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Tree-Ring Analysis of Timbers from the Roofs of the Lady Chapel North and South Aisle, and the Choir South Aisle, Worcester Cathedral, Worcester

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Tree-Ring Analysis of Timbers from the Roofs of the Lady Chapel North and South Aisle, and the Choir South Aisle, Worcester Cathedral, Worcester

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Summary

Fifty samples were obtained from the roofs of the north and south aisles of the Lady Chapel, and the south aisle of the Choir at Worcester Cathedral. These samples were analysed in conjunction with 143 obtained previously, producing four site chronologies, WORCSQ01-04, that included new samples; one sample dated individually. These new chronologies replace those produced during earlier analysis.

The site chronologies comprise 23, six, four, and two new samples, being 289, 191, 131 and 90 rings long. Three of these dated spanning AD 1484 - AD 1772, AD 1095 - 1285, and AD 1294 - AD 1424.

The latest work, from the north aisle of the Lady Chapel, uses timber felled in AD 1772. Some work in the south aisle possibly dates to this time too.

The Choir south aisle roof contains timber felled in AD 1742, with a brace structure here being made of timber felled in AD 1727 and between AD 1733 - 68.

The Lady Chapel roofs and the Choir south aisle roof also contain probable early to midseventeenth century timber, and probable early to mid-fifteenth century timber.

The north aisle of the Lady Chapel also contains probable early to mid-thirteenth century timber. Several timbers are of indeterminate date.

Keywords

Dendrochronology Standing Building

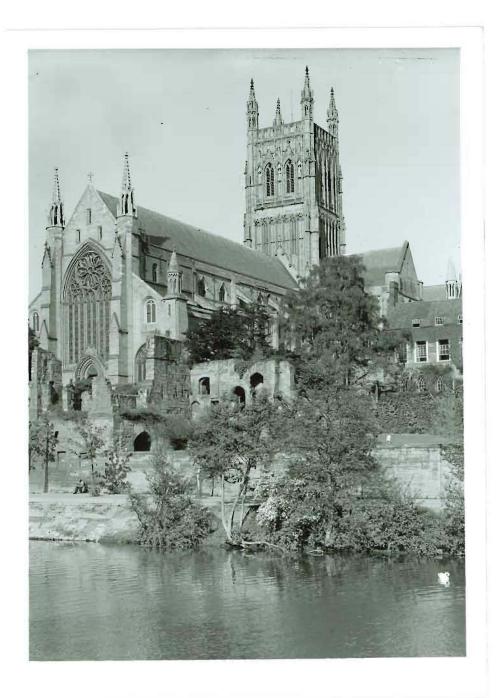
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Frontispiece: Worcester Cathedral from the south-west, across the River Severn. (©Crown Copyright. NMR)



Introduction

Worcester Cathedral (frontispiece), standing in a prominent position on the east bank of the River Severn (SO 850 545; Fig 1) has a long history. The bishopric was founded in the seventh century and the first Cathedral was dedicated to St Peter. Oswald, who was made bishop in AD 961, built a new cathedral, dedicated to St Mary. The presbytery of St Peter's was rebuilt following a Danish raid in AD 1041. Both early cathedrals appear to have been demolished around the time St Wulfstan started the present cathedral in AD 1084 (although the current hypothesis is that the Chapter House is a remodeling of a late Anglo-Saxon rotunda).

Surviving work of St Wulfstan's period includes the crypt, western transepts, cloisters, and Chapter House. In AD 1175 the crossing tower fell down and was rebuilt (Guy 1994). It was rebuilt again in the AD 1370s. In AD 1224 the construction of a new east end was started under bishop William of Blois. Much of the existing decorated architecture at the east end belongs to this phase, with additional work in the perpendicular style dating from the late-fourteenth or early-fifteenth century. There was also a considerable amount of rebuilding activity in the nineteenth century.

