a single rib (37, 38, 40) whilst one has three narrow ribs. It is much to be regretted that none are inscribed.

- 37. East Dereham, Norf. (Pl. xvi).
- 38. Snettisham, Norf. (Pl. xvi.)
- 39. Walpole St. Peter, Norf. (Pl. xvi.)
- 40. Exeter Cathedral (Pl. xvii.)

40. 'Item a great dexte of laton wt a spred egle' (*Edwardian Inventories for the City and County of Exeter*, Alcuin Club Collections, 1916, xx, 9).

Group V

In this group the eagle is replaced by a double desk built up from sheets of latten. The three examples have nothing but their general form in common, and are best described separately. That they form part of this series is shown by the lion feet of Type C.

41. Cambridge, King's College (Pl. xvii).
 42. Eton College (Pl. xviii).
 43. Oxford, Merton College (Pl. xviii).
41. Supported on four lions. Pedestal of usual form. Stem lacks the usual mouldings at the middle, but has a heavy band of them just beneath the desk. One side of the last is engraved with a large Tudor rose surrounded by piercing and has the signs of the Evangelists in the corners. The other has the college arms surrounded by piercing, and Tudor roses. Across both sides is inscribed: 'Robertus Hacomblen.' The ends have three quartrefoil and one circular opening and are engraved with roses. A branch candlestick is attached to each. The desk is surmounted by an openwork cresting of fleur-de-lys, and a statuette of the founder, Henry VI, with orb and sceptre, and an antelope at his feet. Robert Hacomblen was Provost from 1509 to 1528, but there is no indication at what period of his career he gave the lectern.
 42. Supported on three lions. Pedestal of conventional form. Stem rather thicker than usual and has some of the octagonal mouldings set askew. Desk engraved and originally decorated with champlévé enamel, with the college arms (the lion in the sinister canton is shown as rampant) surrounded by piercing, and with the signs of the Four Evangelists in the corners. On each side are two scrolls above and below the coat of arms, inscribed respectively: 'Gloria in excelsis Deo' and 'Ihc' and on the other: 'In terris pax' and 'Mercy.' The desk is surmounted by a battlemented cresting and the ends are each pierced with a circle and fitted with a branch candlestick.
 43. On four lion feet, the pedestal and stem presenting no unusual features. In the centre of the desk is engraved the arms of Fitz James surrounded by piercing. On either side is: 'Orate pro anima magistri Johannis Martok.' Above is an openwork cresting, and the ends are pierced with a circle and fitted with later branch candlesticks. John Martok, M.A., became a fellow in 1458 and died in 1503; Warden Fitz James died in 1507.

SERIES IV

This is formed by the very fine desk lectern at Yeovil (Pl. xix) which, whilst sharing the stem and pedestal characteristic of the other three series, possesses no single detail which enables it to be associated with any one of them.

The double desk is surmounted by a large knob (an eighteenth century addition probably replacing the figure of a saint); the two ends are each pierced with a large hole. Both sides are engraved with the half-figure of a friar with knotted girdle, and a scroll inscribed:

Precibus nunc precor cernuis hinc eya rogate
Fratr Martinus Forester vita vigiletque beate.

Nothing further appears to be known of the donor.



GROUP I. 23. NEWCASTLE CATHEDRAL



F. H. C.

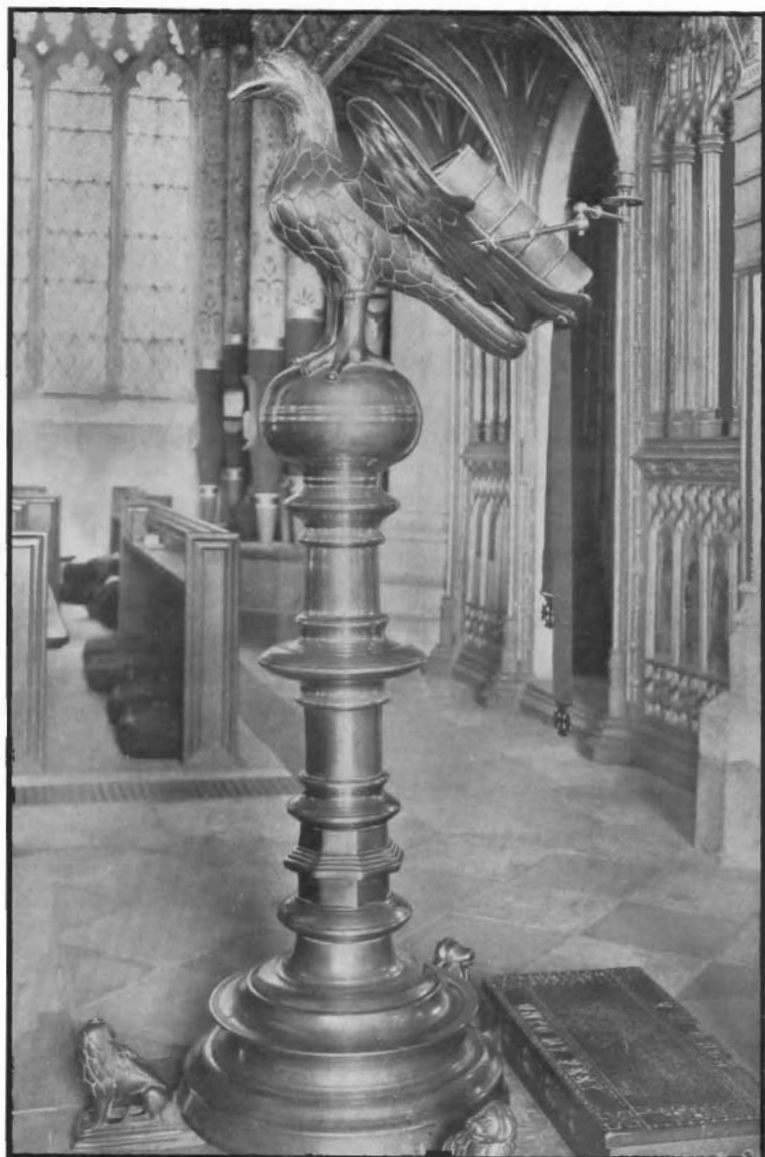
SERIES III.

