THE ARCHITECTS OF ENGLISH PARISH CHURCHES

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Our parish churches have probably been described in greater detail than any other class of medieval buildings. But curiously little has been said of the designers or architects of their fabrics. The evidence, compared with that available for a similar study respecting the greater churches, castles or larger houses, is slight but is still a sufficient basis for general conclusions of some value for the history of English medieval art.

In the first place, church building must be divided into two great classes, which might almost be called the ' designed ' and the ' built ' respectively. These classes merge into one another, and both may be represented at different periods in the same church, but the broad distinction still holds good. It would be fruitless to search among the buildings of the second class for the great inventions which from time to time resulted in the progress of structure and style.

A second classification may be based on the responsibility for construction and maintenance. Normally this was divided between the rector, who took charge of the chancel, and the parishioners, who had to keep up the nave. Complications occur where chapels have been added by private individuals or by guilds. Another class, architecturally speaking, comprises the non-cathedral collegiate churches, including parish churches made collegiate after their original building, and perhaps wholly or partly reconstructed as a result. Some of these collegiate churches, such as Beverley or Ripon, rank architecturally with the cathedrals, and will not be discussed here.

Within the normal arrangement, an important class includes churches appropriated to a monastic or collegiate body. In such cases the whole church is often incorrectly spoken of as having ' belonged ' to the house, and there is some danger of forgetting that only the chancel was in the hands of the impropriators. But here, too, there were exceptional cases where the Rectors had to bear part of the upkeep of the whole fabric.[1]

Neglecting those humbler churches which were built to order by local jobbing masons and carpenters, under the general supervision of the rector, lord of the manor, or bailiff, we must all the same note the exceptional case of Harlestone, Northants. This church was built for the lord of the manor, Henry de Bray, between 1320 and 1325, as we know from his remarkable estate-book. One of a commission that surveyed the defences of Northampton Castle in 1323, de Bray

[1] The oft-repeated story that the magnificent marshland churches between Spalding and Lynn are the result of competition between the monasteries which had impropriated, or which held the advowsons, has no foundation. On the other hand, the nave and transept of Spalding church were built in 1284 by the Priory, the parishioners paying to the Prior, William of Littleport, £100 of the cost—see *Archaeological Journal*, lxxxix, 1932, 373. At Kessingland, Suffolk, when the church was appropriated to the Minoresses of London in 1362, they were made responsible for all repairs to the chancel, and for two-thirds of repairs to the rest of the fabric—Bishop Percy's Register, Norwich; I owe this reference to the kindness of the Rev. Christopher Chitty.

may have had some personal knowledge of architecture, and the implication seems to be that his works, which included a great deal of building on his manor, were done under his own control.[2] The building of a village church in this way was an extension of the principle of building a barn or framing a new cottage : the design was either inherent in the traditions of local craftsmen, or was imitated from admired models in the neighbourhood.

Such methods tend to fossilization rather than to artistic progress, and in the Middle Ages were a mark of comparative insignificance and above all of lack of patronage. Folk-art of this type forms a flourishing and fruitful background but does not itself provide an impetus to further progress, which comes from above and outside. On the other hand, the stored momentum of craft traditions in secluded backwaters of culture long outlasted Gothic as a ruling style.[3] At the other end of the scale from these peasant works are churches designed by the King's Craftsmen, whose ' Westminster school ' was the leading artistic organization in the country. Direct intervention by the royal officers was rare in the case of parish churches, but is almost certain at St. Thomas, Winchelsea, and Holy Trinity, Hull, built as integral parts of bastide towns laid out by Edward I. To these may be added the Chapel of St. Peter ad Vincula in the Tower of London, architecturally of parochial type. More frequently the King's Master Mason or some other royal craftsman was concerned, not *ex officio*, but in private practice, or perhaps as consultant mason to a monastery. Many parish churches were undoubtedly designed in this way by the leading architects of the time, especially where an influential benefactor provided funds for a complete rebuilding.

Next in importance were the chief craftsmen of cathedrals and of the greater monasteries and collegiate churches, who wielded influence over wide areas in virtue of their office, and in some cases were called in by the parishioners to design or supervise works not officially in their hands. Subordinate masons on the staff of monastic houses also took on private contracts, and were responsible for churches of a secondary rank. Yet other churches were designed by leading masons of the corporate towns, who had practices extending for considerable distances from their homes. Some of these men were quarry-owners, and may have turned out shop-worked shafts, bases, capitals or window-tracery, ready for erection and almost on a mass-produced scale.[4] Finally, merging into the home-made type are the works of local craftsmen with small independent practices in a confined area.

Each class tended to imitate the work of the class above, so that admired innovations of the royal school, such as Perpendicular tracery, soon spread to remote districts. No class of mason worked exclusively on churches, though individuals may have found it convenient to specialize. But wherever detailed evidence survives, the same masons are found to have worked indifferently on

[2] *The Estate Book of Henry de Bray*, ed. D. Willis (Camden 3rd ser., XXVII, 1916), pp. xx-xxi.

[3] It will be noticed that I am in direct opposition to the school of artists and critics led by the late Eric Gill, which holds that true art springs only from folk-craftsmanship, or is identical with it. The historical evidence, so far as the Middle Ages are concerned, points clearly in the other direction.

