

## HEREFORD CATHEDRAL : THE CHAPTER HOUSE

By NORMAN DRINKWATER

The purpose of this paper is to reveal the structural and decorative character of the Chapter House of Hereford Cathedral, a building which was almost completely destroyed in 1769, and to indicate the significant place it takes in the history of English Gothic architecture.

The advanced nature of the design will be shown and evidence given for the manner in which it was covered by a splendid fan-vault contemporary with the first section of the fan-vaulting of the cloisters at Gloucester Cathedral.

During the Civil War the lead of the roof was removed from the building and presumably not restored. This damage which might so easily have been rectified was aggravated by the inexcusable action of Bishop Bisse (1712-21) who pulled down two of the windows and some walling with which to repair his adjacent palace. The Bishop's action was the beginning of the end, and in 1769 the Dean and Chapter had no alternative but to authorise demolition in view of the dangerous condition of the building. It was used as a quarry and thus to-day the remains are only fragmentary.

The date of completion of the Chapter House by 1371 is indicated in a contract dated 1364 for completion of work within seven years,<sup>1</sup> which also gives the name of the mason-contractor, Thomas of Cambridge, who presumably designed the vault.

The vault is now entirely destroyed, but William Stukeley visited the Chapter House in 1721 and was able, from the considerable remains then surviving, to make a careful drawing of the interior, which is preserved in the Bodleian Library<sup>2</sup> (Pl. VIIIC). Stukeley in his *Itinerarium Curiosum* (1776) is emphatic regarding the likeness of the vaulting to that of King's College Chapel, Cambridge, and his description and some topographical accounts, will be considered later.

It is now necessary to seek the explanation why the building was completed in a style some century in advance of its time.

In 1330, after the overthrow of Mortimer and the Queen-Mother, Edward III began an era of intense building activity. The building of the upper Chapel of St. Stephen in the Palace of Westminster had been begun with the employment of elements of 'Perpendicular' treatment. William de Ramsey, who had worked as an assistant on St. Stephen's Chapel, developed this treatment when he was engaged in 1332 on the building and design of the new Chapter House and Cloister of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. Hollar's engraving of this building (Pl. Xc) shows clearly the new ideas, including new types of

<sup>1</sup> *Charters and Records of Hereford Cathedral*, pp. 231-2. Transcribed by William Capes, M.A., pub. 1908.

<sup>2</sup> Interior of Chapter House, Hereford Cathedral. Drawing by William Stukeley, 1721.

window tracery, the prolongation of the mullions below the windows, and the vertical panel treatment of the door spandrels and parapets. The vertical treatment is also seen in the finish of the staged pinnacles to the buttresses. Master William de Ramsey was made the King's Chief Mason, and it is thus certain that important work of the kind was proceeding in the circle of the King and his Court, and was encouraged by them. Dr. J. M. Hastings in his article on *The Court Style* demonstrates the importance of this school of masons gathered around the London Court, illustrates the chief characteristics of the style, and gives possible reasons for its occasional appearances in the provinces.<sup>1</sup> A striking example of the 'Perpendicular' treatment was carried out in the Choir of Gloucester Cathedral in 1337. The designer may possibly have been William Ramsey, as the King's father, Edward II, lay buried there. It is not certain that he carried out the work, but, as Dr. Hastings points out, it was put under the ordination of one of the great masons of the Court School. In 1351 work was begun on the first range of the Gloucester cloisters and finished in 1377. It is credited with having the earliest fan-vaulting on a large scale in the country.

In 1364, the Dean and Chapter of Hereford Cathedral contracted with Thomas of Cambridge to finish the Chapter House, already partly built, within seven years.

It is highly probable that Thomas, a mason from the Cambridge in the vicinity of Gloucester, was acquainted with some of the new ideas carried out at Gloucester Cathedral, especially the cloister vaulting, and he might even have been employed on the work before coming to Hereford. This suggestion is supported by John Harvey,<sup>2</sup> who says:— 'Though Gloucester was never so great a centre of masonic activity as has been supposed (for the documentary evidence and that of Mason's marks suggests that Gloucester was generally dependent on Bristol, London, Winchcombe and Oxford), it was of undoubted importance for its continuous output of work, a constant stream of skilled workers came and went, carrying with them the combined knowledge of the Court School and of the Abbey masters, who were engaged in the fashioning of another innovation, the fan vault, which itself was at least partly suggested by the timber vaults of the King's Carpenters, William Hurley and Hugh Herland'. Thus it may be reasonably concluded that the knowledge of the Court School had spread to isolated work in the provinces.

Documentary evidence has not, at present, produced a definite year for the commencement of the building. There is no doubt that the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century was a period when building prospects were bright at Hereford, largely on account of the flow of pilgrims to the Cantilupe shrine. That a new

<sup>1</sup> In *Architectural Review*, Jan., 1949, No. 625, vol. cv.

<sup>2</sup> J. Harvey, *Gothic England* (1947), pp. 56-7.