GROUP II. 25. BRISTOL, ST. NICHOLAS



F. H. C.

GROUP II. 28. WIGGINHALL



F.H.C.

Humphrey Milford

SERIES III. GROUP II. 24. BOVEY TRACEY

The four lions (Type F) which support it are more crouching than in the other types. Though their heads and shoulders are large their hindquarters seem quite inadequate when seen in profile.

PLACE OF MANUFACTURE

It is now time to return to the question of the origin of these pieces. To me it seems extremely significant that 42 of these lecterns should remain in England and that the only examples identified abroad should be in Italy, where their extraneous origin has never been questioned. Before claiming them as English, however, it is only fair to consider the possible alternatives.

Hitherto three main schools of brass-working have been recognised as having flourished in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. Of these, the South German, with headquarters at Nuremberg, clearly does not concern us, despite the fact that its stamped brass dishes reached this country in considerable numbers.

The Lübeck school can not be so lightly dismissed. Brass-working had been carried on in North Germany since the early Middle Ages but by this time the centre of this industry was this great Hanse town. Though a magnificent Four Evangelist lectern at Lund, in Sweden, is attributable to Lübeck, lecterns do not seem ever to have been a speciality of the Lübeck founders, who concentrated rather on fonts, 'sacrament-houses,' candelabra, and monumental brasses, a few of which last can be identified in this country. An examination of the principal works of this school fails entirely to provide any noticeable similarity to the English pieces.

It has usually been presumed that the Flemish school had a monopoly of the English market. Brass-working had been carried on in the valley of the Meuse, from an early date, but by the fourteenth century the town of Dinant, in the prince-bishopric of Liège, had become so pre-eminent that brass-ware became known as 'dinanderie.' In 1329 Edward III

granted the inhabitants of Dinant¹ special privileges, of which they appear to have made great use. This trade was not, of course, principally in objects of monumental importance but in the little necessities of everyday domestic and ecclesiastical use—cauldrons, buckets, candlesticks and holy-water stoups, etc. The high price that old brass has always commanded has, however, been responsible for an almost complete disappearance of the evidences of this trade.

Though Dinant both made and exported lecterns, the example at Holy Rood, Southampton, is the only one that may possibly have come thence. In 1466, Charles the Bold espousing a quarrel of Dinant's rival, the town of Bouvignes in his father's country of Namur, sacked the former with a thoroughness which has never been repeated there. The site remained desolate for some years and though by the end of the century brass-working was once more being done there it had ceased to be on any considerable scale. Dinant, seems never to have had a monopoly of the brass trade, as Tournai had always been a serious rival. The effect of the sack of Dinant was to accentuate the tendency already shown by its inhabitants to go to work in other towns. In the second half of the fifteenth century 'dinandiers' can be traced at work in Bruges, Brussels, Liège, Maestricht, Malines and smaller places. It has even been asserted and repeated again and again by Belgian writers that 'dinandiers' sought refuge in England. Though this is far from improbable, the texts on which they have based their assertions are inadequate for this conclusion.² To

¹ On May 13th, 1329. (K. Hohlbaum—*Hansisches Urkundenbuch*, II, no. 482, 207, Halle, 1879.)