[4] This has been suggested by Mr. Ralph H. C. Davis in his careful investigation of Masons' Marks in Oxford and the Cotswolds (Oxfordshire Archaeological Society, 84th *Report*, 1938-9), where he instances the piers of Magdalen College ante-chapel and those of the Harcourt aisle of Stanton Harcourt church, as having exactly the same section and bearing the same mason's mark.

domestic, military, or ecclesiastical works, and for royal, corporate or private patrons. Recapitulated in tabular form, the classes of parish church design are :

A. CHURCHES DESIGNED BY MASONS OF ARCHITECTURAL STANDING

(i) Designed by the King's craftsmen *ex officio*.
(ii) Designed by the King's craftsmen in a private capacity.
(iii) Designed by other official (e.g. monastic) masons *ex officio*.
(iv) Designed by other official (e.g. monastic) masons in a private capacity.
(v) Designed by craftsmen of corporate towns.
(vi) Designed by local craftsmen with small practices.

B. CHURCHES BUILT BY AN AD HOC ORGANIZATION

(i) Under control of an amateur ' architect '.
(ii) Elements of design left to traditional usage.

The evidence may now be examined for instances of each type, provided by surviving accounts, contracts and other documents. These show that as in the construction of larger buildings, two main methods of organization were employed : *direct labour*, and *contract*. In the first case the clients, for example the churchwardens, appointed a master of the fabric, some trustworthy parishioner, who was responsible for the money subscribed and who paid directly to the craftsmen and labourers their fees and wages. This master or keeper of the fabric also had to obtain the necessary materials, and arrange for their carriage. He would engage a master mason to design and supervise the actual building, a carpenter for the roofs and other woodwork, and plumbers, thatchers, tilers and glaziers as and when required. When this method was employed, no financial responsibility rested on any of the craftsmen, who were all treated as employees of the client. In many cases, the churchwardens themselves might act as joint masters of the work, if it were not sufficiently extensive to demand the full attention of a separate official.

In practice the direct labour system was often modified by *task-work* : certain parts would be undertaken by individuals or gangs, paid not for their time but according to the amount of work done. Different leading masons might thus agree with the fabric-master to build the aisle walls, arcades and windows of a church respectively.

Another modification of the direct labour system was *gang-work*, based on time. A leading craftsman was paid in respect of himself and his mates or servants (*socii, famuli, servientes*) a lump sum per day, which he shared with them. Both of these variations tended in the direction of work done by contract.[5]

Contract work was greatly favoured for parish churches and other buildings of comparatively small extent, as it removed from the client the necessity of arranging administration and financial details. On the other hand, it might put him at the mercy of an unscrupulous craftsman, and for this reason provision would be made in the contract not merely for the quality of materials and work, but for

[5] For a discussion of organization, see D. Knoop and G. P. Jones : *The Mediaeval Mason*, 1933, *passim*, and ' The Rise of the Mason-Contractor ' in *R.I.B.A. Journal*, 3rd ser., xliii, 1936.

'survey' by a third party of standing. Obviously such a surveyor had to be technically expert, and such men were mostly found among the royal craftsmen and the 'sworn' craftsmen of London and the great towns, whose duty was to enquire into all work executed in their respective crafts, to ensure the maintenance of a high standard and the observance of bye-laws. They were often, but not invariably, officers of the craft guilds concerned.

It was these same men who were the chief designers of the time, so that it is not surprising to find them being asked to provide designs as well as the necessary supervision. This arrangement, of client, designing and supervising master, and contracting craftsman, corresponded closely to the present method involving client, architect, and building contractor. Throughout the Middle Ages, the mason-architect and the mason-contractor trained at the same banker, but it is clear that by the fourteenth century, as contract work became more extensive, the two functions were becoming more and more differentiated. The essential parts of present-day practice were foreshadowed when a client approached a mason noted for his architectural work, asked him to prepare designs and undertake supervision, and to suggest a good contractor. This stage had certainly been reached by the second half of the fourteenth century.

The contract commonly contained a specification of the work, with the proviso that it was to be according to drawings and templates provided by a named master, who was also to survey the work. The contractor was to supply materials, carriage, and labour, and to receive either an agreed sum by instalments, or a set price for each unit (e.g. a rod of masonry) completed. Variants provided that the client should supply materials or carriage or both. In none of this is there any fundamental difference from modern practice. Apart from the change in architectural education from mainly practical to entirely theoretical training, already mentioned, the chief difference was due to the rigid separation of crafts enforced by guild regulations. There could not in the Middle Ages be such an individual as a general contractor, except on rare occasions outside the limits of a corporate town. Separate contracts were entered into with the mason for walls, with the carpenter for roofs, the tiler and the glazier; but in many cases the subsidiary works were not let to contract.

Surviving contracts are the chief authority for work at parish churches, while from the late fourteenth century a growing quantity of churchwardens' accounts, and some municipal accounts supplement the evidence available. Monastic accounts also are frequently of great value as evidence of dated work on chancels, but they seldom give the details preserved by the more important series of churchwardens' and town accounts, and so are somewhat unhelpful as regards craftsmens' names. Caution has to be exercised in relating the documents to existing buildings, for in some cases extensive alterations were made within a generation before a complete rebuilding; in such a case the evidence of style would not be conclusive. Another fruitful source of error is the extensive rebuilding of the nineteenth century, which sometimes preserved the forms of the original work with more or less accuracy, but more often introduced sweeping changes without authority.

