
Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society

(incorporating the Cambs and Hunts Archaeological Society)

Volume XCI
for 2002



Recent Publications of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society

Proceedings LXXXVIII, 1999: Price £12.50 for members, £14.50 for non-members

John Alexander and Joyce Pullinger: *Roman Cambridge: Excavations on Castle Hill 1956–1988*

Proceedings LXXXIX, 2000: Price £12.50 for members, £14.50 for non-members

Richard Mortimer with a contribution by David Hall: *Village Development and Ceramic Sequence: The Middle to Late Saxon village at Lordship Lane, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire*

Paul Spoerry: *The Topography of Anglo-Saxon Huntingdon: a survey of the archaeological and historical evidence*

Mary Hesse: *Field systems in southwest Cambridgeshire: Abington Pigotts, Litlington and the Mile Ditches*

S M Oosthuizen and C C Taylor: *Rediscovery of a vanished garden in Bassingbourn, Cambridgeshire, and the impact of the Lynne family on the medieval landscape*

Margaret Spufford: *General View of the Rural Economy of the County of Cambridge*

Susan Oosthuizen, John Alexander and Alison Taylor: *Reviews*

Tim Reynolds, Jeremy Parsons, Tim Malim and Ben Robinson: *Field-Work in Cambridgeshire*

Proceedings XC, 2001: Price £12.50 for members, £14.50 for non-members

Alex Jones: *A Romano-Celtic Shrine and Settlements at Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire*

Audrey L Meaney: *Felix's life of St Guthlac: Hagiography and/or Truth*

Susan Oosthuizen: *Anglo-Saxon minsters in south Cambridgeshire*

J H Denton: *The 1291 valuation of the churches of Ely diocese*

Robert Walker: *Cambridgeshire Bell Frames*

Alison Dickins: *Kings College Chapel, Cambridge: A Study of Artefacts Recovered from Beneath the Choir Stalls*

Timothy Insoll: *The Cambridge Mosque and Muslim Community*

Alison Taylor: *Reviews*

Helen Lewis, Tim Malim and Judith Roberts: *Field-Work in Cambridgeshire 2000*

**Proceedings of the
Cambridge Antiquarian Society**

(incorporating the Cambs and Hunts Archaeological Society)

**Volume XCI
for 2002**

Editor Alison Taylor

Published by the Cambridge Antiquarian Society 2002

ISSN 0309-3606

Officers & Council, 2001-2002

President

Tim Malim BA, MIFA

Vice-Presidents

Christopher Chippindale PhD
Ann Holton-Krayenbuhl BA
Peter Warner PhD

Disney Professor of Archaeology

Professor Lord Renfrew MA, ScD, FSA, FBA

Curator of the University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology

David Phillipson MA, PhD, FSA, FRGS

Ordinary Members of Council

Lyn Boothman BA, MSt
Beth Davis IHBC, Cert Ed
Mark Knight BA
Jonathan Last BA, PhD
Elisabeth Leedham-Green PhD
Evelyn Lord BA, MA, PhD

Adam Menuge DPhil, IHBC
Michael Petty MBE, MA, ALA
Honor Ridout MA
Ben Robinson MA
Revd David Viles BA, MA (*Hunt Loc Hist Soc*)
S Wroot

Secretary

Elizabeth Allan BA, dipTP, MA
96 Mill Lane, Impington, Cambridge CB4 9HS
Tel: 01223 502974; email: liz_allan49@hotmail.com

Treasurer

Cyril Pritchett MA
66 Gough Way
Cambridge CB3 9LN

Editor

Alison Taylor BA, MIFA, FSA
40 Hertford Street
Cambridge CB4 3AG
Tel: 01223 500431

Registrar

Don Fage MA
178 Fishpool Street
St Albans AL3 4SB
Tel: 01727 847562

Hon. Librarian and Assistant Editor

John Pickles MA, PhD, FSA
The Old Schools
Cambridge CB2 1TN

Excursions Officer

vacant

Editor of Conduit

vacant

Conference Secretary

Derek Booth PhD, MIBiol
Fen End Cottage, 30 Fen Road, Milton, Cambridge CB4 6AD

Representative of the Cambridgeshire Local History Society

Michael Farrar MA

Hon. Auditor

R E Seaton CIPFA, IIA

Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| The Ring-Ditch and the Hollow: excavation of a Bronze Age 'shrine' and associated features at Pampisford, Cambridgeshire Joshua Pollard | 5 |
| A Great Circle: Investigations at Arbury Camp. Christopher Evans and Mark Knight | 23 |
| Unravelling the Morphology of Litlington, Cambridgeshire Susan Oostuizen | 55 |
| 'Gateways to Heaven': the approaches to the Lady Chapel, Ely Philip Dixon | 63 |
| A Reconstruction of the Medieval Cambridge Market Place Peter Bryan and Nick Wise | 73 |
| A late Sixteenth Century Pit Group from Pembroke College, Cambridge Andrew Hall | 89 |
| The Seventeenth Century Water-Meadows at Babraham Christopher Taylor | 103 |
| Jane Griffin's Journal of a Visit to Cambridge June-July 1811 Harold King | 119 |
| Reviews Alison Taylor, Peter Warner | 137 |
| Fieldwork in Cambridgeshire 2001 Helen Lewis | 141 |
| Summaries of papers presented at the Spring Conference 9 March 2001, Lady Mitchell Hall, Cambridge: <i>Ely – archaeology, architecture, and historical perspectives</i> | 151 |
| <i>Index</i> | 155 |
| Abbreviations | 162 |
| THE CONDUIT: local history and archaeology organisations, societies and events | 163 |

Editorial

After two themed volumes these *Proceedings* return to the usual PCAS format of mixed papers, covering excavations, local history, landscape archaeology, architecture and historical geography. Indeed, in the finest antiquarian tradition many of the papers involve more than one of these disciplines. There should therefore be something to interest all members in this miscellany.

Two departures from recent practice are the inclusion of Conference synopses and an abbreviated *Conduit*. The synopses are by popular request, rising from a realisation that many members would be grateful to have a lasting reminder of these important papers. We are grateful to the authors who supplied copy so conscientiously after the event (naturally we had not thought of this in advance), and to Derek Booth who collected them all together. *Conduit* had to be an even more last-minute construct, when it became clear that the County Council could no longer keep up with the necessary production time-scale. This year's approach is a bit of an experiment, and it will be useful to know what reaction we have both from members and from affiliated societies.