² In 1470 Edward IV, whilst in exile at Bruges during the restoration of Henry VI, granted, at the request of an important Burgundian noble, Pierre Bladelin, all the privileges previously enjoyed by the inhabitants on Dinant to those of the refugee Dinantais of the newly-founded little town of Middelbourg, in Flanders (on the Lievre, between Ghent and

the Scheldt). In the preamble to this (but not in the version confirmed by Edward IV on his return to Westminster and given in Rymer) is a passage which is rendered as follows by Pinchart. The refugee Dinantais at Middelbourg, "ne sont en rien coupables de la faute de les autres dudit Dinant, n'agueres residens en la cite de Londres ou peuvent avoir commise envers ce souverain." Les Dinantais de Londres avaient, ainsi que tous les marchands affiliés a la hanse teutonique, embrasse le parti de



F. S.

30. CROFT



F. H. C.

SERIES III. GROUP III.

31. WREXHAM



C. C. O.

36. OXFORD, CORPUS CHRISTI
COLLEGE



Humphrey Milford.

SERIES III. GROUP III.

35. CHIPPING CAMPDEN

this period, the second half of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century, belong the majority of the medieval brass lecterns which have survived in Belgium. Though emanating from a number of different workshops, their designs maintain certain conventions with surprising fidelity.

The pedestals are usually supported on lions, but these lions are couchant, not sejant. When lions sejant are used, as in van Thienen's candlestick lectern at Léau, they look straight in front of them, instead of to right as in the examples in England.

A still more rigorous convention dictated that a small winged demon should be held in the bird's claws. As far as I am aware, this feature is invariably present on all Flemish eagle-lecterns from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century,¹ whilst, as we have seen, it is completely absent from all the brass examples for which an English origin is claimed, as well as from the wooden examples which have always passed unquestioned as English. Other features might be noted, but I do not feel it too strong to assert that no lectern in Belgium, and no lectern in any other country to which a Flemish origin can be ascribed with certainty, displays any of the peculiarities of these lecterns in England. Only one line of argument seems open to those who would claim a Flemish origin—for these pieces—that they were made specially for export to England. This seems extremely improbable. We have seen that the

Henri VI contre Edouard IV dans la fameuse querelle d'York et de Lancaster. Le dernier de ces princes avait alors révoqué par charte de 9 mars 1462, les privilèges dont les marchands de la hanse jouissaient dans ces états depuis trois siècles' (*L'art ancien à l'exposition nationale belge*, ed. C. de Roddaz, Brussels, 1880, 96.) It will be seen from the above that mention is only made of Dinantais resident in London in 1462, before the destruction of their native town. Such are much more likely to have been wholesale merchants engaged in importing *dinanderie* than craftsmen, whose intervention in politics would be of no importance.

There is some evidence, however, that working *dinandiers* did wish to reach England before the destruction of Dinant, but there is no proof that any actually got there. In 1455 some *dinandiers* who had got into debt with their fellow citizens fled by night from Dinant with the intention of reaching England and plying their craft there. Their fellow citizens pursued them and succeeded in getting them arrested at Bomel, near Bois-le-Duc (H. Hachez, *Histoire de Dinant*, 1893, 91.)

¹ It does not appear, however, on the 13th century drawing of Wilars de Honecourt, *vide supra* p. 120.

same types of pelican lecterns were sold in Flanders as were exported. It cannot be said that the English market would absorb lecterns of a cheaper and poorer quality than could be sold in Flanders. The lecterns in England are of all sorts—the best are well above the average of examples in Belgium, though the worst are admittedly below it.

The idea that a considerable base metal industry should have existed in England in the later Middle Ages ought not to seem strange. Bell-founding had been carried on in this country from at least the thirteenth century, and it is certain that the founders did not confine themselves to bells, but produced other objects of general use. Mortars and jugs by English founders are well known, and it was in their interest that statutes were passed in 1463 and 1483 prohibiting the importation of such objects as chafing-dishes, hanging candlesticks, sacring bells and holy-water stoups.¹

Though very little is known of the careers of medieval founders, it is known that Peter Wulf of Lübeck, who cast the font at Molln in 1509,² cast two bells for the church at Breitenfelde two years later.³

It may seem sententious to say that the founder's contribution to the making of a lectern was artistically unimportant. The real artists were in fact the carver of the wooden patterns, and the craftsman who chased and engraved the casting. No one familiar with English medieval sculpture or woodwork would consider that the eagles and lions of these lecterns were beyond the powers of English carvers.

The monumental brass industry had flourished in this country since the thirteenth century. An examination of the engraving on the desk lecterns shows so close a resemblance to that of the contemporary monumental brasses that there can be little doubt that they are the

¹ For the complete list of prohibited imports see 3 Edward IV c 4 and 1 Richard III c 12.

² Walter Paatz—Die Lubeckische Bronzeherstellung des 15 und 16

Jahrhunderts, in *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, LI, 1930, 72.

³ Hach—Lübecker Glockenkunde, 1913, 114.



F. E. H.

38. SNETTISHAM



F. E. H.

SERIES III. GROUP IV.
39. WALPOLE ST. PETER

To face page 138.