It is helpful to bear in mind the normal sequence of building operations, as employed during the complete rebuilding of a parish church in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries: the chancel was first built, followed by nave and aisles, and later by the tower, and by porches, side chapels, and vestries; but appropriation

of the chancel to a religious house might often delay its rebuilding.[6] Central towers were frequently demolished, and western towers erected, during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.[7] Stone vaulting, where it was employed, was put up after the erection of the timber roof and beneath its shelter.

As has already been suggested, the churches of Winchelsea and Hull were probably designed by the King's masons; both are quite exceptional in scale and character. New Winchelsea was laid out between 1288 and 1292, and of its two parish churches St. Giles was probably the earlier. No trace of this church now remains, but the aisled chancel of St. Thomas's is still in use. There can be little doubt that this chancel was structurally complete by 1307, for the famous 'Alard' tomb in the south aisle bears the heads of Edward I and of his young second queen Margaret, while a larger version of the King's head appears on the exterior, above the east window of this aisle. The late Professor Lethaby suggested[8] that Richard Crundale, King's mason and designer of Queen Eleanor's tomb and certain of the Eleanor Crosses, may have been the architect. But it is unlikely that much if any of the work at St. Thomas, Winchelsea, had been built by Crundale's death in 1293. Edward I employed several distinguished masons towards the end of his reign, but none of them was in complete control of the royal works.

The leading master at the turn of the century was Walter of Hereford (probably Harford in Gloucestershire), whose chief work was the building of Caernarvon Castle from about 1285 to his death in 1309.[8a] The town of Caernarvon, which like Winchelsea and Hull was of bastide type, had been laid out in 1283, and the walls were built in the following year. Work at the castle practically ceased from 1291 to 1295 and from 1301 to 1315. It is probable that Master Walter was engaged elsewhere during those periods; and in fact in 1304 he was at Edinburgh Castle, and in 1306 took masons to London for the Queen's work: viz., the building of the Grey Friars' Church at Newgate, destined to have a wide influence on the planning and design of parish churches. We know further that in 1278 he had agreed to serve Winchcombe Abbey as master of the new works, and for some years after that date he was also master of the works of the King's abbey of Vale Royal in Cheshire. So he was not lacking in experience of church work, and very probably planned the churches of Winchelsea and Hull, even if the details and supervision were left to others.

Holy Trinity, Hull, was begun before 1300 but the nave was not complete until 1425, and the tower was only finished about 1530; at St. Thomas, Winchelsea, the nave was probably never built, though foundations were laid. Hull and Winchelsea both have transepts of slight projection, and provision for a central tower, which at Hull was built two centuries after the chancel, and at Winchelsea was never completed. Both plans must have been determined by 1300, and perhaps the general designs also. In the Sussex church the beautiful mouldings and exquisite carving are of outstanding merit, but lacking a clearstorey it is a less advanced type than its contemporary at Hull.[8b] This latter is almost identical in plan with the great

[6] For example, at Holy Trinity, Cambridge: T. D. Atkinson in *Cambridge Antiq. Soc. Proc.*, xl. 1945, 36.

[7] As at Wells St. Cuthbert, Glastonbury St. John, High Wycombe.

[8] W. R. Lethaby: *Westminster Abbey and the King's Craftsmen* (1906), 177.

[8a] A. J. Taylor in *Trans. Caernarvonshire Hist. Soc.*, 1948, 16-19.

[8b] Unless, indeed, we are to regard St. Thomas, Winchelsea, as a hall-church with high side-aisles rather than low central aisle, and thus in line of ancestry to St. Augustine's, Bristol (now the Cathedral).

church of the Grey Friars in London, which has been described as ' the expression of a new and original idea in church building '.[9] It is highly probable, not only that the new style in parish churches followed on royal initiative,[10] but that the architect responsible for the new design was Master Walter of Hereford. First Winchelsea and then Hull gave opportunity for experiment; lastly the great church of the Franciscans, though not itself parochial, determined the future course of the town church.

Much indirect official influence flowed from the construction of royal chapels such as St. Stephen's at Westminster, St. George's in Windsor Castle, and that of Eton College, while the little chapel of St. Peter ad Vincula in the Tower of London, designed in 1513 by William Vertue the King's chief mason, is architecturally though not legally parochial. The class of parish churches designed by official craftsmen acting in their private capacity is much more numerous, and formed an important link in the dissemination of art-forms. Proven examples date from the late fourteenth century; but the practice probably originated much earlier, for Stone church, near Dartford in Kent, has extremely close resemblances to parts of Westminster Abbey built while a Master Ralph of Dartford worked there in the second quarter of the thirteenth century.[11]

Henry Yevele was not only King's Master Mason, but in addition undertook work for private patrons, and was retained in an architectural or advisory capacity by St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, St. Albans Abbey and Canterbury Cathedral. In 1379-80 he supplied a new east window, evidently shop-made, for the chancel of Battersea Church, appropriated to Westminster Abbey,[12] and in 1381 made the ' devyse ' or design according to which Nicholas Typerton contracted to build a south aisle and porch to the church of St. Dunstan-in-the-East, London.[13] He was probably concerned in the addition of a tower to Cobham Church, Kent, about 1370, and stylistic considerations suggest that about 1395 he supplied Archbishop Courtenay with designs for the new collegiate church of All Saints, Maidstone, and for the adjoining College with its noble gateway.