Alison Taylor

President's Address

Two years as President is too short a time to see through any substantial programme of reform for CAS. When I was elected there were a number of initiatives I wanted to start in the hope they would mature in another President's time. To this end Derek Booth as Secretary and I put out a questionnaire in the year 2000 to profile our membership and to canvas opinion on possible changes.

It has been a central part of my Presidency to re-imbue the Society and its membership with confidence in its right to express opinion on heritage issues. It is essential that there remains a well-informed independent Society to safeguard archaeological and related services at a time when other pressures and agenda take precedence within local and central governmental organisations which we perhaps naively assume will be acting in our best interests in protecting the past. It is particularly regrettable that CAS has been excluded from representation within long-established fora to discuss and scrutinise public heritage services within Cambridgeshire at this time.

Another issue I hoped we could address was to reverse the decline of amateur archaeology, perhaps by re-establishing the Society's post of Director of Fieldwork, and to encourage research-led investigation in the County once more. This latter still awaits the right person and opportunity, but I am pleased there are encouraging signs in the way local groups have attracted grants which will give them solid research foci and draw in new members. Notable amongst these are Thriplow Society, Fulbourn Village History Society, Haverhill and District Archaeological Group and Cambridge Archaeology Field Group.

We asked members if it would be beneficial for CAS to develop other venues for meetings, and would there be interest in workshops on current research topics. We have developed the workshop idea with this year's conference dedicated to the archaeology, architecture and history of Ely, a town that has had considerable investigation in the past ten years, with some startling new discoveries but little co-ordination or academic discussion. Synopses of the talks are published within this volume. From October we shall be holding our monthly meetings in more comfortable and more accessible surroundings, in the newly built Divinity Faculty at the Sidgewick Site.

Other positive steps are that, after two years I can report that the Web page is now complete and will shortly appear at www.Cambridge-Antiquarian-Society.org.uk, and that the Society has taken back full ownership of *Conduit* which, over the past ten years, had been produced jointly with Cambridgeshire County Council.

In summary there has been good progress over the past two years and the Society will continue to build upon its strengths as the paramount amenity society guarding Cambridgeshire's heritage. Government policies at central and local level are capricious and we cannot afford to put faith in them without constant scrutiny and challenge. With the advent of regional government and root and branch reform of the planning system, a Cambridgeshire focus for our heritage provided by CAS will be ever more imperative. The Society is therefore essential and I thank you all for continuing to support and contribute to it. I am pleased to leave it in the capable hands of your secretary Liz Allan, and new President, Tony Kirby.

Tim Malim

Gateways to Heaven: the approaches to the Lady Chapel, Ely

Philip Dixon

Surveys of the Lady Chapel and Choir at Ely Cathedral, accompanying an excavation of the area where the new Processional Way and Services has now been constructed, have revealed new evidence for the dating, sequence, and ritual arrangements of this part of the cathedral in the early 14th century. This paper shows that the architect of these works designed two separate entrances to the Lady Chapel, in order to segregate the monks from the laity.

For nearly 450 years access to the Lady Chapel at Ely Cathedral has been through a low doorway hacked roughly into the back of one of the niches at the south-eastern corner of the Chapel, an undignified approach into one of the great glories of English Decorated architecture. The original entrance is visible in the centre of the southern side; this is an elaborate double portal with a figure on an elaborate corbel facing the direction of arrival. Until the rebuilding of this part of the Cathedral during the latter part of 2000, this double door simply gave access to a post-Reformation vestry. The southern end of the original access to the Lady Chapel was always visible in the northern aisle of the Choir. This highly decorated and painted grand entrance had been blocked up (probably at the Reformation), and then provided with a small service door by Scott during the repairs of the mid 19th century. Occupying much of the space once taken up by the passageway which linked these two openings was a late Victorian blower chamber for the organ, largely unused and decidedly lacking in quality. During 2000 the blower chamber was demolished, the site was excavated, and a new passageway built to connect the Choir and Chapel in a fitting way. Before these works began a general survey of the buildings was carried out by the writer, in collaboration with John Heward. The present account draws on all these projects to outline a particular problem: the way in which different groups of people entered the Lady Chapel in the Middle Ages.

The upper door from the Choir

A little above head height in the first bay from the Octagon, at the west end of the Choir, in the north wall is a blocked doorway. This was the entrance to a

bridge or flying gallery which ran from the Choir along the east front of the adjacent North Transept to the south-western corner of the Lady Chapel, and from there along the side of the Chapel almost as far as its East End. The sill of this blocked door is a little more than three metres above the paving of the north aisle. On the choir side of the door the springers for vaulting across the Choir aisle still survive, and a long slot in the wall suggests that the vaulting was created in timber. Where the southern side of this vaulted arch rested remains uncertain. The angle of the springing suggests that the bridge should have come into contact at least with the eastern side of the first pier of the main choir arcade. No signs of that are now visible, but the pier has been restored at this point (probably by Scott), and a scar may have been removed. Atkinson, however, in his plan of this area shows the bridge ending in a spiral within the aisle.

This conjecture has the advantage of allowing the bridge to avoid the arcade pier, but it would be quite awkward to fit both an arch and a stair into the aisle, which is only 5m wide. Furthermore, no signs of this arrangement remain in the surviving slabs of the flooring below, which has the position and shape of the bridge marked out in cut slabs: these appear to be medieval. On the whole, therefore, it seems better to suppose that the bridge cleared the aisle and ended at the arcade, and that some staircase from the end of the bridge was contrived from within the choir itself. This point would be immediately to the north of the altar of St Peter in the Monks' Choir, as shown in fig. 1.