A modest amount of sampling for tree-ring analysis has been undertaken from timbers of the nave roof. This was commissioned by the Dean and Chapter of Worcester Cathedral in AD 1993, the work being funded by English Heritage (Howard *et al* 1995). The AD 1993 analysis indicated that, although a significant number of samples could not be dated, a certain amount of timber was felled in the early-seventeenth century, for repair work undertaken at that time. That programme of sampling showed that some earlier timbers were reused.

A much larger programme of sampling for tree-ring analysis, funded by English Heritage, has been undertaken from timbers of the choir, the north-east and south-east transepts, and the crossing between them in AD 1999 (Howard *et al* 2000). A further programme of tree-ring analysis was undertaken of the timbers of the roof of St John Chapel, and of the roof connecting the Chapel to the Chapter House (Howard *et al* 2001).

The work reported upon here concerns three areas of roofing, that of the north and the south aisles of Lady Chapel, and the south aisle of the Choir. A plan of the Cathedral showing the areas under consideration in this report is shown in Figure 2. The purpose of this work, also funded by English Heritage, was to inform the current (AD 2003) process of repair to these roofs by establishing felling dates for the timbers within. The repairs required the lifting of the lead covering and the late nineteenth or early twentieth-century softwood boards beneath. Normally clear access to these roofs, though not impossible, is difficult. The removal of the lead and boards allowed for clear and uninterrupted access to all timbers, and made it less difficult to obtain samples with complete sapwood, or with the heartwood/sapwood boundary. Access to such elements of the timber is often obstructed by the roof covering.

The Laboratory would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who assisted with the sampling of the timbers. In particular thanks are due to the Dean and Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, the Clerk of Works, and to the Vergers' Office, whose staff assisted with access to the roof. The Laboratory would also like to thank Mr Christopher Guy, the Cathedral Archaeologist, who made a detailed study of the roof, produced and provided the drawings and

photograph used in this report, and who assisted with the descriptive introduction to the site given above.

The roofs

For the purposes of this programme of analysis the Laboratory was asked to sample three areas of roofing; the north and south aisles of the Lady Chapel, and the south aisle of the Choir.

Structurally, the roofs of all three areas are very similar. Each is formed in a lean-to fashion against the main walls of the Lady Chapel or the Choir. The roofs of the Lady Chapel aisles consists of principal rafter frames with tiebeams fixed at their inner ends into the wall of the chapel, and wall posts, There are four principal rafter frames in the north aisle, and two in the south. The principal rafters carry double purlins, which in turn carry slightly smaller common rafters. The north aisle is thus divided up into five bays of varying width, the south aisle into three bays of equal width. At various intervals within these roofs are to be found paired struts, a lower one running from the foot of the wall posts where it meets the tiebeam to the lower purlin, and an upper one from about half way up the wall posts to the upper purlin. An illustration of a typical frame from the Choir south aisle roof is given in Figure 3.

The Choir south aisle is also constructed of principal rafter frames, in this case six, again with tiebeams fixed into the wall, and wall posts. These frames, which divide the roof up into seven equal bays carry triple purlins, the common rafters here being noticeably smaller than the principals.

The timbers in all three roof areas appear to be of mixed age. Judging from the evidence of empty mortices, redundant tennons, and peg holes, it is believed that many of the beams are reused. Such timbers appear to be poorly carpentered and are now well worn and eroded, giving the impression of being of some antiquity.

On the other hand there are timbers which show no signs of reuse, are well carpentered, and squarely cut. Such timbers show surface evidence of sawing, possibly with a mechanical circular blade. These timbers are very sound and show no evidence of being degraded.

The roofs also contain modern softwood timbers which are known to date to the repairs of the AD 1960s, or believed to belong to other minor earlier twentieth-century repairs of indeterminate date. No formal record of these works was ever made. Drawings of these roofs, showing the possible phasing interpretation are given in Figures 4a-c.