At about the same time, Thomas Wolvey, a St. Albans mason, was carrying out work on the church of Henley-on-Thames. Wolvey was also working under Yevele at Westminster Hall, was counted as one of the King's masons, and was described on his tomb as an esquire of King Richard II.[14] Thirty years later Thomas Mapilton, who was the King's Master Mason and had also a large consultant practice, was in charge of the rebuilding of St. Stephen's Walbrook, London, between 1429 and his death in 1438.[15] The chief patron of this work was Sir Robert Chichele, brother of Archbishop Chichele for whom Mapilton had just built the south-west tower of Canterbury Cathedral. It is probable that Mapilton was also concerned

[9] A. W. Clapham, *Some Famous Buildings and their Story*, 250.

[10] Ibid., 253; for Master Walter of Hereford, see D. Knoop and G. P. Jones in *Miscellanea Latomorum*, Dec. 1939; and note 8a above.

[11] W. R. Lethaby, *Westminster Abbey Re-examined* (1925), 72-3.

[12] Westminster Abbey Infirmarer's Roll, 1379-80, W.A.M., 19, 358; cf. D. Knoop and G. P. Jones, *Introduction to Freemasonry*, 1937, p. 76.

[13] British Museum, Harleian Ch. 48 E. 43; cf. *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, xlii, 111.

[14] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1396-99, p. 239; P.R.O., E.101/473/11; will of Thomas Wolvey, 1428, Archdeaconry Court of St. Albans, 14 Stoneham. His epitaph, formerly in St. Michael's church, St. Albans, described him as ' Latomus in arte nec non Armiger illustrissimi principis Ricardi secundi '. J. Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments* (1631), 582.

[15] *London and Middlesex Archaeol. Soc. Trans.*, v (1879), 330-1; one of the foundation stones was laid by ' Maister Thomas Mapilton the kyngis mason than beyng Maistir mason of the seyd Chirche werke '.

with the design of the collegiate church at Fotheringhay. Stephen Lote, King's Mason from 1400 to 1417, arranged in his will that Mapilton should continue his work on the tomb of the Duke of York, killed at Agincourt in 1415, and buried at Fotheringhay.[16] The new chancel was begun at about that time, together with the college founded by the Duke, and it is likely that Lote and Mapilton were the designers. The rest of the church was not built until 1434, when William Horwood, a mason-contractor, undertook to make it on the model of the chancel ' under the oversight of master-masons of the country '.[17]

At Chester, in 1433, a south chapel was added to the chancel of the church of St. Mary-on-the-Hill, by a contractor Thomas Betes, working under the supervision of Master John Asser, the official Mason to the County Palatine.[18] The chapel has unfortunately been destroyed and completely rebuilt.

Between the second and third classes of work it is difficult to make a sharp distinction, for many of the royal masters held appointments to monastic houses also. The work for Battersea Church, done by Henry Yevele as mason to Westminster Abbey, has already been mentioned. In 1476 a new south chancel aisle was added to the church of Broxbourne, Herts., by another Abbey mason, Robert Stowell,[19] and he was also designer of the nave of St. Margaret's, Westminster, built between 1495 and 1504.[20] In 1487-88 a new chancel was built at Ellingham, Northumberland, by William Mayson, one of the masons of the Durham Palatinate,[21] and between 1525 and 1536 John Forman, the master mason of York Minster, built the nearby church of St. Michael-le-Belfry.[22] At Westminster, Henry Redman, the Abbey mason, was also Wolsey's principal architect, and had built the new tower and chancel of St. Margaret's between 1515 and 1523.[23]

Most instances of the fourth class concern towers added to existing churches, though this is presumably due to the relative frequency with which such works were done by contract, the text of which has survived. But the new tower at Lydd in Kent was built in 1442-46 by Thomas Stanley of Canterbury, according to the town accounts.[24] Stanley had been for many years one of the leading masons at Christchurch Priory, from the days when Thomas Mapilton was in charge of the works of the south-west tower. Judging from his position in the Prior's Livery Lists, Stanley was in a fair way to obtaining the position of resident mason to the Cathedral, but Richard Beke, who had been chief mason at London Bridge, was brought in over his head, perhaps on Mapilton's advice.[25] Stanley's work at Lydd is substantial and well composed, though plain, and closely similar to the tower at

[16] Will of Stephen Lote, P.C.C. 40 Marche. I am indebted to Mr. Arthur Oswald for an abstract of this will.

[17] Contract printed in Dugdale: *Monasticon*, vi, 1414; also in D. Knoop and G. P. Jones, *The Mediaeval Mason*, p. 245.

[18] J. P. Earwaker, *History of the Church of St. Mary*, etc. (1898), 31.

[19] P.R.O., Ancient Deed, D.2638; this and several other contracts were first brought to my notice by Mr. L. F. Salzman, who generously gave permission for use to be made of his authoritative MS. *Documentary History of Building in England to 1549*, now Soc. of Antiquaries MS. 670.

[20] H. F. Westlake, *St. Margaret's Westminster* (1914), 150.

[21] J. T. Fowler, *Durham Account Rolls*, iii (Surtees Soc., CIII, 1900), 651.

[22] J. Raine, *Fabric Rolls of York Minster* (Surtees Soc., XXXV, 1858), 99-107.

[23] H. F. Westlake, *St. Margaret's Westminster*.

[24] A. Finn, *Records of Lydd*, 1911.

[25] In 1429 Stanley was first of the lodge masons, and again in 1431. In 1432 he was one of the esquires, coming before Richard Beke, who then appears for the first time. In 1433 Stanley's name is back among the masons, and he does not appear in the next list (1437); Bodleian Tanner MS. 165, from information kindly sent by Mr. Arthur Oswald and Mr. W. P. Blore, Librarian of Canterbury Cathedral.