F. E. H.

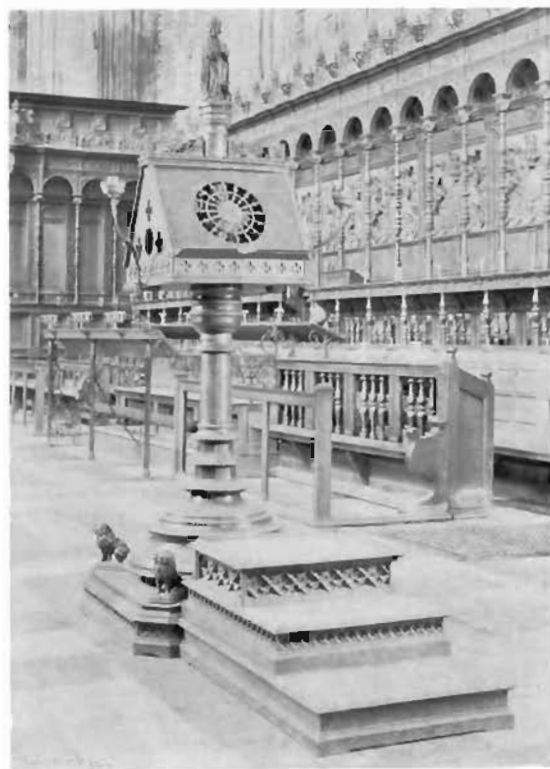
PLATE XVI.

37. EAST DEREHAM



F. H. C.

GROUP IV
40. EXETER CATHEDRAL



Country Life.

SERIES III.
GROUP V. 41. CAMBRIDGE, KING'S COLLEGE



Country Life.

HENRY VI
(KING'S COLLEGE)

work of the same craftsmen. Despite the fact that some 2,500–3,000 brasses of pre-Reformation date survive in this country, little is known of the craftsmen who produced them. It is generally admitted, however, that they were the coppersmiths who are found co-operating with sculptors and founders in the surviving contracts for cast metal tombs in the fifteenth and early sixteenth century, and whose task was to do the chasing and engraving, including the inscriptions, after the casting had been done. Thus in the oft-repeated contract of 1453 for the Beauchamp monument at Warwick, it is shown that the wooden patterns were the work of John Essex, marbler, the casting done by William Austin, founder, and the gilding and engraving of the inscriptions by Thomas Stevyns, coppersmith. At this time, the trades of coppersmith and of brasier or latoner¹ seem to have overlapped each other very much, as neither seem to have confined their operations to any particular process or alloy.

If it can be taken as certain that there were in England craftsmen capable of producing these lecterns there still remains the question where exactly they worked. There can be no doubt that London is the place which must first be investigated. Bells cast by London founders are found in every English county, brasses engraved by her latoners cover a large area, whilst a famous school of imagers flourished within her walls. At the period when the manufacture of these lecterns was at its height, a piece of brasswork of exceptional importance was being erected in the neighbourhood—the brass screen which surrounds the tomb of Henry VII in Westminster Abbey. It was still unfinished at the time of the king's death in 1509, and no documents concerning it have survived. The estimate for the actual tomb drawn up in about 1506 gives the names of Lawrence Imber and Drawswerd, Sheriff of York, as competing for the making of the patterns, whilst Humphrey Walker, founder, and Nicholas Ewen, coppersmith, tender for the casting

¹ Both brasier and latoner are translated *aerarius* in the *Promptorium Parvulorum*.

and the chasing. Professor Lethaby¹ infers from the wording that Imber was the established man and that he probably already held the contract for the grille. If this is so, it is even more probable that Walker and Ewen did the rest of the work as there was no rival tenders for it. Henry VIII finally rejected the design for the tomb in favour of that of Torrigiano, but there is no reason whatever to suppose that foreigners had any share in the making of the grille, which closely resembles the English woodwork of the time and, perhaps, more particularly the West Country.

There would be nothing surprising in the discovery that Imber, Walker and Ewen collaborated to make lecterns, but there is one point which militates against a London origin. An examination of the situation of the 42 surviving lecterns which are claimed as English gives the following results:—

North	..	Northumberland	..	..	1
Midlands	..	Notts., Northants, Warwick,			
		Oxon. ..	..	..	7
East	..	Lincs., Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambs.,			
		Hunts. ..	..	..	21
Home Counties		Herts., Bucks and Surrey	..		3
South	..	Hants and Wilts.	..		2
West	..	Glos., Somerset, Devon	..		7
Wales	..	Denbigh ..	..	..	1

All deductions from these figures must be tempered by two considerations. 1. That a number of lecterns are no longer in the churches for which they were made. 2. That the surviving examples are only an uncertain proportion of those which once existed.

As far as it is possible to judge it would seem that the migrations of these lecterns have usually been over

¹ W. R. Lethaby—*Westminster Abbey and the King's Craftsmen*, 1906, 233-4. It appears that Drawswerd, who was M.P. for York, also made the screens for Newark Church. The following facts (mostly unnoticed) about Humphrey Walker are gleaned from *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII*, 18 June, 1509, mentioned together with two other

founders of the parish of St. Margaret, Lothbury, as having taken an assize of measures (i, no. 186), 22 July, 1509, appointed gunner at the Tower (i, no. 323), 1 November, 1512, cast guns (i, no. 3496), 20 May, 1516, a successor appointed owing to his decease (ii, no. 1918), reference to cast-iron shot by him (ii, no. 1476).