The Bridge

On the outer side of the door, the north-east buttress of the Octagon comes down hard against the doorway's western jamb, and the projection must have partially blocked passage along the bridge (fig. 6 and fig. 7). Carefully angled springing, in consequence, supports the bridge around the buttress. From this point northwards there are no traces of the bridge until the south-western corner of the Lady Chapel. At this level the original wall face of the North Transept survives largely intact, and so the absence here of tussing, creases or other scars shows that the bridge was carried across

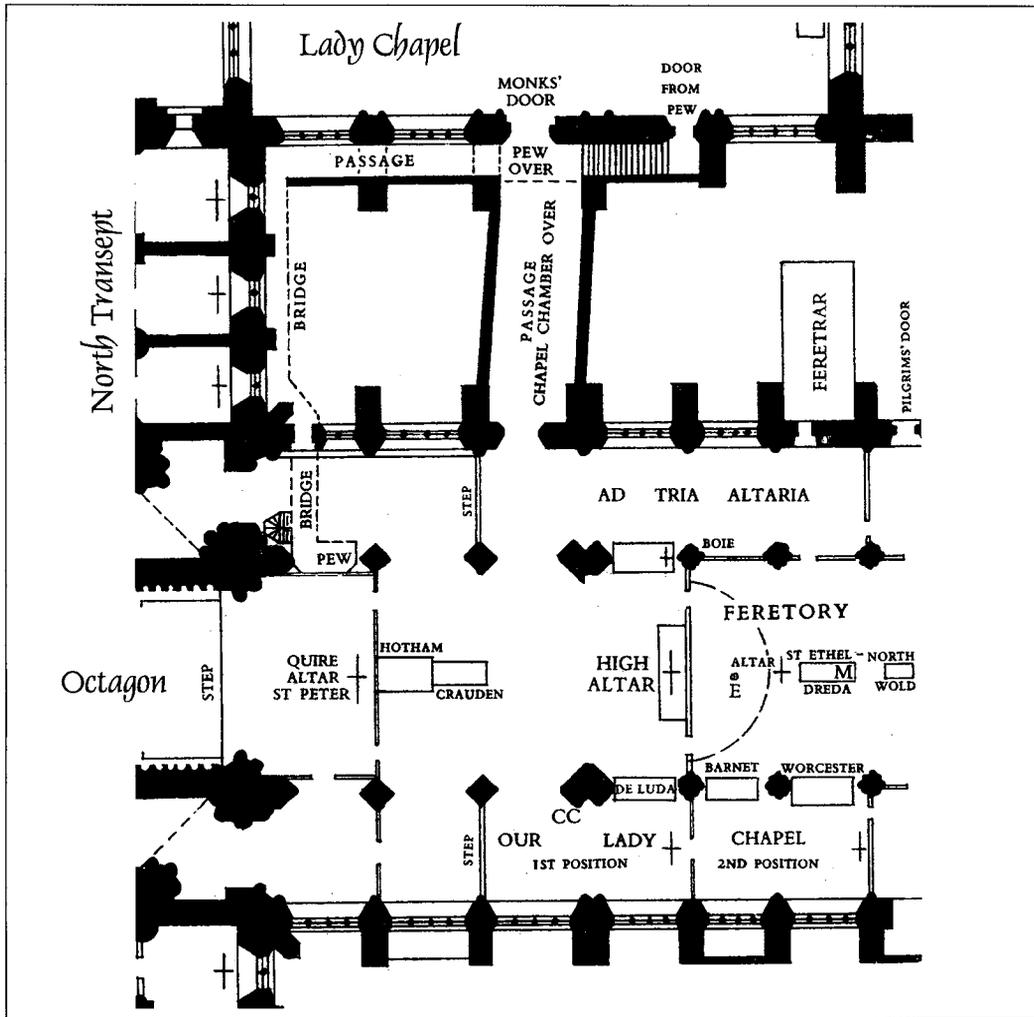


Figure 1. The medieval arrangements of the Eastern Arm of the Cathedral, showing the awkward placing of the old Lady Chapel, based on a drawing by TD Atkinson

the face of the transept as a wholly free-standing structure, apparently no more than two metres broad, and a little less than a metre to the east of the transept. This must have been an elegant almost flimsy structure. It was perhaps roofed, but there are obviously no surviving traces of this, and the reconstruction must be based only on the evidence of roofing of the northern run of the bridge, against the side of the Lady Chapel.

At the re-entrant angle between the North Transept and the Lady Chapel [in what has been used as the post-Reformation vestibule to the Chapel], the bridge reappears as a scar, with the shape of an arch, almost 5.4 metres long, running east-west on the Lady Chapel wall. Three of the four supports of the arch are preserved. The fourth, to the south-east, is missing. Its position is close to a post-Reformation doorway through the east wall of the Transept, and all traces of the bridge at this point seem to have been removed by the stoning up of the jamb. The scar on the eastern wall of the vestibule shows that the bridge was 1.78 metres [6 feet] wide overall at this point, with a walk-

way of a width of about 1.65 metres [5 feet 6 inches], wide enough to walk two abreast along it. How the right-angled junction between the eastern and the northern runs was achieved is not at all obvious. The simplest fashion would be to set the fourth, south-western pier about 2 metres short of the corner, thus making the inner, freestanding, arches smaller than the outer arches against the walls of transept and Lady Chapel.

It is not certain how the underside of the bridge was constructed, but there are reasons to suppose that it was finished with a diagonal rib from each impost. This would have produced a simpler version of that vaulting which still in part survives in the original entrance vestibule [that is to say, the rebuilt vestry]. In this case the vaulting at the corner would be an interestingly complex task, sketched below, fig. 2. Alternatively, the north-south running bridge could have been finished at a point about two metres from the Lady Chapel wall (where the post-medieval door has removed evidence of abutment), and the corner could have been formed by shortening only the outer

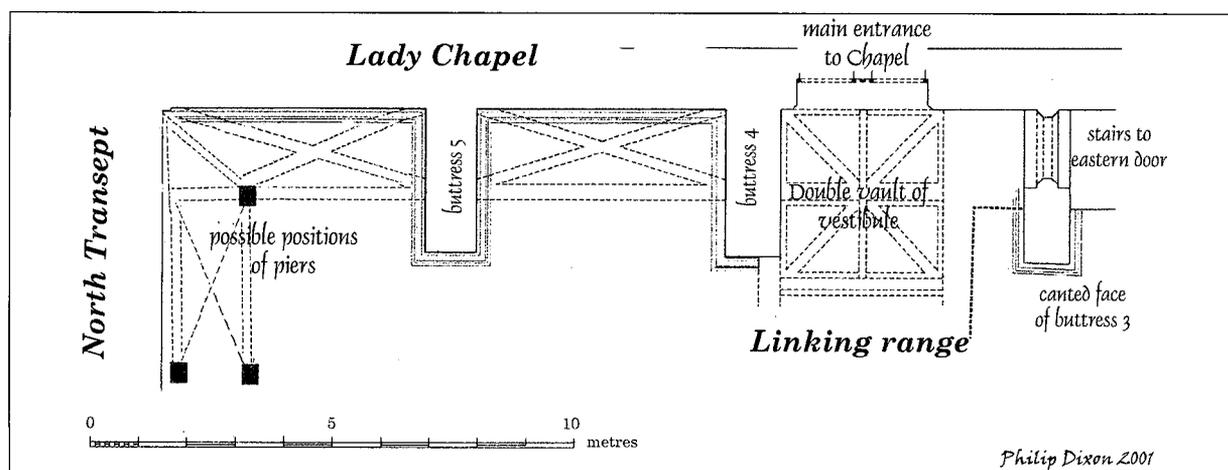


Figure 2. The vaulting of the Lady Chapel Bridge, showing the relationship with the linking range

arch of the east-west bridge against the Lady Chapel. However, in that case one would have expected to find either a scar on the transept to match that on buttress 5, or the creation of a separate square bay at the angle, leaving evidence on the wall of the Lady Chapel. In either case the visible external arch of the bridge in bay 5 would be no more than 3.5 metres [5.4 metres, less *c.* 2 metres], about a metre and a half shorter than the other arches of the bridge, which are all about 5 metres in length.