Tenterden which may also be by him, and shows the marked influence of the south-west tower at Canterbury. At Sandwich, when the steeple of St. Mary's was rebuilt in 1446, the reasonable fee of five pence was ' spendit on the mason of Crystchirche for to have an ynsy3t yn the Cane stone for the stepill ' ;[26] this mason may have been Stanley, or Richard Beke himself.

Local tradition has it that ' John Gowere built Campden Church and Gloster towere ',[27] which would seem to imply that the Gloucester Abbey mason of the time (1450-60) was called in at Chipping Campden. Stylistic comparison certainly supports this, but no documentary evidence has been discovered. Another instance which might be considered under this heading is that of Cheney, one of Wolsey's masons at Hampton Court, who was allowed to undertake private work for St. Lawrence's Church, Reading, where he built a new nave arcade in 1521, and supplied a font in the following year. The churchwardens' accounts show that 3*s*. 4*d*. was paid for Cheney's costs in riding, and 4*s*. 4*d*. for a hose-cloth for Wolsey's surveyor, to license Cheney's absences.[28] It is not clear whether this last was an official fee or a surreptitious bribe.

The fifth class comprises numerous examples, and it is probable that a large proportion of the fine rebuilt churches of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries are due to the principal masons of the larger towns, whose practices extended over wide areas. A much earlier instance is that of Richard of Abingdon, the master mason responsible for the splendid tower of St. Mary-the-Virgin, Oxford, built about 1270-80 ;[29] in 1275 he was granted a house by the church free of rent for the duration of the works. A century later Nicholas Waleys of Bristol was called to Bridgwater, 35 miles away, when that town decided to build the tall stone spire of the church. The work went on from 1366 to 1375, and Waleys was paid over £90 altogether ; his will, proved in 1403, shows that he was a man of considerable substance, and suggests that he was master mason to St. Augustine's Abbey at Bristol.[30]

Nicholas Wyshongre, a Gloucester mason, contracted to build the tower of Arlingham Church in 1372,[31] and the chancel of Adderbury, Oxon., was rebuilt for New College between 1408 and 1418 by Richard Winchcombe, later famous as the architect of the Oxford Divinity School. Winchcombe's style is a development of the ' Wykehamist ' school of William Wynford, and it seems probable that Winchcombe was one of the masons ' attached for the King's work ' from the works of Winchester College in 1398, for among several masons whose names first appear in the accounts of Portchester Castle, Hants., in 1398-99, ' Richard Wynchcombe ' is one.[32]

When in 1425 it was decided to build the tower for the church of St. Andrew,

[26] William Boys, *History of Sandwich*, 1792, 363.

[27] *Dictionary* of the Architectural Publication Society, s.v. ' Gower, John '.

[28] C. Kerry, *History of St. Laurence Reading*, 1883, 14, 24.

[29] *Oriel Records* (Oxford Hist. Soc., LXXXV), 78.

[30] *Bridgwater Corporation Documents* (Somerset Record Soc., XLVIII, 1933), pp. 159, 220 ; will in T. P. Wadley : *Wills in the Great Orphan Book at Bristol* . . ., 1886, 65.

[31] I. H. Jeayes, *Catalogue of the Charters and Muniments at Berkeley Castle*, 1892, 174.

[32] D. Knoop and G. P. Jones, *Introduction to Freemasonry*, 86 ; P.R.O., E.101/479/24. The Bursars' Account Roll of Winchester College for Michaelmas 1397-98 shows under *Expense forinsece* that the Warden rode to Farnham on 14th July 1398 to speak with Wykeham, and then proceeded to London ' *cum litteris domini ad liberandum lathamos attachiatos ad opus domini Regis* '. I am indebted to Mr. Herbert Chitty for access to these rolls and for much assistance.

Walberswick, Suffolk, the contract was let to two masons jointly, living a few miles away in different directions: Richard Russell of Dunwich and Adam Powle of Blythburgh. Russell was a man of high local standing, for he was twice one of the M.P.s for Dunwich, in 1420 and 1427, and a Bailiff of the town in 1430 and 1440. His style can be traced in the noble steeple of Kessingland, larger than that of Walberswick, but never completed, probably begun about 1430, but still in progress in 1454-59.[33] In all these cases the craftsmen were called from towns of some importance to do work at lesser towns or villages; but at Hedon, Yorks., the architect of the splendid tower of St. Augustine's may have been a local man. This was Robert Playser, who from 1427 to 1437 took a yearly fee of 20*s*. together with 7*s*. for his clothing, and free lodging over the Grammar School, in addition to his wages.[34]

In Somerset, the tower of Dunster Priory Church, which was also parochial, was built by a contract of 1442 by John Marys of Stogursey, over 15 miles away.[35] The 'patron' or design was to be made by the advice of Richard Pope, freemason, probably a mason-architect from one of the larger towns such as Taunton. Contrasting methods are instanced by the building of the tower of Totnes, Devon, about 1450, and the addition of a chapel and vestry to the church at Croscombe, Somerset, in 1506-12. At Totnes the mason was Roger Growdon, possibly the chief contractor of the town; the churchwardens apparently distrusted his powers of design, for they instructed the overseers of the fabric to visit a series of fine towers: Ashburton, Tavistock, Buckland (? Monachorum), and Callington in Cornwall, and model that of Totnes on the one considered the most pleasing.[36] Though there is in fact a close relation between the existing tower and that of Ashburton, Growdon's work is much richer and more accomplished. It is not clear why Totnes should have adopted these methods, when Exeter, a noted architectural centre, is only 24 miles away. The churchwardens of Croscombe, on the other hand, though but 5 miles from Wells, sent 65 miles to Exeter to obtain the services of John Carter, freemason, to build their new works.[37] Whatever may be the explanation of these variations of method, it is interesting to note that in both cases fairly wide travel was accepted as normal.