Humphrey Milford

SERIES III. GROUP V.

To face page 140.



C. C. O.

PLATE XVIII.

43. OXFORD, MERTON COLLEGE



comparatively short distances—from a dissolved abbey to a neighbouring parish church, or from one parish church to another. Long distance flights, as from Scotland to Hertfordshire, or England to Italy, seem exceptional.

It is, of course, useless to speculate on the English or foreign origin of pieces of which we can only gather the most meagre descriptions, and the haphazard character of the sources prevent them from having any statistical value. I can, therefore, only give it as my impression that in 1530 brass lecterns were plentiful in the Eastern Counties, not uncommon in the Midlands and rare in the North and South. I have not found many traces of them in the Home Counties, but the unpublished state of the London records prevents me from giving any opinion on the contents of the city churches.

London's claim to be considered the origin of these lecterns is not absolutely invalidated by the paucity of examples recorded in her vicinity. Surrounding the richest town in the country was an area which seems to have shared little of its prosperity. The churches of the London area are seldom imposing and evidently did not enjoy a tradition of rich benefactors. It is, therefore, not entirely surprising that brass lecterns should only be recorded in a few of the more important of them.

The only alternative to London appears to be East Anglia. At this period Norfolk and Suffolk were enjoying a period of extraordinary prosperity. A continuous flow of contributions to the embellishment of churches had resulted in the formation of local schools in many varieties of art. The artistic capitals of this district seems to have been Norwich, Bury and Lynn. Bell-founding had been practised at all three of these places during the fifteenth century, but there is no evidence that the Lynn foundry was active after about 1440. The Norwich and Bury foundries were extremely busy during the period when the lecterns were being manufactured and some Bury records are at least suggestive of what we seek. In the year 1498 died Reigold Chirche, who appears to have been the

second in succession of a prosperous firm of bell-founders, which at one time had cast guns. In his will he bequeathed: 'To my son Thomas all my moolds, toolys, and instruments yt be p'teyning or longyng to my craft that I used' and further 'that Thomas Chirche, my sone, do make clene the grete lectern that I gave to Seynt Mary Chirche q'art'ly as long as he levyth.'¹ The possibility that Chirche may have cast the lectern which he presented was noted by L'Estrange² and seems not improbable in as far as we can judge from the little that is known of him. He appears first as the executor in 1471 and 1475 of the wills of John Cheney and John Owey, brasiers, and amongst his other recorded activities is the casting of five bells for Bishop's Stortford in 1489 and one for Isleham about 1490. His will shows him to have been a person of considerable substance,³ but as the lectern which he presented to his parish church has perished, there is no possibility of recognising what may have been his handiwork.

His son Thomas seems to have carried on the business with considerable success. Amongst the places for which he cast bells were King's College, and St. Mary the Great, Cambridge, and Redenhall. In 1523 he and his son, Thomas, attest the will of John Horton, brasier, whilst his own will is dated 1527. Nothing further is known of the founding activities of the family, but as Thomas left sons and grandsons the business may well have continued till the crash of the Reformation. Another bell-founder, Roger Reve, was certainly at work in Bury in 1533.

Nothing unfortunately is known of Cheney, Owey, or Horton, so that it is impossible to decide whether they were also founders or more probably, some of the coppersmiths or latoners who must have made the monumental brasses of local workmanship which are found in Suffolk. There can be little doubt, however, that Bury contained all the craftsmen necessary for

¹C. Deedes and H. B. Walters—*Church Bells of Essex*, 1909, 51-2; and J. J. Raven—*The Bells of England*, 1906, 170-5.

²J. L'Estrange—*Church Bells of Norfolk*, 1874, 63.

³J. J. Raven—*Church Bells of Cambridgeshire*, 1869, 15.

the production of lecterns. East Anglia was at this time noted for its wood-carvers, who were quite capable of producing the ordinary patterns necessary for these eagles, whilst there would have been no difficulty in sending from London the work of the best imagers.

Though I have not discovered any evidence of the making of lecterns at Norwich it may well be that they were also manufactured there. Though it is obvious that the workshops which we have traced consciously imitated each other, the designs were sufficiently simple to allow an adequate impression being retained by a sketch. On the other hand the manner in which the products of the different workshops are intermingled, only permits the supposition that all must be sought in the same area. The founders of Norwich were undoubtedly prosperous at this time—one of them, Richard Brasyer, was sheriff in 1495 and mayor in 1510, a considerable distinction in the fourth city of the kingdom. In latoners and carvers Norwich would probably be richer than Bury.