Chapter House was under serious consideration at this time is proved by the fact that Bishop Swinfield made a separate and special bequest in his will towards the construction of the fabric and for the glass for its windows. (His seal is shown on Plate XB). It is unfortunate that the actual amounts given are not legible, the first being in sterling silver and the second in marks. Bishop Swinfield died in 1317 and there is no proof that work was begun before his death; the acknowledgment by the Dean and Chapter of the legacy is dated 1337.<sup>1</sup> With money in hand, directly bequeathed for the purpose, it is probable that work on the building started not later than *circa* 1340, a date which equates with the character of the lower part of the structure deduced from existing remains. The work on the Chapter House seems to have progressed slowly, and a partial cause for this may indeed have been the Black Death, which was as prevalent in Hereford as elsewhere.

The next document with any bearing on building activity in the Cathedral is a contract of 1359, and whilst the Chapter House is not specifically mentioned in it the terms are generous enough in relation to the fabric to suggest that they are inclusive. The contract was between the Dean and Chapter and John of Evesham in the county of Worcester, to work on the fabric of the Cathedral with diligence in the arts of masonry and carpentry; he was also to instruct others in these arts. The contract was for life, during which time he was to receive three shillings a week and a daily loaf of white bread. In case of illness, infirmity or failure of strength, for the first two weeks he would still receive three shillings weekly, but if the illness persisted into the third week, then only one shilling a week would be paid. He was allotted a tenement in the vicinity of the Castle and St. Ethelbert's spring, for which he would pay the Dean and Chapter ten shillings yearly.<sup>2</sup> This document is intrinsically valuable as an example of a contract of the period which bound the mason to the Dean and Chapter who provided accommodation and thus assured themselves of constant service and progressive building over the years. It also shows the rate of wages paid at this time to a leading provincial craftsman, capable of instructing others in both masonry and carpentry. The service for life was doubtless an attempt to prevent John of Evesham contravening the Statute of Labourers, or the Acton Burnell Statute, directly referred to in a later contract with another mason.

No further mention is made of John of Evesham and it is not certain whether he broke his contract or died, it is certain, however, that the agreement terminated before or in the year 1364. In this year a new agreement was drawn up between the Dean and Chapter and Thomas de

<sup>1</sup> *Charters and Records of Hereford Cathedral*, pp. 220-1, 1337. Acknowledgment by the Dean and Chapter of legacies for various objects paid by the executors of Bishop Swinfield, as for the fabric and windows of a new Chapter House, and the support of two Chantry priests for obit

services, and payments to vicars choral and the shrine of Cantilupe.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 230-1, 1359. Contract between the Dean and Chapter and John of Evesham, Mason.

Cantebrugge, citizen of Hereford. It is highly probable that Cantebrugge is the Cambridge in Gloucestershire, and that Thomas was attracted to take up residence at Hereford as a result of the demand for a master mason at the Cathedral. The Chapter House is not the only building mentioned in the contract, which refers also to the Chapel of St. John the Evangelist and the Blessed Michael, involving in effect the structural walling of the south-east Transept.

It is evident that the Dean and Chapter were determined that the Chapter House should be finished, for Thomas was bound in his contract in accordance with the Acton Burnell Statute and was to erect within the next seven years, that is from 13th December, 1364, the Chapel of St. John the Evangelist and the Blessed Michael in the church of St. Ethelbert, and to continue and finish the work of the new Chapter House, as far as the mason's work was concerned.<sup>1</sup>

The inference here plainly is that the Chapter House was partly built. Later graphical evidence suggests that the style of the fan-vaulting and window tracery was similar; thus it seems almost certain that Thomas of Cambridge took over at a stage when the vaulting and window-heads were still wanting, that is, before the building had reached above the arch-spring of the windows.

At a later date, 1366, there is proof that both parties to the contract were carrying out their agreement, for the Charters and Records include a receipt by Thomas of Cambridge, mason, for £11 18s. 1d., being part payment of a sum of 50 marks. The payment was for work in the fourth quarter of the third year of the contract.<sup>2</sup>

There is no further reference to Thomas of Cambridge or the work on the Chapter House, and the next Contract in which the latter is mentioned as a building seems to imply that it had been completed. This is an undated contract between the Dean and Chapter and Thomas Denyar, mason, of the city of Hereford. The said Thomas was to build all the 'uprightwerke' of the wall of the cloister near the Chapter House, from the door of the cloister to the 'kuyne' or quoin against the Chapel of the Blessed Mary Magdalene. There were to be two doors in this wall, one at a place from which the procession entered the cloister from the carpenter's lodge, the other leading to the palace, etc.<sup>3</sup>

No other early documents remain to be considered in relation to the new Chapter House, and the next evidence regarding it is supplied by topographical accounts of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries together with their contemporary engravings. Before examining them, it may be mentioned that there was undoubtedly an earlier Chapter House, probably of 12th-century origin, on the same site as its successor. In

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 231-2, 1364. Contract with Thomas of Cambridge, mason, employed on the Chapel of St. John the Evangelist and St. Michael and the new Chapter House, which he is to finish within seven years.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 232.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 232-3. Date uncertain. Contract of Thomas Denyar, mason, to build the cloister near the Chapter House and the Chapel of St. Mary Magdalene within six years.