For final examples of what may be termed 'borough' craftsmanship, we may take the church of Tilney All Saints, Norfolk, where battlements were added in 1523-25 by Thomas Burrey from King's Lynn, some five miles off[38]; and the calling of John Tempas from Boston, probably the master of the lantern of Boston 'Stump', to complete the spire at Louth, Lincs., in 1515.

The last class of 'designed' churches merges into the second division, those built without the assistance of a mason-architect; like this latter division, the class is a large one. Even when allowance has been made for a degree of uncertainty as to the status of some masons, there is no doubt that a considerable proportion of the documented examples belong here. At Sandon, Herts., in 1348, the chancel was to be rebuilt for the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's by Thomas Rickling of

[33] B.M. Add. Ch. 17,634; 40, 728; *Returns of M.P.'s*; P.R.O., S.C.11/886, 887; T. Gardner, *History of Dunwich*, p. 79. I have to thank the Rev. C. Chitty for much help in connexion with Kessingland and Walberswick.

[34] J. R. Boyle, *History of Hedon*, 1895, 119.

[35] *Archaeological Journal*, xxxviii, 217.

[36] H. R. Watkin, *The History of Totnes Priory*, I, 396, 407; II, 956-7; I am indebted to Mr. Arthur Oswald for drawing my attention to this.

[37] *Somerset Churchwardens' Accounts* (Somerset Rec. Soc., IV, 1890), 29-32.

[38] A. D. Stallard, *Churchwardens' Accounts of Tilney All Saints*, 1922.

Barkway ;[39] the south aisle of Hornby, Yorks., was built in 1409-10 by Richard de Newton of Patrick Brompton,[40] and in 1412 the church of Catterick was undertaken by Richard of Cracall,[41] who is probably to be identified with Richard de Newton.

John Coupere who was at work on the church of Tattershall, Lincs., in 1482,[42] was evidently a mason of greater powers, for his church work is of high rank, and he also designed Kirby Muxloe Castle in Leicestershire, 70 miles away.[43] But he was almost certainly identical with the apprentice of that name who trained on the works of Eton College from 1453 to 1459,[44] and the mason of Winchester who in 1477 and 1478 agreed under two contracts to rebuild Bramber Bridge in Sussex for Magdalen College, Oxford.[45] All these works, except Kirby Muxloe, were connected with Bishop Waynflete of Winchester, and Coupere may also have worked on the bishop's new palace at Esher, Surrey (*c.* 1480) and his school at Wainfleet, Lincs. (1483-84), as well as at Winchester Cathedral and elsewhere in the diocese.

Similarly, if the Thomas Aldrych of North Lopham who contracted in 1487-88 to build the tower of Helmingham Church, Suffolk,[46] was identical with the mason of the same name who inserted a new east window in the church of Thetford Cluniac Priory 20 years later,[47] the Suffolk work might rather be considered as belonging to one of the earlier categories. William Pond, carpenter, who made an enclosed chantry chapel at Tempsford, Beds., in 1512,[48] was probably a local man, and so was William Jackson of Bratoft, Lincs., who contracted to make the battlements of Orby Church in 1529, on the model of those at 'Weston Admeals' and 'Esterkele' (East Keal).[49]

Finally, there is the interesting case of Bolney Church, Sussex, where the stone tower and timber spire were made under contracts entered into by the churchwardens with the craftsmen concerned. The mason was Thomas Pokyll, and with him was associated a partner, perhaps a 'sleeping' one, Gills or Giles. An earnest of 20*s.* was paid to them on 'Maremaudlyn day 28 Henry VIII' (22 July 1536) for their bargain to make the steeple for 18*s.* for each foot in height. The final payment to Pokyll was made on the 17th March, 1536/37, when it was stated that he had received the full sum of £9, which would be equivalent to 10 feet of the tower. Payments had, however, been made to Pokyll as early as the end of 1535, so that some part of the tower must already have been built when the contract was entered upon ; and a much greater sum, totalling over £22, went to John Corker, a mason-setter, during 1537 and 1538 ; he set some 25 feet, as he was paid at the same rate of 18*s.* the foot. Pokyll's work included the junction with the church, for 18*s.* was 'payd to to (two) of Pokyll servants for oteryng (altering) of the chyrch wall to the stepyll'. A carpenter, Roger Frogbrook, was engaged in 1537 to make 'the

[39] Dr. Rose Graham in *Archaeological Journal*, lxxxvii, 1930, 21. The place-name Barkway is read by Mr. Salzman (see n.19).

[40] H. B. McCall, Richmondshire Churches (1910), 46, 62 ; *V.C.H. Yorkshire North Riding*, I, 317.

[41] J. Raine, *Catterick Church* (1834). Newton (le Willows) in Patrick Brompton and Crakehall are adjoining townships ; the style of work at Hornby and at Catterick is identical.

[42] H.M.C., *De L'Isle and Dudley*, I, 198.