Both towns were admirably suited for acting as distributing places for lecterns and for receiving the raw material from the Continent. Norwich is but a short distance by river from the sea, whilst Bury is only a few miles from the navigable parts of the Ouse, up which must have come the Barnack stone to build the abbey. A further outlet would be afforded by the port of Ipswich.

It is interesting to note to what an extent waterways seem to have been used in the distribution of these lecterns. Although medieval communications were sufficiently good to have allowed their transport across country almost anywhere, it will be noticed that as a matter of fact the surviving examples are almost all situated in places near a seaport or a navigable river. It is clear that we have a parallel to what has already been remarked by Mr. H. B. Walters, when writing on bells,¹ and Mr. A. C. Fryer when dealing with the Bristol school of sculptors.²

In conclusion, if I have succeeded in showing that

¹ H. B. Walters—*English Church Bells*, 1912, 179.

² *Archaeologia*, lxxiv, 1923-4, 26.

the majority of these lecterns are English, what is its significance? It is, surely, that the history of the brass industry in England does not begin with the manufacture of brass from native ores in the reign of Elizabeth. If lecterns were produced at Bury or elsewhere, is it not at least probable that a considerable proportion of the brass utensils mentioned in medieval inventories were the work of the founders and latoners whom we know dwelt in the principal towns in this country? The lecterns become, in fact, only a chapter-heading in an artistic history of the brass industry which has still to be written.¹

Lastly, I must express profound gratitude to all those who have aided me in the preparation of this study. First of all I must mention my colleague Mr. F. C. Eeles, who ungrudgingly allowed me to avail myself of much of his time and of his knowledge of ecclesiological lore. No less generous was the help given me by Mr. F. H. Crossley, F.S.A., of Chester, Mr. F. E. Howard, F.S.A., of Oxford, and the Rev. F. Sumner, of Bristol, by allowing me the free use of their collections of photographs of lecterns, and thus accelerating the completion of this study by at least two years.²

Thanks for single photographs are also due to Mr. Parker Brewis, F.S.A., of Newcastle, Mr. F. Leney, F.S.A., of Norwich Castle Museum, the Rev. G. H. Page, Rector of Woolpit, and Signor Luigi Serra, Superintendent of Medieval and Modern Monuments for the Marches and Zara. Thanks also are due to the editor of *Country Life* for the loan of blocks of the Cambridge lecterns, and to Messrs. Humphrey Milford for three blocks from Dr. Cox's *Pulpits, lecterns, etc.*

¹ The economic aspect has already been dealt with by H. Hamilton—*The Brass Industries in England*, 1926.

² Acknowledged under the illustrations by the initials F.H.C., F.E.H., and F.S.

APPENDIX A

Notes on the Post-Reformation histories of some of the examples.

Eton.—'For removing the brazen desk from the Chapell 6d.'—
Eton Audit Book, 1649, H. Maxwell Lyte, *Eton College*, 1875,
248.

Oundle.—Said to have come from Fotheringhay College. Dr.
Cox, *op. cit.* 172.

Wigginhall.—There is no record of Robert Barnard, Guardian of
Walsingham, having anything to do with this church. Did
it belong to the Franciscan church at Walsingham, or is it
one of the two brass lecterns recorded in Little Walsingham
church?

The following examples are said to have been dug up in the
neighbourhood of the churches in which they now are, but it is
extremely doubtful whether there is any truth in any of these tradi-
tions.—

Isleham, Little Gidding, Redenhall, Wolborough.

The histories of the examples at Chipping Campden, Little
Gidding, Southwell and St. Albans have already been discussed in
their respective places.

There can be little doubt that the examples at Urbino and Venice
reached Italy when ecclesiastical plunder was being exported from
England after the Reformation. The Urbino example is tradi-
tionally said to have been looted from the Duomo at Volterra by
Federigo di Montefeltro but there seems to be no contemporary
authority for this.

The legends connected with the example at St. Mark's, Venice,
are too fantastic to be worth recording. They have been effectively
dealt with by Pasini (*Il tesoro di S. Marco in Venezia*, 1885, 120).

APPENDIX B

Notes on the present condition of the lecterns.

Norwich Cathedral.—Figures of a bishop, a priest and a deacon
added in 1845.

Windsor, St. George's Chapel.—Half globe beneath the desk, and
extra book-shelf on either side, and the battlemented grease-
pans of the candlesticks all added.

King's Lynn, St. Margarets.—Four feathers of right wing and two
of left restored in a reddish metal. The whole much worn.

Coventry, Holy Trinity.—'For mending y^d egle's taylor 16d.'
extract from Churchwardens' accounts for 1560—(F. W.
Woodward—*Churches of Coventry*, 1909, 73).