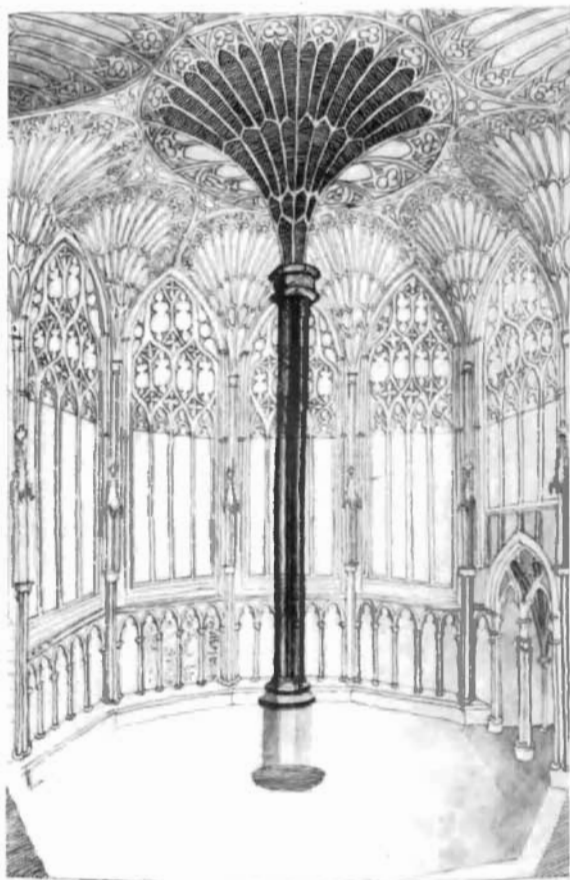




A. Fragment of central conoid



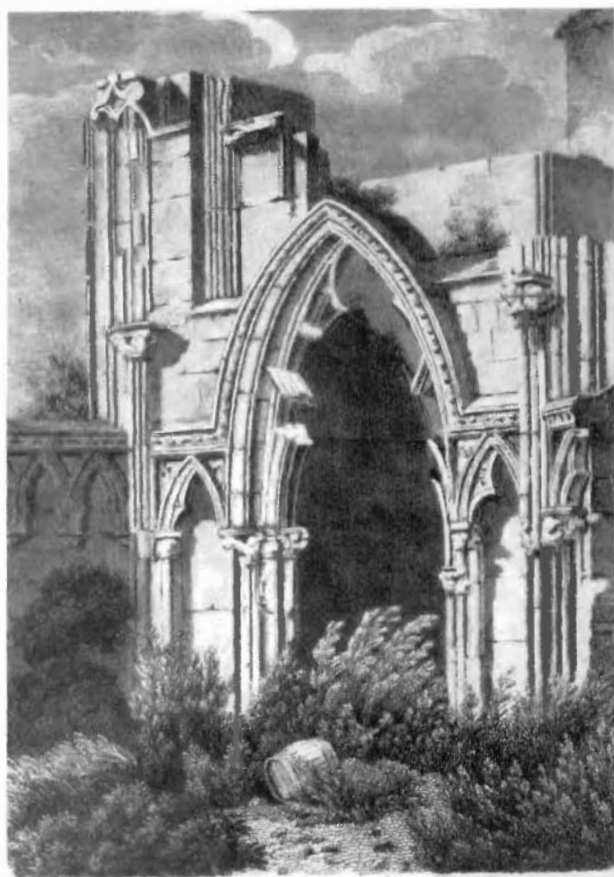
B. Remains of S. Wall



C. Interior of Chapter House. Drawing by  
William Stukeley, 1721  
(By kind permission of the Bodleian Library)



A. Entrance to Chapter House from Cloister  
(*Photograph by Royal Commission on Historical Monuments  
(England), Crown Copyright reserved*)



ENTRANCE TO VESTIBULE OF CHAPTER HOUSE  
at Hereford.

B. Entrance to Vestibule of Chapter House,  
from engraving by J. Rosse



clearing the ruin of the 14th-century Chapter House in 1937, the wall bounding the bishop's garden was found to be continued under the building and to join up with 12th-century walling on the east side of the cloister. This would seem to indicate the outline of a rectangular Chapter House, similar to that at Gloucester or Bristol. The late George Marshall deals very fully with this point in his book on Hereford Cathedral.<sup>1</sup>

The new 14th-century building was one of four Chapter Houses in England which had ten or more sides.<sup>2</sup> Hereford had ten as compared with its near neighbour, Abbeydore, which had twelve and was of late 13th-century origin.

At Hereford the Chapter House had radial buttresses at the angles, flanking handsome four-light windows in the sides. Below each window was a wall-arcade of five trefoil-headed arches, with richly carved spandrels and decorated with paintings on the recessed surfaces. It was covered by fan-vaulting with conoids radiating from each angle and meeting the perimeter of a central conoid supported by a central free-standing shafted column. This vaulting was no mean feat of construction, in view of the fact that the Chapter House was some 45 ft. in diameter and that the only comparable fan-vaulting of the period was that at Gloucester over the narrow span of the cloisters. On the western side was a vaulted vestibule (17 ft. by 12 ft.) with two main doorways. The eastern entrance from the cloisters to the vestibule still exists and has beautiful proportions and finish. This brief description may help to clarify the varied and sometimes confusing accounts by the early topographers. Structural and architectural details are considered more fully below with a description of the existing remains.