Once past the corner, the bridge passed through the adjacent buttress by a round-headed arch, now glazed to light the space which was used by the townspeople as the entry to the Lady Chapel after the Reformation (fig. 3 and fig. 4). Beyond this point the bridge extended through a space between buttresses, an area since the 19th century used as a staff room. Traces of the bridge, very similar to those in the vestibule, are visible on all three walls (fig. 5). Two differences are clear. The arch was almost 500 mm shorter, matching the spacing of the buttresses. The strongly accented upper moulding of the buttress, which forms the western wall of the staff room, was carried up vertically at a position which must have led to its forming the outer order of the moulding of the bridge arch. This detail and other variations, such as the absence of a plinth further to the east [in the 'flower room'], show that the bridge was an integral part of the planning of the Lady Chapel, and that preparations were being made for it as soon as the walling had extended above ground level. This was presumably after the first season or so of building. This is a very important point in understanding the phasing of the work, and is discussed below.

From the staff room the bridge passed through a further round-headed doorway in the next buttress, and came into the space used until 1999 as the Lady Chapel Vestry. Here the traces on the walls show a quite different arrangement. Instead of a single arch on the face of the buttress which forms the western wall of the Vestry, there are two, showing that the bridge was at least doubled in width at this point (fig.

2 and fig. 3). The buttress itself is wider than the one to the west, and part of its southern face formerly extended further southwards (as would be necessary to support the southern side of the additional vault). The width of this doubled section of vaulting is shown on the northern face of the Vestry, where the original double door entrance to the Lady Chapel is surmounted by an arch with a span of about 3.3 metres. The result must have been to produce a double vault leading to the double doors. All trace of the eastern wall of this vault has now disappeared, but it is clear from the evidence on the buttress at the eastern side of the Vestry that the bridge from here eastwards was again only of a single width span. The double vault must thus have formed a deep projection extending over a little more than half the space between the third and fourth buttresses.

On the northern wall of the Vestry a series of scars and roughly smoothed masonry show the position of the first steps of a stair descending from the bridge height of about 3.25 metres towards a round-headed doorway in the eastern buttress of this bay. This door sill lies at about 1.8 metres above floor level. The stair must have continued approximately 1.7 metres beyond this buttress, into the space now called the Flower Room. The face of the Lady Chapel wall here, however, shows no signs of a plinth, and therefore the wall was not regarded in the same way as the rest of the Lady Chapel, but was seen as internal. The eastern side of the buttress, unfortunately, has been completely rebuilt in brick, and no evidence of steps survives. It therefore seems likely that the lower part of the stair was either of stone unbonded into the walling, or of some other material, such as timber. The bottom of the stair (assuming a regular series of steps) would have been at least one metre short of the eastern door of the Lady Chapel. This would have allowed something of a dignified or measured approach, and not a short stumble into the entrance of the Chapel itself.

The details of the remainder of the bridge are clear enough from the evidence described in the previous sections. The roofing, however, needs further discus-