At the east end of the Choir south aisle roof is found an unusual bracing structure, laid horizontally on the floor of the roof void (the upper side of the aisle ceiling). This is formed almost as a roof truss, with principal rafters, a tiebeam, king post and struts. It appears to hold the east gable end wall plate in place. Its date is completely unknown though a comparison with other timbers in the roof suggests it might be of eighteenth century date. A photograph of this structure is given in Figure 5.

The Choir also contains a small number of "random" individual timbers, inserted as blocks or

beams in the walls, with no apparent structural significance. In some cases these timbers appear to have had a previous use, judging by the evidence of redundant mortices etc. Some of these timbers appear to have been pulled out of their sockets in the wall and are *ex situ*, that is, they have been moved and are no longer in their original positions.

Thus, on the basis of this physical appearance of the timbers, on the documentary evidence, and upon the basis of previous tree-ring analysis, it is believed that two or three, and possibly more, phases of oak timber might be present. It is believed that the reused timbers might date from the thirteenth century, while the later timber is probably of eighteenth or nineteenth century date. It is believed that there may be other timbers of different dates.

Sampling

After discussion with Chris Guy on the possible phasing of the timbers, and in conjunction with the brief provided by English Heritage, a total of 50 core samples was obtained. Each sample was given the code WOR-C (for Worcester Cathedral). Given that the last sample from previous programmes of work was numbered WOR-C143, the samples obtained for this analysis run from WOR-C144 to C193.

An attempt was made to obtain approximately equal numbers of samples from each of the three roofs, with samples within each roof spread between what appeared to be reused timbers and those that were believed to be later. Of course, such a selection is based on the subjective examination of the timbers and in the past this has not always been correct. Some timbers which were originally thought to be later on the basis of their appearance subsequently turn out not to be and vice-versa. In particular the timbers of the Lady Chapel south aisle were less easy to categorise than those of the other roofs. Samples were also obtained from some of the random timbers in the Choir, and from the horizontal brace structure here.

This sampling information given above is summarised below:

	Number of	
Sample area	samples	Sample numbers
Lady Chapel north aisle - later timbers	6	WOR-C144 – 149
Lady Chapel north aisle - reused timbers	9	WOR-C150-158
Lady Chapel south aisle all timbers	17	WOR-C159 - 175
Choir south aisle - reused timbers	7	WOR-C176 - 182
Choir south aisle - later timbers	6	WOR-C183 - 188
Choir south aisle - horizontal brace	5	WOR-C189 - 193

The positions of the timbers cored were recorded at the time of sampling on the timber survey plans produced and provided by Christopher Guy, Figures 4a - c. It should be pointed out that not all the timbers in the roof are illustrated in these drawings, so that in some cases, the horizontal brace structure or the wall plates for example, the position of some individual

timbers is not shown. Details of the samples are given in Table 1. When referring to frames, bays, and timbers, this report follows the numbering convention used in the drawings provided.

<u>Analysis</u>

Each sample was prepared by sanding and polishing, and the growth-ring widths of all 50 were measured; the data of these measurements are given at the end of the report. For the purposes of analysis, the 50 samples obtained in this programme of work, WOR-C144 – C193, were compared with each other by the Litton/Zainodin grouping procedure (see appendix) in conjunction with all other samples of at least 54 rings obtained during previous campaigns, samples WOR-C01 – C143.

At a minimum *t*-value of 4.5 two larger groups, and two smaller groups, which included crossmatching samples from the most recently acquired material, could be formed, these newly formed groups replacing those of any previous analysis. The largest of these groups contains a total of 79 samples, 56 samples obtained previously plus 23 newly acquired. All 79 samples were combined at their indicated relative off-set positions to form site chronology WORCSQ01, with a combined overall length 289 rings. Site chronology WORCSQ01 was compared with a large number of reference chronologies for oak indicating a series of very high *t*-value cross-matches when the date of its first ring is AD 1484 and the date of its last ring is AD 1772. Evidence for this dating is given in the *t*-values of Table 2.