The earliest description of the building, in a Lansdown MS.,<sup>3</sup> is quoted in the *Graphic and Historical Illustrator*.<sup>4</sup> It states that in the year 1643 (*sic*) a topographical Excursion took place in this country and that one of the Visitors to Hereford Cathedral described the Chapter House as follows: 'The Chapter House there is very fayre and not much short of any wee yet saw, wherein are 10 fayre square built windowes of Antique work in good colours: It is adorn'd on the walls w<sup>th</sup> 46 old Pictures curiously drawne and sett out. Christ and his 12 Apostles, the 2 Sisters that gave 4 Mannors to that Church. Edward the Confessor & his Queene, the Earl of Pembroke that flourished in the time of the Barrons Warres: St. Winefride, St. Chad and divers Holy women. In the midst heerof stands A Pulpitt, wherein every Canon at his first entrance doth Preach 4 Latine Sermons'. This excerpt is quoted in an abbreviated form by Havergal in his account of mural decorations of the Cathedral now no longer existing.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> George Marshall, *The Cathedral Church of Hereford*.

<sup>2</sup> Lincoln Cathedral, Margam Abbey, Abbeydore.

<sup>3</sup> B. M. Lansdown MS., 213, f. 333, gives

the excursion as taking place in 1634.

<sup>4</sup> E. W. Brayley, *op. cit.* (1834).

<sup>5</sup> Rev. Francis T. Havergal, *Fasti Herefordenses* (1869).

The interior was obviously one that caught and held the eye, particularly the paintings around the walls, but these are dealt with individually by later topographers. It is not proposed to discuss this early account in any more detail, except for a word on the pulpit. There are no remains of this, but it is possible that the rather peculiar shadow at the foot of the central column in Stukeley's drawing next described is the outline of the base of the pulpit.

Over three-quarters of a century elapsed before the next recorded visit to the Chapter House. In 1721 William Stukeley visited the Cathedral and, in addition to describing the ruins, completed a most detailed and instructive drawing (Pl. VIIIc) on the basis of the considerable remains then existing. There is no doubt that it is accurate; apart from his established reputation, the details, even to the outline of the murals tally with other accounts, as the architectural features do with other engravings of the later ruins and with existing remains.

He describes the Chapter House as follows :—<sup>1</sup> 'The most beautiful chapter house of decagonal form and having an umbilical pillar, was destroyed in the civil wars. I saw its poor remains, whence I endeavoured to restore the whole in drawings, as well as I could from the symmetry and manner of the fabric, which I guess to be about Henry the Sixth's time : there are four windows now standing and the springing of the stone arches between of fine ribwork, which composed the roof : of that sort of architecture wherewith King's College Chapel at Cambridge is built : two windows were pulled down, a very little time ago by Bishop Bisse, which he used in fitting up the episcopal palace : under the windows in every compartment was painted a King, bishop, saint, virgin or the like : some I found distinct enough though so long exposed to the weather'. Stukeley only touches thus briefly on the murals, which are dealt with in some detail by Malcolm and Duncumb and will be discussed at a later stage.

An account by a slightly later topographer, Francis Grose,<sup>2</sup> in 1776 makes another valuable contribution in referring to documentary confirmation of the fact of the removal of lead from the Chapter House roof and the use to which it was put. He quotes from a manuscript then in the possession of Thomas Clarke, Esq., Register of the See of Hereford, entitled 'A Survey of the ruinous Castle of Hereford, late parcel of the possessions of Charles Stuart, late King of England, taken 14th Dec., 1652, by commissioners appointed by act of the Commons in Parliament' : Wherein are the following entries, viz. : 'All that Tower situate in the West part of the Castle, and upon the mount called Castle-hill, commonly called the Keep, built with stone ; having a rampart or wall of stone about the same upon the said Castle-hill ; which said Tower is now covered with lead taken from the Chapter-house belonging to the Cathedral, valued at 40s. The old ruinous Gatehouse, standing and

<sup>1</sup> W. Stukeley, *Itinerarium Curiosum* (1776), vol. i, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> Francis Grose, *Antiquities of England and Wales*, vol. iv.

being in the old ruinous walls on the north side of the said Castle, covered over with part of the said lead, taken from the Chapter-house aforesaid, valued at 25s'. The remainder of Grose's account appears to be based on that of Stukeley.

The illustration to Grose's account is an engraving by Sparrow dated 1776. It shows part of the arcading on the south wall, the adjacent stretch of wall containing a rough plank gate into the garden of the Bishop's Palace and the west doorway into the Vestibule. Above the doorway is the solid blocking below the window with the mullions prolonged downwards across it. Flanking the window opening are parts of the abutments, that on the north side shows the radial buttress behind it.

In 1796 John Price<sup>1</sup> published a book on Hereford with an account of the Cathedral, including the Chapter House. This account is the only one which states that during the Civil War the Chapter House was injured by the enemy's cannon. In the absence of any other record of this elsewhere or of evidence of damage to surrounding buildings, it is unlikely, for the 17th-century muzzle-loader had its limitations. Price also records that the lead of the roof was taken away by the soldiers to cover their barracks after the capture of the city in 1645.