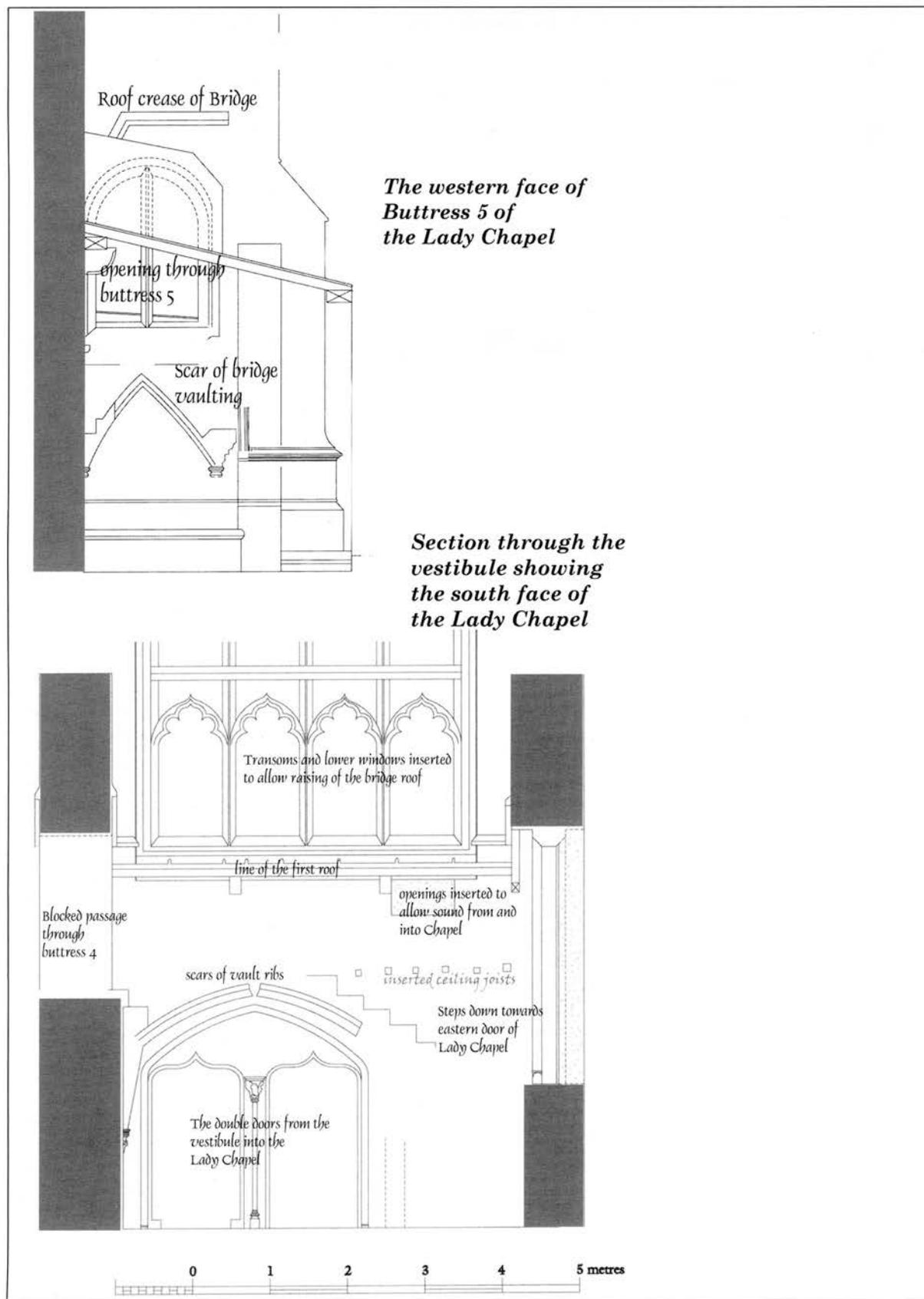


Figure 3. Elevations of the traces of the Bridge on the walls of the Lady Chapel: based on survey drawings by John Heward



Figure 4. Opening (now a window) for the Bridge through buttress 4 of the Lady Chapel, showing the weathering for the roof, and the lead groove below the Chapel window. Photograph Philip Dixon



Figure 5. Traces of the springer for the Bridge and remains of its vaulting, on buttress 4 of the Lady Chapel. The moulding of the buttress runs up to the springer, and then is taken upwards to frame the side of the bridge, demonstrating the contemporaneity of the two. Photograph Philip Dixon

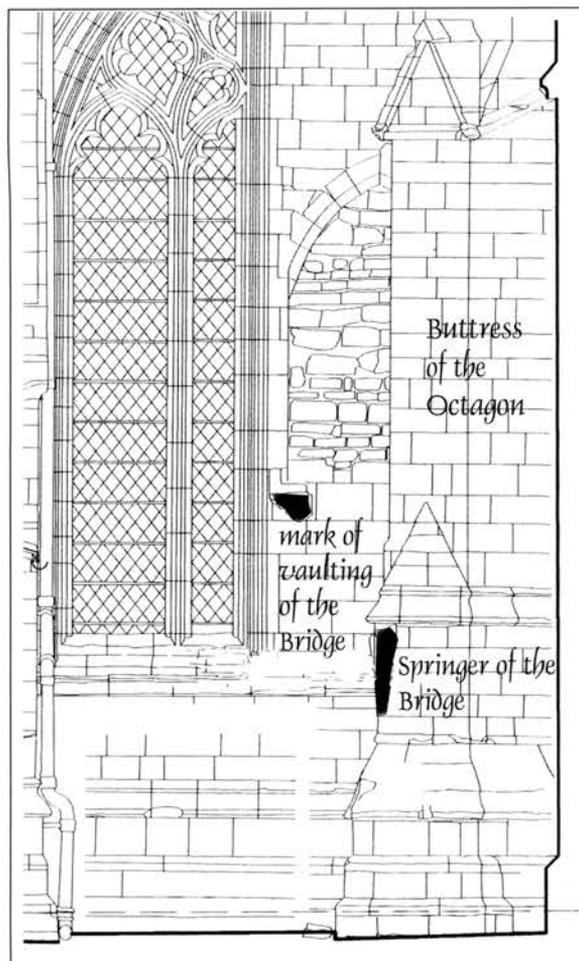


Figure 6. The blocked upper door and adjacent buttness of the Octagon, from outside, showing the springers for the Bridge vaulting

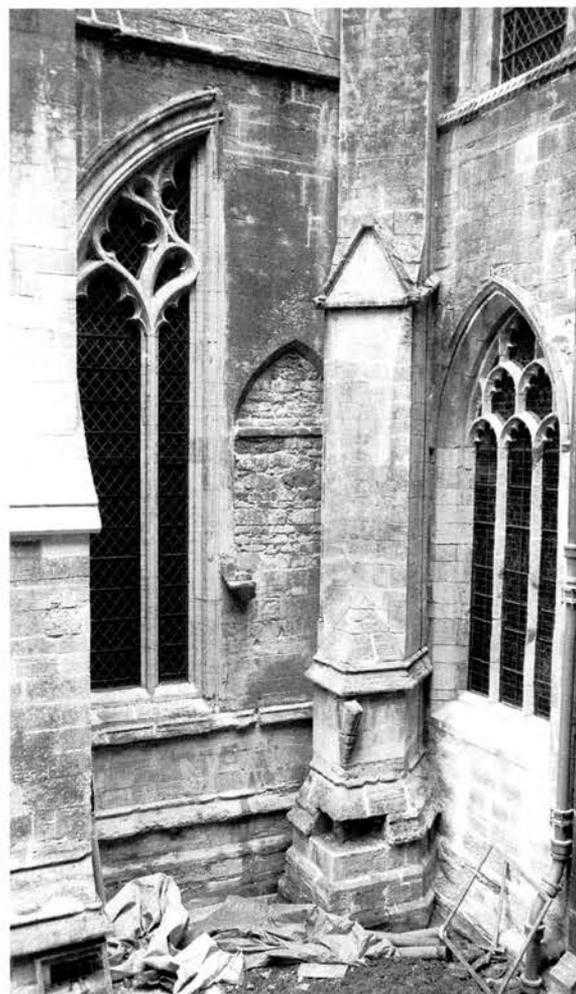


Figure 7. View of the blocked door and the Octagon buttness. Photograph Philip Dixon

sion. In its original form the roof over the centre of the bridge was flat, and about 1.2 metres wide. To its north, against the south wall of the Lady Chapel, the roof sloped down nearly 800 mm, in order to clear the sill of the chapel windows. How this concealed valley was drained is not clear, but some arrangement of downpipes to clear the bridge would be possible: a later downpipe of this sort is visible in the eastern face of the fifth buttness. This was introduced at a period, probably in the 18th century, when the present Staff Room was part of the open court. The outer, southern side of the bridge is more of a problem, since it is hard to show that originally it was ever enclosed. It would be possible to argue that the roofing ended with the flat top, leaving a draughty open side. The holes now visible in the buttnesses probably held a timber wall plate, but these may represent a modification of and improvement to the bridge, which need not, of course, have been long in coming.