The next major group comprises a total of 40 samples, 34 obtained previously plus six samples newly acquired. These 40 samples were combined at their indicated relative off-set positions to form site chronology WORCSQ02, with a combined overall length 229 rings. Site chronology WORCSQ02 was also compared to a large number of reference chronologies for oak indicating a series of satisfactory *t*-value cross-matches when the date of its first ring is AD 1057 and the date of its last ring is AD 1285. Evidence for this dating is given in the *t*-values of Table 3.

The third group comprises eight samples, four from the previous work and four newly obtained. These eight samples were combined at their indicated relative off-set positions to form site chronology WORCSQ03, with a combined overall length 139 rings. Site chronology WORCSQ03 was also compared to a large number of reference chronologies for oak indicating a series of satisfactory *t*-value cross-matches when the date of its first ring is AD 1286 and the date of its last ring is AD 1424. Evidence for this dating is given in the *t*-values of Table 4.

A fourth and final group, consisting of only two new samples, could also be formed, WORCSQ04, of combined overall length 90 rings. Although compared to a large number of reference chronologies, there was no cross-matching and site chronology WORCSQ04 remains undated.

The relative positions of only the 35 newly acquired cross-matching samples of each of the four groups (any previously obtained cross-matching samples being omitted) are shown in bar diagrams Figures 6, 7, 8, and 9. In these bar diagrams the samples are shown in simple last

measured ring position, but are colour coded to show the area from which samples have been taken, blue for the Lady Chapel, and red for the Choir.

In addition to the main groups of samples, other small groups which included previously and newly obtained samples were also indicated. However, there was usually only one new sample in each group. An attempt was made to date these groups by comparison with the reference chronologies, but no consistent satisfactory cross-matching was indicated. These groups were not made into site chronologies and are thus not illustrated, the newly obtained samples being now treated as singletons.

Each of the four new site sequences thus created, WORCSQ01 – C04, was then compared with all the remaining newly acquired but ungrouped samples, and the samples which had cross-matched with the previously acquired material but were still undated. There was, however, no further satisfactory cross-matching. All the remaining newly acquired samples were then compared individually with the full range of reference chronologies. This process indicated satisfactory cross-matching and dating for only one further sample, WOR-C169, dated as spanning AD 1682 – AD 1754. Evidence for this dating is given in the *t*-values of Table 5.

Brief details of these four site chronologies thus created are sumarised below, showing the number of new samples obtained, and the combined number of rings and date span of only these newly acquired samples.

Site chronology	Sample area (new samples only)	Number of new samples	Number of rings	Date span (new samples)
WORCSQ01	Lady Chapel, north/south aisles (including horizontal brace)	23	289	AD 1484 – 1772
WORCSQ02	Lady Chapel, north aisle	6	191	AD 1095 – 1285
WORCSQ03	Lady Chapel, south aisle Choir, south aisle	4	131	AD 1294 – 1424
WORCSQ04	Lady Chapel, south aisle	2	90	undated
WOR-C169	Lady Chapel, south aisle	1	73	AD 1682 – 1754

Interpretation

The Lady Chapel - north aisle

Five of the dated samples from the north aisle of the Lady Chapel, WOR-C144, C145, C146, C151, and C153, retain complete sapwood, that is, they have the last growth-ring produced by the tree before it was felled. On all five such samples the last measured complete sapwood

ring date is the same, AD 1772. This is thus the felling date of the trees represented. The relative position of the heartwood/sapwood boundary on a sixth sample from this area of the roof, WOR-C149, would strongly suggest that this represents a tree felled at this time too.

The north aisle, however, also contains timbers which were felled centuries earlier, an illustration of the relative position and dates of each group of samples from within this roof being shown in Figure 10. Three samples, WOR-C150, C154, and C156 have heartwood/sapwood boundary dates of AD 1218, AD 1204, and AD 1211 respectively. The average heartwood/sapwood boundary date of these three is AD 1211. Using a 95% confidence limit for the amount of sapwood on mature oaks in this part of England of 15 - 50 rings would give the timbers represented by these three samples an estimated felling date in the range AD 1226 - 61.