- Wolborough.—Arched book-rest attached to wings.
- Oundle.—Claws wanting. Tail supported by two iron struts.
- Urbino Cathedral.—Head has been crowned and more elaborate book-rest with the device of the Albani added in the eighteenth century.
- St. Albans, St. Stephen.—Claws and lions added when restored by Messrs. Barkentin and Krall in 1891.
- Southampton, St. Michael.—Claws wanting. Parts of three feathers of right wing wanting.
- Newcastle Cathedral.—The section of the stem between the globe and the middle moulding restored. Book-rest added.
- Bovey Tracey.—Claws wanting, branch candlesticks added.
- Bristol, St. Nicholas.—Lions wanting. Claws and book-rest restored, the whole very badly rubbed and repaired.
- Salisbury, St. Martin.—Lions wanting, lower part of legs of eagle restored in a yellowish metal, support added to tail.
- Croft, Lincs.—Claws wanting, iron prop for tail added.
- Wrexham.—Second feather of both wings and tail lengthened to support a new book-rest.
- Cavendish.—Whole of the base wanting.
- Upwell, Norf.—Crest added to eagle's head, the claws restored. Lions at one time used as scrapers at the church door but have now been replaced and attached by rivets.
- Woolpit, Suff.—Claws wanting.
- Chipping Campden.—Whole reburnished in 1881 when claws and glass eyes were restored.
- Oxford, Corpus Christi College.—Branch candlesticks added in seventeenth century.
- Snettisham, Norf.—Claws wanting.
- Walpole St. Peter, Norf.—Claws wanting.
- Exeter Cathedral.—Book-rest added.
- Oxford, Merton College.—Branch candlesticks added in seventeenth century.
- Yeovil.—Surmounted by a knob, added probably in the eighteenth century to replace the statuette of a saint.

APPENDIX C

Medieval brass lecterns formerly in England and now lost.

The following list is not the result of a prolonged and systematic search, but merely the jottings made from time to time since the writer began to study the subject. Readers will probably be able to add other examples which they have come across, but it will not be possible to make anything like a complete list till the Edwardian

Inventories have been published in their entirety and until more parish records have been examined. It is much to be regretted that the Edwardian Inventories of the two counties of greatest interest to this study, Norfolk and Suffolk, are in the one case unpublished, and the other non-existent.

NORTH—Durham Cathedral.—One pelican and one eagle lectern (vide supra 118). The former was stolen by one Brewin who had charge of the Scottish prisoners imprisoned in the cathedral after the Battle of Dunbar [Surtees Society cvii, 1902, 13-14].

MIDLANDS—Leics. Leicester, St. Margaret's.—'Recd. of Mr. Neuzamm for the egle 5—0—0' (Churchwardens' Accounts, 1570).

St. Martin's.—'Receyved of Mr. Norres for egle iii L. xviii s.' (Churchwardens' Accounts, 1568-9. There is a previous reference in 1544, *Accounts of the Churchwardens of St. Martin's, Leicester*, 1884, 9).

Northants—Benefield.—Will of John Gun, died 1522, 'to ye bying of a lectarne of brase for the church of Benefield' (*Arch. Journal*, lxx, 1913, 234).

Peterborough Cathedral.—'Item 2 pair of organs and two desks of Latten.' Inventory 1539. Only one lectern (1) survives now (Sweeting, *Parish Churches in and around Peterborough*, 1868, 51).

Wold.—Will of Agnes Arnold, died 1521, who bequeathed 6s. 8d. 'to the bying of a lectayne of latten.' (*Arch. Journal*, lxx, 1913, 234).

Warwick.—Coventry, St. Michael's.—An eagle lectern sold in 1645 at 5d. per lb. for £5 3s. 6d. = 392 lb. (Churchwardens' Accounts).

Oxon.—Osney Abbey.—'Item a dext of brasse with a egle 20s.' (Alcuin Club Collections, xxiii. *Edwardian Inventories for Oxon*, 1920, 136).

Staffs.—Burton-on-Trent Abbey.—'A lecterne of brasse (sold to the use of the parysshe of Burton),' Dissolution Inventory (*Archaeologia*, xliii, 1871, 231).

Delacres Priory.—'1 great lectroun of lattenn,' Dissolution Inventory (*Archaeologia*, xliii, 1871, 215).

EAST—Cambs.—Trinity College, Cambridge.—From 1580 to 1722 the cost of cleaning 'the brassen deske' in the chapel appears as an annual item (*Ecclesiologist*, i, 1843, 174).

Essex (North and East)—Colne Priory.—'An egle of latten, deske fasshion, for to redd the gospels, xxs,' Dissolution Inventory (*Archaeologia*, xliii, 1871, 242).

Saffron Waldon.—'a egle or Lecterne of latten,' Edwardian Inventory (*Essex Archaeological Society's Transactions*, New Series, iii, 1885-9, 61).

St. Osyth Priory.—'For a deske of laten in the Quere li s., iii d.,' Dissolution Inventory (*Essex, etc.*, Old Series, v, 1873, 51).

Hunts.—Sawtry Priory.—'A lecturne with an eagle of latten, xl s.,' Dissolution Inventory (*Archaeologia*, xliii, 1871, 239).