In describing the proportions of the Chapter House he states 'that it had ten arches' (presumably windows), thereby inferring it was decagonal, and this he supports by his later computation of figures and niches, but on his plan he shows the building as octagonal. Price describes it as being 'supported by a single colonade of exquisite workmanship', which is suggestive of a shafted column, rather than a single one. He agrees on the number of murals (one to each niche, five below each window, forty-five in all) with Duncumb and Malcolm, and he also describes various figures, but not in detail.

To illustrate his account, Price includes a good engraving by his own hand (Pl. XIA). It shows a more advanced state of ruin than appears in the view by Sparrow, and the east wall of the muniment room above the cloister is seen, with the creasings for different gabled roofs; interesting explanations of these are given by the late Mr. George Marshall in his book on Hereford Cathedral.

For descriptions of the mural-paintings the accounts of Duncumb<sup>2</sup> and Malcolm,<sup>3</sup> are the fullest, and were published within a few years of one another. Duncumb's account is the first, and is in some degrees more accurate than that by Malcolm who is at fault on the numbering of the panels. Undoubtedly both accounts are based on similar sources of information<sup>4</sup> and local knowledge, confirmed perhaps by remains

<sup>1</sup> John Price, *An Historical Account of the City of Hereford*.

<sup>2</sup> John Duncumb, *History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford* (1804), vol. i.

<sup>3</sup> J. P. Malcolm, *Excursions in the Counties of*

*Kent, Gloucester, Hereford, etc.* (1807).

<sup>4</sup> B. M. Harl. MS. 4046 ff. 19. (Dated as written in the late 17th early 18th century, B.M.).

of the murals, for it is within the bounds of possibility that they were removable and not painted directly on the stone, as will be seen from the following account.

Duncumb's preliminary description of the building is very similar to that of earlier topographers and is based on Stukeley's account. In describing the vestibule, he says it contained a gravestone inscribed : ' Hic jacet d'n'us Thomas de Birynton, quondam sub-thesaurarius hujus ecclie qui obiit 12 die mens : Junii A.D. MCCCLXXV ' :<sup>1</sup> It is probable that as Thomas de Birynton was sub-treasurer of the Cathedral, and died in 1375, he had the control of the funds for the building of the Chapter House and was duly honoured by being buried there on his death.

Duncumb goes on to say : ' The building itself was forty feet in diameter, the windows were pointed, and under each was a square containing five niches, in every one of which was admirably painted a portrait as large as life.

' The entrance occupying one of the sides, the number of portraits was forty-five; the first square on the left hand exhibited—1. King Milfrid crowned ; 2. King Ethelbert, ditto ; 3. Bishop Athelstan, one of the early founders of the cathedral, having a model of a church in his hand ; 4. Wulvive, a great benefactress to the church ; and 5. Godiva, another benefactress, and well known from liberating the town of Coventry from the heavy exactions to which it had been subject.<sup>2</sup>

' The second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth squares contained portraits of our Saviour, of all the Apostles, and many of the primitive saints ; most of these were embezzled and removed during the confusion of the civil wars '. This is also borne out by Malcolm who says : ' Which being embezzled by private hands, and some pulled down, cannot be discovered '. Their embezzlement seems to indicate that they were on some detachable material, perhaps parchment,<sup>3</sup> Stukeley refers to these panels as follows :—' Some I found distinct enough though so long exposed to the weather ', but does not give any indication as to the method or material used. No traces of paintwork remain on the existing walls. The fact that the local red Herefordshire sandstone would not provide a very happy surface on which to carry out fine and delicate paintings is a good reason for the use of other material.

Duncumb's description continues : ' The seventh square had—1. St. George, habited as a knight, in antique armour ; 2. Scus David : episcopus ; 3. A nun, in a black dress ; 4. a bishop mitred ; and 5. a Knight Templar, in his coat of mail. Over these were three escutcheons, bearing quarterly, or a maunche gules, and barry of ten pieces, argent and azure ; over all seven martletts gules, 2, 2, 2, 1 '. Here it is necessary to study Stukeley's drawing and to note its accuracy, for the seventh square in

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> The obits of Wulvive and Godiva were celebrated in the cathedral on the 18th of June (Duncumb).

<sup>3</sup> The inscriptions on the late 14th-century paintings in the Chapter House of Westminster Abbey are on parchment.





A. Gloucester Cathedral. Cloister-walk of 1351-77

*(Reproduced by kind permission of the National Buildings Record)*



B. Seal of Bishop Swinfield

*(Reproduced by kind permission of the Dean and Chapter)*



C. London, Old St. Paul's : Chapter House and Cloister, 1332. Designer William Ramsey. From an engraving after Hollar



*Remains of the old Chapter House Hereford*

A. Ruins of Chapter House. From an engraving by J. Price



B. Hereford Cathedral, Bishop's Chapel. Capital and base now in Cloisters.  
Late 11th century



his drawing shows figures in four of the five panels, closer inspection shows these respectively to be vaguely an ecclesiastical figure, a nun, a bishop and a knight in armour. The latter may be identified as a Templar by the cross on his shield.

The shields bear the arms of an Earl of Pembroke and are those of Hastings quartering Valence. The Pembroke family had a link with Hereford, and it is possible they made contributions to the building of the Chapter House, their act being commemorated by the Dean and Chapter in this way.