It should be stressed, however, that it is not certain that the trees represented by these three samples were felled at exactly the same time. The spread of the relative position of the heartwood/sapwood boundary on each, ranging from AD 1204 to AD 1218, is perhaps a little wider than might be expected on timbers with an identical felling date. Whilst all three timbers were certainly felled in the early to mid-thirteenth centuries, it is possible that they were felled at slightly different times. It is possible, for example, that the timber represented by sample WOR-C154 was felled as early as AD 1219 whilst that represented by sample WOR-C150 was felled as late as AD 1268.

This possibility is emphasised by the fact that another timber from the north aisle of the Lady Chapel, though early, was almost certainly felled later than the three timbers discussed above. This later timber is represented by sample WOR-C152. This sample has a last measured ring date of AD 1285. It does not, though, have a heartwood/sapwood boundary, and thus its felling date cannot be estimated. It is unlikely, however, to have been felled before AD 1300, some 32 years or so at least after the latest possible felling of any of the above mentioned timbers.

Two other apparently early timbers, represented by samples WOR-C155 and C158, are also without a heartwood/sapwood boundary and their felling dates cannot be reliably estimated. It is unlikely that the timbers they represent were felled before AD 1188 and AD 1211 respectively.

The Lady Chapel - south aisle

The south aisle of the Lady Chapel also contains timbers with a variety of felling dates. The latest felling is represented by sample WOR-C169. This has a heartwood/sapwood boundary date of AD 1751. Using a 95% confidence limit for the amount of sapwood on mature oaks in this part of England of 15 - 50 rings would give the timber represented by this sample an estimated felling date in the range AD 1766 to AD 1801. It is perhaps most likely that this timber has a felling date very similar, if not identical, to that of the latest timbers of the north aisle, that is, AD 1772.

Other, apparently reused, timbers from the south aisle are earlier. Probably the earliest dated timbers are represented by samples WOR-C160 and C163 These have almost identical

heartwood/sapwood boundary dates, AD 1398 and AD 1399, and probably represent a single phase of felling. Using the same sapwood estimates as above would give the timbers represented an estimated felling date in the range AD 1413 - 48.

The felling dates of the timbers represented by samples WOR-C162 and WOR-C166 on the other hand cannot be reliably estimated because neither of them have a heartwood/sapwood boundary. It is unlikely, however, that they were felled earlier than AD 1593 and AD 1611 respectively.

The last two dated timbers from the south aisle of the Lady Chapel are represented by samples WOR-C168 and C171. These have similar heartwood/sapwood boundary dates, AD 1605 and AD 1609 respectively, and again probably represent timbers of a single phase of felling. Using the usual sapwood estimate for this region would give the timbers represented an estimated felling date in the range AD 1622 - 57.

Choir, south aisle

Like the north and south aisles of the Lady Chapel the south aisle of the Choir has timbers of different felling dates, the relationship of these again being shown in Figure 10. The earliest material found in this analysis is that represented by sample WOR-C177. This sample has a heartwood/sapwood boundary date of AD 1406, and retains 18 sapwood rings. Given that its last measured ring date is AD 1424, this would give an estimated felling date in the range AD 1425 – 56, using a 95% confidence limit for the amount of sapwood on mature oaks in this part of England of 15 - 50 rings

It is likely that the timbers represented by samples WOR-C179 and WOR-C180 are of a single phase of felling, such an interpretation being based on the fact that the relative position of the heartwood/sapwood boundary on each sample is very close to each other, varying by only one year. The average heartwood/sapwood boundary date of these two is AD 1610. Using a 95% confidence limit for the amount of sapwood on mature oaks in this part of England is 15 - 50 rings again would give the timbers represented by these an estimated felling date in the range AD 1625 - 60.