Lincs.—Boston, St. Botolph's.—'Itm to Robt. Dobbles one Egle for a lectern, xl s.,' Edwardian Inventory (W. Peacock, *English Church Furniture*, 1866, 223).

Guild of the B.V. Mary.—'Itm a great Egle of latten standing on three lions of latten in the myddes of the queyr. Itm a great lectrone of latten standyng where masse and Antimp' be songe, bought in the tyme of m' John Robynson, being alderman,' Inventory of 1534 (W. Peacock, *ibid.*, 199-200).

Deeping St. James.—'Itm one litterne of brass,' Inventarium Monumentorum Superstitionis, 1566 (W. Peacock, *ibid.*, 6a).

Norfolk—Norwich, St. Andrew's.—'Itm a greate latten lectorne valued at lxvis. viiid.' Three 'images of a lectorn' had been sold previously (Edwardian Inventory in *Norfolk Archaeology*, vii, 1872, 57).

Walsingham, Little.—'Item too lecterns of latyn, weying by estimacon vc, at i id. y li sm iii Li xvis. viiid. (*ibid.* 47).

LONDON AREA—Westminster Abbey.—An eagle lectern is depicted standing at the North side of the altar at the funeral of Abbot Islip in the Islip Roll. It is difficult to make much of this view but it would seem that the lectern was supported on the couchant lions familiar on Flemish lecterns. It had belonged to the abbey since 1423-4, when amongst the expenses in the church of the Sacrist Accounts appears the entry 'In munducione aquile stant' ad magnum altare 3/4' (W. A. Mun, 19665). Henceforward the cleaning of the lectern appears regularly each year.

The lectern is said to have been given to the Genoese ambassador at the court of Henry VIII and carried to Italy. The above information was very kindly supplied to me by Mr. L. E. Tanner, F.S.A.

St. Michael's Cornhill.—1566 'Item paide for showing the Egill at Ester iis.' A previous mention in 1457 (*Churchwardens' Accounts, etc.*, 1456-1608, ii, 160).

Bucks.—Chesham.—An eagle lectern sold with other items for 35s. (Alcuin Club Collections, ix, *Edwardian Inventories for Bucks*, 1908, 42.)

Essex (London area)—Havering.—'Itm an Egle of latten w^{che} ys to leve the byble on,' Edwardian Inventory (*Essex Archaeological Society's Transactions*, New Series, iii, 1885-9, 38).

Herts.—Bishops Stortford.—'Item a stondyng ffawcon of bras for a lecturn,' Edwardian Inventory. (Glasscock, *Records of St. Michael's, Bishops Stortford*, 1882, 128).

Kent—Canterbury Cathedral.—‘Analogium quoque sive aquilam eneam propriis impensis procurari fecit’ was among Prior Thomas Goldston’s (1494–1517) gifts to the church. It was destroyed by Colonel Edwin Sandys’ troopers in August, 1642. J. Wickham Legg and W. St. John Hope, *Inventories of Christ Church, Canterbury*, 1902, 123, 266. What is supposed to be the left leg of this eagle, found in the city ditch at Canterbury, was shown to the Society of Antiquaries in 1911 (*Proc. Soc. Ant.* 2nd Series, xxv, 1911–12, 357 ill.).

Dartford.—‘Item on deske of latten called the Egle,’ Edwardian Inventory (*Archaeologia Cantiana*, viii, 1871, 141).

Surrey.—Guildford, Holy Trinity.—‘Item a brasen deske,’ (*Surrey Archaeological Collections*, iv, 28, Edwardian Inventories).

SOUTH—Wilts—Salisbury, Black Friars.—‘It’ an egill and ii gret candelsticks laten, y^e w^{ch} father Browne cleymithe, but y^{is} xii yeris thei have be ther in y^e inventory of y^e convent before: w^{for} I wolld not allowe y^t he had y^{em} away, but caused him to bring them ageyne,’ Dissolution Inventory (*Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine*, xviii, 1872, 172).

SCOTLAND—Aberdeen, King’s College Chapel Inventory, 1542 —‘ambones ennei,’ etc., *vide supra* 118.

Cathedral Inventory 1549.—‘Item ymago Moyse pro epistola cantando in initis chori,’ *vide supra* 121.

St. Andrew’s, St. Salvador’s College Inventory (sixteenth century).—‘Item ane letturon for the vangell of brace with ane egill; Item ane letturon for the pistill of brace’ (*Miscellany of the Maitland Club*, Edinburgh, 1843, iii, 205).

Dunkeld Cathedral.—‘A four-sided lectern of brass with four figures of the Evangelists supporting desks upon which the Gospel is sung in turn, according to the title of the Evangelist: a brazen figure of Moyses holding a desk in his arms, and at the back thereof a candlestick of brass with three branches’ (*Myln’s life of Bishop George Brown* (1484–1514) in *Rentale Dunkeldense*, 1915, 314).