'The eighth square had—1. a king in his parliamentary robes, with an inscription under him, 'Scus Edwardus': 2. a nun veiled, and in black habit: 3. a king crowned, resembling one of the later Norman kings: 4. a female, inscribed 'Sca Wenefrida': 5. a bishop with his crozier and mitre, inscribed 'Sce Ceadda', he presided over this See A.D. 850. Over each of these portraits was painted this coat, gules, three lions' heads erased, argent. The ninth square contained a portrait of the Virgin Mary in each of the niches: four of them had infants in their arms, and under were smaller paintings of religious persons, praying with extended hands; on the side of one of them was written 'Dnus Johes Prat'.'<sup>1</sup>

The connection of the heraldry described with the Chapter House remains unknown; the arms are those of Sir William Teford or Titford<sup>2</sup> and Papworth's blazon agrees with Duncumb. Mr. Marshall states that a Sir John Prat was collated to the Prebend of Gorwall in 1389 and that before being rewarded with a prebend he may have been a vicar choral and possibly linked with the work of the Chapter House, hence his name appearing there.<sup>3</sup>

A further account of the Chapter House appears in the *Beauties of England and Wales* by E. Brayley and J. Britton.<sup>4</sup> The description substantiates those of previous writers and also mentions that the central pillar 'was finely ornamented with figures and other devices'. It is interesting to note that they deliberately refer to the vaulting as 'fan-work' which was extremely fine. They touch briefly on the murals and the reasons for their destruction. There is a fine engraving by J. Rosse, of 1803, which, as Brayley states, 'represents the principal part of the Ruin as it appeared previous to the latest removal' (Pl. IXB). The view shows the doorway to the Vestibule from the Chapter House, and part of the walling of the tenth side in which the doorway stands. The latter has a moulded two-centred head; above it is a label enriched with leaf work and continued as a stringcourse. The arch springs from the moulded and foiled capitals of moulded and shafted responds. The tracery in the head has broken away. At the time of the engraving

<sup>1</sup> Duncumb, *op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Papworth, *Gules 3 lions' heads erased Argent.* Sir William Teford or Titford.

<sup>3</sup> George Marshall, *The Cathedral Church of*

*Hereford.*

<sup>4</sup> Edward Brayley and John Britton, *The Beauties of England and Wales* (1805), vol. vi.

no doubt the central supporting shafts had broken down, as they too are missing.

On each side of the doorway is a single niche of similar finish and dimensions to those in groups of five on the nine other sides ; two of these niches on the ninth side are shown in the engraving.

In each main angle the vaulting shaft can be seen, up to the level of the sills of the niches ; in the south angle the niche is almost complete. The south jamb of the window above the doorway remains, but only at sill level and below, together with the continuation of one mullion downward on the solid panel below the sill. Unfortunately, although this view gives more detail of the entrance than any other, Hearne, who drew it, has made no attempt to portray any vaulting inside the Vestibule.

Britton<sup>1</sup> in his description of the Cathedral has nothing of further value to add in his account of the Chapter House, nor has Havergal in his *Fasti*.<sup>2</sup> It now remains to consider the fragments of the structure surviving *in situ*, and those which are still recognisable though dispersed, in the Cathedral precincts.

When the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments<sup>3</sup> reported on the Cathedral in 1931 the remains of the Chapter House were much as they are to-day, with the exception of the work next described and the discovery of one important fragment which will be discussed later.

In 1937 the tangled mass of vegetation and rubbish that covered the ruins was cleared away at the instigation of the Friends of the Cathedral, and this work included the exposure of the old footings and the building of a low wall upon them to indicate the plan.

The remains show that the ten-sided Chapter House had a continuous stone wall-bench with a step below it. On the south side of the walling, seen from the Bishop's Palace garden, are remains of a moulded external plinth and radial buttress. One complete side survives on the south up to the string-course below the windows (Pl. VIIIB). This string-course has a hollow chamfer enriched with paterae. In the main angles of the walls are the vaulting-shafts with the string-course stopping against them. Below the string is a wall-arcade of five trefoiled arches, with carved spandrels, springing from foliated capitals to free-standing shafts ; these last are now missing, and only some of their moulded bases remain. Half the first arch of each of the return arcades on the adjacent walls survives.

The main spandrels are carved with figures, now badly weathered. East to west, the first two spandrels are very worn ; (3) shows a double row of small figures facing towards a seated figure to the west ; (4) has a ship at sea containing two or three figures ; (5) a group of standing figures facing inwards to a small kneeling figure in the centre ; (6) is very similar to (5) ; (7) has a seated figure on the east with kneeling figure

<sup>1</sup> John Britton, *The History and Antiquities of the Cathedral Church of Hereford* (1831).

<sup>2</sup> Havergal, *Fasti Herefordenses* (1869).

<sup>3</sup> Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, *Herefordshire*, vol. 1, South-west.

before it ; (8) possibly worn figures. With the exception of (4), the spandrels have embattled borders, perhaps indicating that the scenes took place within a building. In the Royal Commission's account the suggestion is made that the scenes portray the miracles of St. Thomas Cantilupe. The subsidiary spandrels are carved with beasts, some of them are winged ; they are mainly very worn.