The latest certain felling is represented by samples WOR-C186 and C188. Both of these samples have complete sapwood, the last ring dates of both being the same at AD 1742. This is thus the felling date of the timbers represented. Other samples in this group, WOR-C181, C182, C184, and C185 have their heartwood/sapwood boundary in relative positions consistent with all these timbers being felled in, or very close to, AD 1742 also.

Less easy to determine is the felling date, or dates, of a number of timbers from the horizontal bracing structure. One of the samples from this structure, WOR-C192, retains complete sapwood, with a last measured ring date of AD 1727, this being the felling date of the timber. This sample, however, has only 13 sapwood rings, less than the 95% confidence limit of 15 - 50 rings used here. It also has the earliest heartwood/sapwood boundary date, AD 1714, of any sample from the bracing structure. If the other samples from the bracing structure were to have been felled in AD 1727 too, they would have to have even fewer sapwood rings. While this is not beyond the bounds of possibility it would be unusual.

The average heartwood/sapwood boundary date of those four samples from the bracing structure without complete sapwood, WOR-C189, C190, C191, and C193, is AD 1718. Using the same sapwood estimate as above would give a felling date range of AD 1733 - 68. It is thus probable that the brace structure uses timber felled some time within this date range as well as a piece felled in AD 1727.

The latest possible material may be represented by the individually dated sample WOR-C169. This has a heartwood sapwood boundary date of AD 1751. Using the same sapwood estimate as above would give the timber represented an estimated felling date in the range AD 1766 to AD 1801. Given that there is no other evidence for work after the early AD 1770s it is more probable that this timber was felled at about this time rather than later.

The felling date of the final dated timber, represented by WOR-C187, cannot be estimated because it does not have the heartwood/sapwood boundary. However, given that its last measured ring date is AD 1387, it is unlikely to have been felled before AD 1402.

Sample area (Lady Chapel)	Sample numbers	Felling date or estimated felling date range
north aisle	C144, C145, C146, C149, C151, C153	AD 1772
south aisle	C169	AD 1766 – AD 1801
south aisle	C168, C171	AD 1622 – 57
south aisle	C166	not before AD 1611
south aisle	C162	not before AD 1593
south aisle	C160, C163	AD 1413 – 48
north aisle	C152	not before AD 1300
north aisle	C150, C154, C156	AD 1226 - 61
north aisle	C158	not before AD 1211
north aisle	C155	not before AD 1188
Sample area (Choir)	Sample numbers	Felling date or estimated felling date range
south aisle	C181, C182, C184, C185, C188	AD 1742
brace structure	C189, C190, C191,	AD 1727
	C192, C193	and AD 1733 – 68
south aisle	C179, C180	AD 1625 – 60
south aisle	C177	AD 1425 – 56
south aisle	C187	not before AD 1402

This preceding interpretation may be summarised below:

Conclusion

Analysis by tree-ring dating has produced three site chronologies, WORCSQ01 - 03, comprising a total of 33 dated samples, with one further sample being dated individually, plus one undated site chronology of two samples, WORCSQ04. This has provided felling dates, or estimated felling date ranges, for timbers from the north and south aisles of the Lady Chapel, and the south aisle of the Choir. As suspected on carpentry and structural ground, tree-ring analysis has shown that these timbers have a wide range of felling dates and, along with a terminal date for works, indicate the extensive reuse of earlier timber. An attempt to show the relationship between the dated timbers found in these roofs is shown in Figure 11.

The latest firmly dated material is that from the north aisle of the Lady Chapel, these timbers being felled in AD 1772. This appears to represent some of the latest repair work at Worcester Cathedral identified by tree-ring dating. It is possible that a small amount of material from the south aisle of the Lady Chapel is of this date too. The dating of the timber in this roof to the AD 1770s, in conjunction with other similarly dated material analysed earlier suggests that a large and extensive programme of roof repairs was undertaken at Worcester throughout the eighteenth century.