The reconstruction drawing [fig. 9] shows the southern side enclosed, in the form in which at least later it assumed. When it came to the space between the third and the fourth buttnesses (at ground level the entrance vestibule to the Chapel), the roof seems at

first to have extended no further here than elsewhere along the bridge. If this were so, the outer side of this vaulted area would have been unprotected. For a delicate piece of work as the soft Clunch vaulting below shows, exposure to rain seems unlikely, and so a roof supported by the putlog holes extending the line southwards seems only reasonable; but these holes, too, seem likely to be an afterthought, rather than part of the first build. Beyond to the east, the stair resumed its original narrow width, and was roofed in an identical fashion to that in the western bays. Over the end of the stair by the eastern door there was presumably a roof, but no trace has survived the thorough rebuilding of the western wall of the Flower Room, and the Victorian external porch door to its east.

The link with the choir and its roofs

Was the Lady Chapel always intended to be linked to the Choir by a range of buildings? The grandeur of the entrance facing into the Choir has always suggested that this was probable. The excavations of 2000 have now demonstrated that this was the case, and have



Figure 8. Excavations by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit in progress on the site of the Processional Way, showing the remains of the eastern wall of the linking range from the north: two buttresses are visible. Photograph Philip Dixon

shown that a cranked passage ran from the Choir door to the area of the vaults at the Lady Chapel entrance. At its northern end the passage was built in with the primary walls of the Lady Chapel. At its southern side it was built against the end buttress of Northwold's choir (c. 1234–1252), and underlay the edge of the eastern buttress of Hotham's choir (c. 1330). The implications of this are discussed below. Roof scars on the buttresses of both Choir and Lady Chapel show that at either end the roof was treated in the same fashion. On the north face of Choir buttress 7 [the eastern buttress of bay 7] is the angle of an infilled roof crease. This points across the court at a shallow angle towards the missing eastern wall of the Lady Chapel entrance, and the southern side of the adjacent Lady Chapel buttress 3 is canted to match this angle. These roof creases were both similarly filled in, when new roofs were created. On the Choir walls it is clear that the original roof was almost flat where it covered Choir bay 7, sloping to cast water on its outer side.

At least two subsequent rooflines are visible on the Choir buttresses 7 and 8. What was probably the first alteration slopes steeply from the outer side of the buttress to the sill of the Choir window, where it meets the scar of the first roof. Putlog holes in both buttresses indicate the positions of beams to hold up this and the subsequent roof. The latter begins at a

higher level and obscured the lower part of the Choir window, where cuts in the window moulding show the level of the leads. Drainage from here (as in the case of the Lady Chapel bridge roofs) must have been via down pipes through the roof covering. The first and last of this sequence of roofs is matched by the scars in Lady Chapel bay 3, particularly on its western side. Here, however, the final high roof is connected to a rebuilding of the main window. At present we can see a series of four lower lights and a transom in the window. A close examination, however, shows that the mouldings of the original single lights are still intact beneath a coating of Roman cement, and that the transom and its heads are insertions. Though *similar*, the shape of the heads and the profile of the mouldings differ slightly from the original forms. The new high roof (corresponding to the final roof on the Choir bay 7) ran to join this new transom. Though close dating is not possible, it is likely that this alteration [which created a tall linking range] was made at the time that a new chamber was inserted into the original linking range. This upper floor room would have been entered from the room above the Lady Chapel vestibule, and is presumably the space referred to as the Lady Chapel chamber at the time of the Suppression, used for occupation by the guardians of the Chapel.

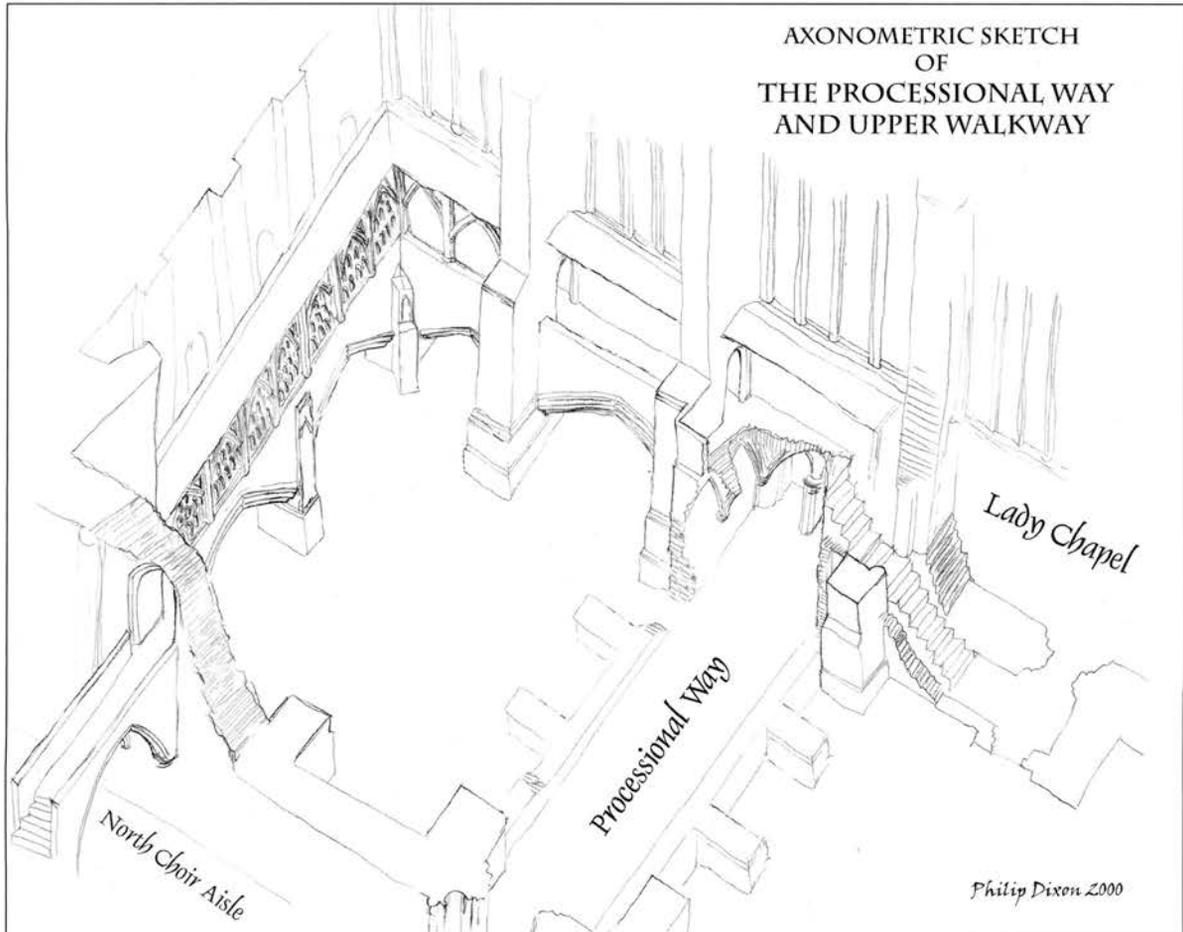


Figure 9. A reconstruction of the Bridge and the access to the Lady Chapel.