The other fragmentary remains *in situ* are few. On the west side is the base of the moulded south jamb of the doorway flanked by the bases of detached shafts. The mouldings of the jamb run out at a raised threshold which has a moulded nosing on each side. The Vestibule between the Chapter House and the cloister retains portions of its south wall, the entire west wall containing the elegant doorway to the cloisters (Pl. IXA) and a fragment of the north wall at the west end.

The remains of the Vestibule show that it was vaulted in two bays with wall, diagonal and intermediate ribs ; the springers of these remain in the west angles. In the north-west angle is also a foliated capital with a part of the shaft below. At the apex of the west wall rib is a foliated boss. On the south side are the moulded bases of the vaulting-shaft in the south-east angle and the intermediate shaft, both of them resting on a stone bench. Stukeley's drawing clearly shows the vaulting to the Vestibule through the open tracery of the head of the doorway to the Chapter House. The Royal Commission in their report mention the existence of a number of 14th-century carved foliage bosses in the Vestibule, and indeed they can be seen in a Commission photograph—a general view—set up on the south wall-bench. These were no doubt from the Vestibule vault. They have now been removed to the Cathedral mason's yard. The crease of the flat pitched roof above the Vestibule can be seen on the east wall of the muniment room over the cloister. Stukeley's drawing clearly indicates that there was very little depth between the sill of the window on the west side and the door-head and vault. This would demand as low and as flat a roof as possible.

The doorway in the east wall of the cloister, opening in to the Vestibule (Pl. IXA) has a moulded two-centred arch, springing from foliated capitals on moulded and shafted jambs ; the arch encloses coupled trefoiled openings, with blind tracery above in the tympanum. The cusp-spandrels of the small arches are beautifully carved and represent the figure of Gabriel from the Annunciation, a bishop, the figure of the Virgin from the Annunciation and, the southernmost, a censuring angel. Flanking the doorway are panelled diagonal standards, terminating in pinnacles with worn remains of crocketing. From the standards rises a crocketed gable-moulding over the main arch, with a finial and a trefoiled panel in the spandrel.

In the ruin of the Chapter House, mounted on the footing of the central pier, is an important fragment (Pl. VIIIA). This is a single stone comprising part of the lower taper of the conoid supported by the central column. It is clearly identifiable in Stukeley's drawing,



being almost immediately above the capital of the column. The stone is 3 ft. 10 ins. in diameter across the top, 2ft. 4 ins. across the base, and 2 ft. 8 ins. in height. The ribs are round in section; weathering has obscured the section of the inner mouldings to the panels. In the east wall of the main corridor connecting the south-east transept with the College of the Vicar's Choral are seven worn and weathered niches. These have small corbelled sills and canopied heads and are very similar to those shown by Stukeley in each angle of the Chapter House interrupting the vaulting-shafts just above sill-level. They are too worn to be accurately assessed and described, but this alone suggests they are reset; if *in situ*, they would always have been under cover and presumably would be in much better condition. The Commission's account states that in 1892 the parapet of the east wall of the corridor was removed and the buttresses rebuilt. As each niche is immediately behind a buttress, it is possible that they were salvaged from the Chapter House ruin and inserted at that time. Further, the absence of niches in similar positions behind the two buttresses at the north end of the corridor suggests that only a limited number was available.

Generally, in the precincts of the Cathedral, including the Canons' gardens, the Chapter House garden, the gardens around the Hall of the Vicars' Choral, and the adjacent mason's yard, are various fragments, including a carved spandrel and many parts of window heads, etc., probably from the ruins of the Chapter House. The spandrel is a subsidiary one from an arcade, and contains a carved beast; it is similar in all respects to those *in situ* previously described.

Having considered the documentary evidence, the topographers' accounts and the existing remains, it is now necessary to examine Stukeley's excellent drawing and the comparable data, including the link with the Court style, the earliest fan-vault and its much later but larger successor.

Stukeley shows the window over the entrance stopping short and the wall below the sill, marking the roof of the Vestibule behind, unpierced. The window mullions are prolonged downwards across the face of this wall so forming blind panelling. Such a treatment may be seen in Hollar's engraving of the Chapter House of Old St. Paul's, London (Pl. Xc), a building of 1332 and one of the first 'Perpendicular' buildings; it was designed by William Ramsey, King's Mason, who was an exponent of the Court style. The new development is implicit in the Hereford windows where straight lines bind and link the tracery which, too, is comparable with that in the windows of Old St. Paul's Chapter House. The vaulting is shown supported by a central column consisting of several shafts with a common capital, resting on a polygonal base. Springing from the column is a conoid, a part of which survives and has been described. The rounded ribs increase fanwise in radiating panels to the outer perimeter of the conoid where the panels finish in pairs under two-centred embracing arches

with trefoiled spandrels. Springing from the foliated capitals of the vaulting-shafts in the angles of the Chapter House are the ten part-conoids, their outer perimeter meeting that of the central conoid. Their ribbing and panelling are similar to those just described. The spandrels left between the conoids contain tracery-panelling typical of the Court style. These then are the outstanding features of the Chapter House, as preserved for us by Stukeley, features which appear in the earliest known 'Perpendicular' work, and which corroborate the early date for this little-known building indicated by the documents. The logical conclusion is that here is an early example of provincial development in the style begun by William Ramsey.