[43] A. H. Thompson in *Leics. Archaeol. Soc. Trans.*, xi (1915-16), 193ff.

[44] D. Knoop and G. P. Jones, 'The Building of Eton College' in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, xlvi (1933).

[45] Magdalen College Deeds, 'Bramber' (see n.19).

[46] Bodleian, Tanner MS. 138, f. 87, quoted by Mr. Salzman (see n. 19).

[47] J. H. Harvey in *Norfolk Archaeology*, xxvii (1939), 11.

[48] H.M.C., *8th Rep.*, 262.

[49] Early Chancery Proc., 613/10. P.R.O. (see n. 19).

tymber work of the stepyll', and on one occasion he was paid 4*s.* 6*d.* 'for goyng to the Yll of Whyt', a journey of some 50 miles in each direction. There is no mention of drawings being made for the tower itself, but a certain Parsons was paid 2*d.* 'for making a plat for the cran'; it is not clear whether 'plat' is here to be taken in the sense of plan or diagram—it may mean simply a platform.[50]

The voluminous records of medieval building show that there were very many small masters capable of doing good, if not inspired, work. On the other hand, the comparatively few architects of first-class rank were invited to travel long distances to give their advice or undertake work, and were paid in proportion. The lesser men worked over areas which would reflect credit on a small-town contractor even in these days of swift communication, and there is no doubt that the degree of isolation of individual communities during the Middle Ages has in the past been greatly exaggerated. The prevalent view originated with the depressing picture of the roads of England given by diarists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and this has led to the false assumption that conditions were even worse two centuries earlier. The conclusion is not justified, for the increase of wheeled traffic had led to rapid degeneration of the roads. Much use had been made of water transport for the carriage of materials, while postal and personal communications depended mostly on riding horses. That there was an extensive volume of travel for business purposes is fully borne out by the known movements of the architects of our parish churches.

MEDIEVAL WORKS AT PARISH CHURCHES BY KNOWN CRAFTSMEN

Cases resting on inscriptions and graffiti have not been included. All those named are masons unless followed by "C", which indicates a carpenter. References are to the notes

c. 1270–80	Oxford, St. Mary the V.	Tower	Richard of Abingdon[29]
1293	Southchurch, Essex	Chapel	Roger of Prittlewell[51]
1348	Sandon, Herts.	Chancel	Thomas Rickling of Barkway[39]
1366–75	Bridgwater, Som.	Spire	Nicholas Waleys of Bristol[30]
1372	Arlingham, Glos.	Tower	Nicholas Wyshongre of Gloucester[31]
1379–80	Battersea, St. Mary	Window	Henry Yevele[12]
1381	London, St Dunstan in the East	S. aisle and porch	Henry Yevele and Nicholas Typerton[13]
1390–92	York, St. Andrew	Choir	Hugh Grantham[52]
1392	Houghton Conquest, Beds.	Tower	William Farele of Dunstable and Philip Lessy of Totternhoe[53]
1397	Henley-on-Thames	Church	Thomas Wolvey of St. Albans[14]
c. 1406	Crayford, Kent	Tower	John Wells[54]
1408–18	Adderbury, Oxon.	Chancel	Richard Winchcombe[32]
1409–10	Hornby, Yorks.	S. aisle	Richard of Newton in Patrick Brompton[40]
1412	Catterick, Yorks.	Church	Richard of Crakehall[41]
1413	Halstead, Essex	Chancel roof	John Taverner of Halstead, C[55]

[50] *Sussex Arch. Colls.*, vi, 244-52.

[51] *Essex Arch. Soc. Trans.*, xxi, 268.

[52] J. Raine, *Fabric Rolls of York Minster*, 129.

[53] Contract of 1st Nov. 1392, Houghton Conquest Church, kindly communicated by the Rev. R. H. Goode. Farele and Lessy were to be paid 10*s.* per foot for the foundations, and 13*s.* 4*d.* per foot from the ground upwards, and 6 quarters of wheat; the work was to be completed in three years.

[54] L. L. Duncan, *Testamenta Cantiana—West Kent*, pp. vi, 16.

[55] St. Paul's MSS., 329 (see n. 19).