The Post-Reformation Alterations

After the modifications to the bridge and linking range described above, the arrangements seem to have remained in use at least until the middle of the 16th century. The parish church of Holy Cross, built as a lean-to against the northern side of Nave bays six to ten, was renamed Holy Trinity (probably at the Reformation (Atkinson)), and was demolished in 1566 (Bentham). By then the Lady Chapel had been rendered without use, and so the parochial function was transferred to the former Chapel. At some point after this period the original entrance was abandoned. At present we have no evidence for the date of this change. The earliest monument *in situ* within the Lady Chapel is probably the ledger slab of Alice Browne, who died in 1676, though the slab may have been placed at the death of her husband in 1706. By then the former main double entrance had been converted into a side room to the parish church, presumably for use as a vestry. At or before this period a new entrance to the Chapel was formed through the westernmost bay of the Chapel, reached from a new vestibule which sat between the Chapel and the North Transept, where the bridge had once turned eastwards. The northern transept chapel was cleared, and

a door formed to give access to the vestibule as part of this work, providing an undistinguished and winding entrance to the new parish church.

The new vestry was similarly pieced together from the remains of the medieval arrangements. Its northern wall included the end of the bridge and beginning of the stair descending towards the eastern door of the Chapel. Its eastern wall was formed by the buttress (after the demolition of the former re-entrant angle against the staircase). Its southern wall, at first about 60 cms lower than at present) was fairly roughly built of rubble and some cut down ashlar, and may have included a window. The three-light opening which has now been removed from here probably belongs to the refurbishment of the area, and the creation of the rest of the service rooms, during the second half of the 19th century. No certain date has yet been identified for this work. However, a note in Bacon's manuscript, tells us that this room had been transformed into a furnace to heat the Church, but in 1864 the roof caught alight, and required replacing. His description does not fit the construction of the present roof, which must belong to a still more recent restoration. Some work had clearly been carried out in this area c. 1840 for, in an earlier note, Bacon records the discovery of the tiled passageway of the linking range which ran be-

tween the Choir and the Lady Chapel. Some of its tiles were relaid on the southern side of the Octagon, where they still remain.

The Date and Function of the bridge and the linking range

The ground-floor gallery or linking range clearly was constructed to provide a covered way between the Choir door and the Lady Chapel. At its northern end this was set out at the very start of the Lady Chapel foundations, that is to say on Lady Day in 1321. At its southern end it postdated the eastern buttress of Northwold's mid-13th-century work, and antedated the western buttress of Hotham's choir, built in the later 1320s. All this fits well with a date for the linking range of 1321 or 1322, and not later. The grand door to this range from the Choir aisle, however, fits quite awkwardly on the aisle side, and seems to be aligned not with the upper wall face, but with the bench at the base of the wall. In a recent survey of this area John Maddison has identified this bench as part of the Norman church, its position retained during Hotham's rebuilding. The clear implication of this is that the Lady Chapel entrance door was inserted into the final surviving bay of the Norman Choir, and that the walling in which it is now set was replaced around it. Thus this doorway too fits the dating of c. 1321. Though the slight angle or canting of the link is a little awkward, it may not have been very obvious in practice, and it was compensated for by the skewing of the south face of buttress 3 of the Lady Chapel, which is clearly an original part of the plan. A low roof was included in the design in its first form (as shown by the crease on Choir buttress 7).

The flying bridge to the Chapel was clearly part of the initial laying out of the Chapel, as the variations in the plinth and the scars of the arches makes obvious. At this period too an upper door from the Choir to the bridge must have been set in the then Norman walling of the Choir aisle. The collapse of the central tower in February 1322 and the building of the Octagon led immediately to changes in this area, and this sequence explains the awkward placing of the present upper door with a crooked start to the bridge around the bottom of the Octagon buttress.

Both the sequence and dating of these works are now clear. To establish the functions of the bridge and the linking range is more difficult. Some attempt to provide an explanation was made by the editors of the Victoria County History, who give a series of possibilities, all of which are described as having their difficulties. They suggest that it may have been a place for an anchorite, a pew for the prior, his guests, or the bishop, a place for the display of relicts, an organ loft, a place for singing boys, or (what seems to be their choice, following Atkinson) a pew for Queen Philippa, above the vaulted vestibule into the Lady Chapel. Some of these functions may have been served by the bridge across the Choir North Aisle: its disappearance leaves little to be said, and relicts could

easily be positioned here, matching the Saxon displays in the wall which closed the northern side of the choir in the Octagon.

None of the nine examples of such a bridge cited in the Victoria County History (in Durham, Cambridge, London, Malmesbury, Norwich and Winchester) is particularly apposite, since the *comparanda* are all relatively short, and most are internal features, unlike our Ely bridge. The external passage to an upper private pew within the chapel (such as that seen leading from the *Grutehuis* to the chancel of the church of Our Lady, Brugge) may be in the mind of the authors. In the case of the Ely bridge, however, it is quite clear that the floor levels are quite wrong for such a pew with a view of the chapel. The sill of the window is 1.76 metres above the floor of the bridge, and from this position only the middle part of the opposite window can be seen. There is, furthermore, no room for a raised floor here, or anything larger than a step-ladder, since the whole space between the arched entrance from the bridge and the start of the stair downwards is less than 3 metres wide. While the heightening of the adjacent ground floor link would have allowed a useful 'royal' withdrawing chamber (some 10 metres by 4 metres in size) entered from this space, this room had no direct connection with either the Choir or the Lady Chapel. It was in any case an afterthought which does not relate to the function of the bridge itself.