Mr. John Harvey<sup>1</sup> states: 'the late F. E. Howard<sup>2</sup> dealt almost exhaustively with the fan-vaults that now exist, but had to confess that unless transitional examples have been lost there is no link between the small fan-vaults of the Gloucester Cloister and the high vaults of Sherborne,<sup>3</sup> the first fan work on a large scale, designed about 1430-40'.

It would seem that Hereford Chapter House is one of the links, and it is desirable to compare the different proportions of the three vaults in question.

Hereford is close to Gloucester in date. Work was begun on Gloucester cloister in 1357; it was built in two periods. The eastern range, that part linking the transept to the Chapter House entrance, was completed in 1370-77 (Pl. XA); the remainder was built during the period 1381-1412.<sup>4</sup> The problem of vaulting here was fairly simple; the bays were approximately 12 ft. square, giving each conoid a radius of 6 ft. The tracery-panelling of the spandrels between the perimeters of the conoids consists of eight cusped rounds, four centrally, with one at the apex of each diagonal square, the latter having tapered points to allow for a mouchette in the apex. The early 'Perpendicular' treatment of the blind window-tracery panelling on the east wall, south of the doorway, can be clearly seen in the illustration of the cloister (Pl. XA); the windows opposite are treated similarly.

The Hereford Chapter House had ten sides, each 15 ft. internally; the conoids were centred in each angle, with presumably a radius of 11 ft.; the central conoid was some 22 ft. in diameter.

At Sherborne the presbytery vault combines both conoids and liernes. Alternate ribs forming the fans are produced to meet the longitudinal ridge-rib and linked to one another by liernes, so forming lozenge-shaped panels; the radius of the fans is about 10 ft.

In conclusion, it is hoped that this paper has established a hitherto unknown link between the advanced architectural style originating at the Court of Westminster in the 14th century and an expression of it in the provinces, and, further, helped to bridge the gap between the

<sup>1</sup> John Harvey, *Gothic England*, pp. 127, 128.

<sup>2</sup> F. E. Howard, 'Fan-Vaults', in *Arch. Journ.*, lxxviii, pp. 1-42.

<sup>3</sup> R.I.B.A., *Transactions*, 1887, for drawings of the vaults.

<sup>4</sup> J. Harvey and H. Felton, *English Cathedrals*.

vault of Gloucester cloister and that of the Sherborne Abbey presbytery.

I should like to acknowledge here that the significance of this building was mentioned to me by the late Sir Alfred Clapham, under whom I was privileged to work and learn. I should also like to acknowledge the help I have received from Mr. F. C. Morgan who has always been ready to place at my disposal any records or views which might further this enquiry.

ADDENDUM TO : THE BISHOP'S CHAPEL OF ST. KATHARINE AND  
ST. MARY MAGDALENE, HEREFORD CATHEDRAL<sup>1</sup>

Since publishing the above article it has been possible to confirm the existence of two important fragments, that undoubtedly are survivals from the Bishop's Chapel.

The fragments consist of a capital and base, which are now in a niche in the east wall of the cloisters, just beyond the west doorway to the Chapter House vestibule. The niche is fitted with doors and the fragments are not immediately visible. The capital and base (Pl. XIb) are so formed as to leave no doubt that they are from a common shaft, a fact confirmed by their dimensions.

The four similar faces of the capital and the continuity of the base moulding show that the column was free-standing.

At each corner of the capital is a large volute and between are two inner secondary volutes. The stems of the corner volutes are produced to merge with the necking-mould; the common stem of the two inner volutes has a small independent base stop. Undoubtedly there was an abacus to the capital, but this separate stone is missing.

The section of the base consists of a light roll mould at the top and below it a hollow chamfer with a slight fillet above the lower bold torus moulding.

Amongst the stone fragments remaining in the Cathedral, the cloisters and the mason's yard, there is none that bears any resemblance in finish or period to this capital and base. In the structure of the Cathedral there is no building phase which equates with that of Robert Losinga's Chapel (1079-1095).

The Hereford volutes bear a close resemblance to those of the capitals of the columns in the small chapel in Durham Castle, *c.* 1072;<sup>2</sup> if anything the Hereford volutes are more delicate in finish. The base is identical with those in the Durham chapel.

Similar volutes may be seen on the angles of the capitals in the crypt of Gloucester Cathedral, *c.* 1089; here the bases are either too worn, or below ground level and cannot be compared. Fragmentary remains of Shaftesbury Abbey, from the building of 1090, show similar bases

<sup>1</sup> *Arch. Journ.*, vol. CXI, p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> George Zarnecki, *English Romanesque Sculpture, 1066-1140*.



to that at Hereford; the capitals are narrower with less pronounced volutes.

Dimensions of the capital and base show that they belonged to a shaft having a diameter of about 1½ ft. A study of the various views and plans of the Bishop's Chapel<sup>1</sup> suggests that, with these proportions, and being a free-standing column, the capital and base are probably from one of the four columns in the great west entrance. It was here that two free-standing columns supported the outer and inner order of the arch, and where an attempt at ornate sculpture would be made. The view of this entrance on the Antiquaries' drawing suggests voluted capitals; Taylor's details are more vague but do not rule out the possibility.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Arch. Journ.*, vol. CXI.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Zarnecki has examined the fragments

and is also of the opinion that they are of c. 1080.