1415	Stratford-on-Avon	St. Mary's (Clopton) Chapel	John Kyrton of Winchcombe[56]
1419	Wyberton, Lincs.	Church & Tower	Roger Denys[57]
1420	Surfleet, Lincs.	Chancel	Roger Denys[58]
c. 1424	Oakham, Rutland	Tower vault	Thomas Nunton[59]
1425–6	Walberswick, Suffolk	Tower	Richard Russell of Dunwich and Adam Powle of Blythburgh[33]
1427–37	Hedon, Yorks.	Tower	Robert Playser[34]
1429–38	London, St. Stephen Walbrook	Church	Thomas Mapilton[15]
1433	Chester, St. Mary-on-the-Hill	S. Chancel Chapel	John Asser of Chester and Thomas Betes[18]
1434	Fotheringhay, Northants	Church	William Horwood[17]
c. 1435	York, St. John Baptist	Tower	John Cotom and John Bolron, C[60]
1439	Bury St. Edmunds, St. John-at-Hill	Roof	John Heywood of Ditton, Cambs., C[61]
1441	Fulham, Middlesex	Tower	Richard Garald and Peter Chapell[62]
1442	Dunster, Somerset	Tower	Richard Pope and John Marys of Stogursey[35]
1442	Thame, Oxon.	Transept & roof	John Beckley and John Este, C[63]
1442–46	Lydd, Kent	Tower	Thomas Stanley of Canterbury[24]
1446	Sandwich, St. Mary, Kent	Tower	? Richard Beke[26]
1449	Totnes, Devon	Tower	Roger Growdon[36]
1452	Cambridge, St. Benet	Roof	Nicholas Tofts of Reach, C[64]
1469	Ludlow, Salop	Tower	? Clement Mason[65]
1469–72	Bodmin, Cornwall	Church & roofs	Richard Richowe and John Sam. C[66]
1471	Wells, St. Cuthbert, Somerset	S. Transept reredos	John Stowell of Wells[67]
1476	Broxbourne, Herts.	S. aisle	Robert Stowell of London[19]
1480	Hythe, Kent	Steeple	John Hamme, C[68]
1480	Steeple Ashton, Wilts.	Nave	Thomas Lovell[69]
1482	Tattershall, Lincs.	Tower, &c.	John Coupere (of Winchester ?)[42]
1484–85	Worstead, Norfolk	Chancel	John Auntell[70]
1487–88	Ellingham, Northumberland	Chancel	William Mayson[21]
1487–88	Helmingham, Suffolk	Tower	Thomas Aldrych of North Lopham[46]
1495–1504	Westminster, St. Margaret	Nave	Robert Stowell[20]
1498	Leverton, Lincs.	Steeple	Thomas Mason[71]
1501–06	Louth, Lincs.	Steeple	John Cole (work continued by Christopher Scune)[72]
c. 1505–25	Wrexham, Denbighshire	Tower	—— Hart[73]

[56] J. H. Bloom, *Gild Register of Stratford-on-Avon* (1907), 23.

[57] *Lincs. Notes and Queries*, xiv, 231, quoting Early Chancery Proc., 7, 104.

[58] Ibid., quoting De Banco Roll, Easter, 8 Hen. V, m. 119.

[59] F. J. Furnivall, *The Fifty Earliest English Wills* (E.E.T.S., LXXVIII, 1882), 65-74.

[60] *Testamenta Eboracensia* (Surtees Soc., XXX), ii, 53.

[61] *British Archaeol. Assoc. Journal*, xxi, 118.

[62] *Cal. Patent Rolls*, 1436-41, 530; cf. Garald's will, 1458, Commissary Court of London, 237 Sharp.

[63] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1865, pt. i, 176-189.

[64] Willis and Clark, *Archit. History of the University of Cambridge* (1886), I, 282.

[65] *Shropshire Arch. Soc.*, 2nd ser., i (1889), 235, 242-3.

[66] J. J. Wilkinson in *Camden Miscellany*, vii (Camden Soc., N.S., XIV, 1875).

[67] T. Serel, *Historical Notes on St. Cuthbert, Wells*, 20.

[68] H.M.C., *4th Rep.*, 432-3.

[69] *Archaeol. Journal*, lxxvii, 1920, 351 n.

[70] Norwich Cathedral, Obedientiary Roll 189.

[71] *Archaeologia*, xli, 333 ff.

[72] R. C. Dudding ed.: *The First Churchwardens' Book of Louth* (1941); cf. J. H. Harvey in *R.I.B.A. Journal*, 3 ser., lii (1945), 231, 233.

[73] R. Merrick, *A Book of Glamorganshire Antiquities*, ed. J. A. Corbett (1887); Hart is also credited with the towers of St. John Cardiff, and St. Stephen, Bristol. Cf. for date of Wrexham tower, A. N. Palmer, *History of the Parish Church of Wrexham* (1886).

1506–12	Croscombe, Somerset	N.-E. Chapel and Vestry	John Carter of Exeter[37]
1508–09	High Wycombe, Bucks.	Nave	William Chapman of Chertsey[74]
1512	Tempsford, Beds.	Chapel	William Pond, C[48]
1515–22	Westminster, St. Margaret	Tower & Chancel	Henry Redman[23]
1521	Reading, St. Lawrence	Arcade	—— Cheney of Hampton Court[28]
1523–25	Tilney, All Saints	Battlements	Thomas Burrey of Lynn ?[38]
1525	Ludlow, Salop	St. John's Chapel reredos	Robert Watkinson of Lilleshall[75]
1526	York, St. Michael-le-Belfry	Church	John Forman of York[22]
1527	Derby, All Saints	Tower	John Otes[76]
1529	Orby, Lincs.	Battlements	William Jackson of Bratoft[49]
1533	Burnley, Lancs.	Aisles	Nicholas Craven and Thomas Sellers[77]
1536–38	Bolney, Sussex	Tower & Spire	Thomas Pokyll and Roger Frogbrook, C[50]
1545–46	Leicester, St. Martin	Aisle	Wright the mason[78]

[74] *Records of Bucks*, ix, 13, quoting P.R.O., Anc. Deed D.985.

[75] *Shropshire Arch. Soc.*, 3rd ser., iii (1903), after p. 138.

[76] J. C. Cox and W. St. J. Hope, *Chronicles of All Saints, Derby* (1887), 50 ff. John Otes also appears as a mason-setter at King's College Chapel, Cambridge, in 1508, taking 3*s*. 8*d*. per week, as much as the wardens—from the accounts, by the kindness of Mr. A. Oswald.

[77] T. D. Whitaker, *History of Whalley* (1818).

[78] T. North, *St. Martin's, Leicester* (1884).