The apparently larger size of the upper room [the 'pew'] over the vault may be caused only by its ground floor design; that is to say, it follows from the provision of a double vaulted space to give a suitable vestibule to the main Lady Chapel doors below. The small size of the original roof above this upper room (covering only the inner side, as described above) is some evidence, after all, that the builders were initially thinking of the bridge as a continuous narrow passage, and not as a first-floor room. The introduction of the later wider and higher roofs, then, would be a sign that the upper area was now being used as a room. But even then this was by no means necessarily royal: its later use was to house vestments and provide accommodation for the guardians. The demonstration that the original plinths of the Lady Chapel of 1321 reflect the detailed layout of the bridge makes it very unlikely that Queen Philippa was in any way involved, since she arrived in England only in 1328, when the building was already much further advanced.

Who precisely were the intended users of the bridge access from the Choir to the eastern Lady Chapel door is still to be decided. It is important to note that the entrance to this bridge or flying gallery was probably not from the aisle (as shown in Atkinson). Instead it was from the central space of the Monastic choir beside the altar of St Peter, or possibly along a northern walkway from the *pulpitum* of the Choir. We have evidence for only one destination for the gallery, to the eastern door of the Lady Chapel. This eastern door is in bay 2 of the Chapel, immediately in front of the altar. Neither the start nor the fin-

ish of this route suggests a path for any secular visitor, and the most likely explanation is perhaps the simplest, apparently not considered by the editors of the *Victoria County History* or Atkinson, or their authorities. The ground floor double entrance was not 'the Monks' Door'; rather, the bridge was intended solely for segregated access from the Choir to the eastern door of the Lady Chapel, distinct from a more public access at ground level from the Choir aisle to the western double door.¹³

It is therefore likely that the whole bridge arrangement was contrived to allow processions of the religious community from the Cathedral into the Lady Chapel without conflicting with the access of the laity.¹⁴ The upper room above the vaulted vestry is well suited for the proper assembly of such a procession before descending to the floor of the Chapel beside the altar. It is therefore notable that two quatrefoil openings were subsequently cut into the thin wall below the window in bay 3, half-way down the final stairs. These openings were not glazed, but are much too high to look from into the Chapel. Their purpose was probably to allow singing in one place to be heard in the other, so as to coordinate the progress of the services.

To reach this point the monks had crossed the ground floor approach twice, once in the Choir aisle, and once at the vestibule of the Chapel. This seems a complex arrangement, but it is explained by the previous history of the Lady Chapels in the Cathedral. Among the most favoured chapels for the townspeople were the chapel of Crux Ad Fontem, the site of Aetheldreda's well of the foundation story, and the chapel of Our Lady. Both were in the southern aisles, Ad Fontem in the nave, looking in to the Cloister, but reached from the west door, and cut off from the monastic church by the great screen and the *pulpitum*. The Lady Chapel, however, stood during the 13th century in the south aisle of Northwold's presbytery, and access to it was problematic. It involved entering the Cathedral by the parish door in the North Transept, then either crossing below the *pulpitum* and across the south aisle (which would conflict with passage from the conventual buildings to the Monks' Choir), or rounding the eastern end of the Monks' Choir and crossing between the altar of St Peter and the High altar. Either route produced conflicts, and the result was made clear in the Visitation of Bishop Ralph de Walpole in 1300, in one of his longest precepts: women were to be excluded from all parts of the conventual buildings, but especially the choir.¹⁵ Under the then existing layout of the chapels, this was scarcely possible.

That this problem was the cause of the building of a new Lady Chapel is perhaps too great a claim: the development of the Marian cult is well attested elsewhere, and emulation of Peterborough, Bury or Norwich was always a consideration in the building at Ely. But it was clearly a factor.¹⁶ The architect of the new building had as part of his plan the separation of the monks and the congregation. He succeeded in delivering the processions of celebrants from the Monks'

Choir, high in the air, to the altar of the Lady Chapel without even coming into the sight of the laity. The latter's approach to the glorious new building was grand enough, but remained solidly on the ground, and the townspeople were delivered in this way firmly to their proper place at the western end of the Chapel.

Bibliography

- Atkinson, TD 1933 *An Architectural History of the Benedictine Monastery of Saint Etheldreda at Ely* Cambridge: University Press
- Bentham, J 1812 *The History and Antiquities of the Conventual and Cathedral Church of Ely* 2nd edition, Norwich: Stevenson, Matchett and Stevenson
- Dixon, PW & Heward, J 1999 *The Lady Chapel Bridge* Archaeological report for the Dean and Chapter, Ely
- Evans, SJA (ed) 1940 *Ely Chapter Ordinances and Visitation Records: 1241–1515* *Camden Miscellany* xvii: *Camden Soc*, ser3, lxiv
- Maddison, J 2000 *Ely Cathedral: Design and Meaning* Ely Cathedral Publications
- Maddison, J 2001 *The Eastern Arm of the Cathedral* Archaeological report for the Dean and Chapter, Ely
- Pugh, RB (ed) 1953 *Victoria County History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely*, iv London: Institute of Historical Research and Oxford University Press
- University Library, Cambridge, Dean and Chapter Mss: *A Record of the Restorations, Repairs etc... since 1818, compiled in 1871, ...by J Bacon*

Proceedings Volume XCI, 2002

Price £12.50 for members, £14.50 for non-members

Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| The Ring-Ditch and the Hollow: excavation of a Bronze Age 'shrine' and associated features at Pampisford, Cambridgeshire Joshua Pollard | 5 |
| A Great Circle: Investigations at Arbury Camp. Christopher Evans and Mark Knight | 23 |
| Unravelling the Morphology of Litlington, Cambridgeshire Susan Oostuizen | 55 |
| 'Gateways to Heaven': the approaches to the Lady Chapel, Ely Philip Dixon | 63 |
| A Reconstruction of the Medieval Cambridge Market Place Peter Bryan and Nick Wise | 73 |
| A late Sixteenth Century Pit Group from Pembroke College, Cambridge Andrew Hall | 89 |
| The Seventeenth Century Water-Meadows at Babraham Christopher Taylor | 103 |
| Jane Griffin's Journal of a Visit to Cambridge June-July 1811 Harold King | 119 |
| Reviews Alison Taylor, Peter Warner | 137 |
| Fieldwork in Cambridgeshire 2001 Helen Lewis | 141 |
| Summaries of papers presented at the Spring Conference 9 March 2001, Lady Mitchell Hall, Cambridge: <i>Ely – archaeology, architecture, and historical perspectives</i> | 151 |
| <i>Index</i> | 155 |
| Abbreviations | 162 |
| THE CONDUIT: local history and archaeology organisations and events | 163 |