Some work had been undertaken on the roof of south aisle of the Choir, using timbers felled prior to that discussed above, in AD 1742. It is possible that the horizontal brace structure was put in place at this time, using one piece that had already been felled, in AD 1727, though it is possible that the brace structure is later and more closely associated with the AD 1770s work to the roof

An earlier phase of felling is represented by small groups of samples, WOR-C179 and C180, from the south aisle of the Choir, and WOR-C162, C166, C168, and C171, from the south aisle of the Lady Chapel. While the felling date of two of these cannot be reliably estimated, the group appears to represent the felling of timbers in the early to mid-seventeenth century.

There is then a further group of timbers, represented by WOR-C177 and C187, from the south aisle of the Choir, and WOR-C160 and C163, from the south aisle of the Lady Chapel. Again, while the felling date of one of these cannot be reliably estimated, the group probably represents the felling of timbers in the early to mid-fifteenth century.

It is not possible to estimate the felling date of the timber represented by sample WOR-C152, except to say that it is unlikely to have been felled before AD 1300.

The earliest phase of felling detected in this analysis is represented by samples WOR-C150, C154, C155, C156, and C158. Again the felling date of all the timbers represented by this group of samples is not certain, but they appear to indicate the cutting of timber in the early to mid thirteenth century. These conclusions may be summarised over page.

Sampling area	Sample numbers	Felling date
Lady Chapel, north aisle	C144, C145, C146, C149, C151, C153	AD 1772
Lady Chapel, south aisle	C169	probably no later than AD 1770s
Choir, south aisle	C181, C182, C184, C185, C188	AD 1742
Choir, brace structure	C189, C190, C191, C192, C193	AD 1727 and AD 1733 – 68
Lady Chapel, south aisle	C162, C166, C168, C171	probably early to mid- seventeenth century
Choir, south aisle	C179, C180	
Lady Chapel, south aisle Choir, south aisle	C160, C163 C177, C187	probably early to mid- fifteenth century
Lady Chapel, north aisle	C152	not before AD 1300
Lady Chapel, north aisle	C150, C154, C156, C158, C155	probably early to mid thirteenth century

The dating of the timbers from the Choir and Lady Chapel aisle roofs is highly consistent with that obtained for the other roofs at Worcester that have been analysed using dendrochronology. For example, the St John Chapel roof and the connecting roof use timbers felled in the early to mid AD 1740s, a date very similar to that of the material used in the Choir south aisle. The St John Chapel roof also contains timber felled in the mid-seventeenth, and early- to mid-fifteenth centuries.

Analysis of timbers from the high roofs at Worcester Cathedral have also produced felling dates in the AD 1720s, the mid-seventeenth century, and the mid- to late- thirteenth century. All such felling dates are echoed in the results obtained in the material from the aisle roofs undertaken here.

Some observations may now be made of this analysis. It is perhaps noticeable from Table 1 that most of the main structure of the Lady Chapel north aisle roof, the principal rafters, tiebeams, purlin, post, is made of the timber felled in AD 1772. Only one late timber is used as a common rafter, most of these being made of earlier timber reused.

On the other hand, on the basis of tree-ring dating, the south aisle of the Lady Chapel appears to have less late material in it than the other roofs. This roof appears to be made up largely of reused material. Such an interpretation appears to be consistent with the timber survey (see Fig 4b).

Turning to the principal timbers of the south aisle of the Choir these are again also made from later timbers, this roof appearing to have only a small amount of reused material in it.

The dating of the timber in the aisle roofs to the AD 1770s, in conjunction with other similarly dated material analysed earlier suggests that a large and extensive programme of roof repairs was undertaken at Worcester throughout the eighteenth century. In these repairs new timber appears to have been felled specifically for the principal structural timbers, with the older material being used for the lesser members.

Ungrouped and undated samples account for 14 of the 50 cores obtained. Half of these 14 undated individual samples have between 54 and 60 rings which is just about a sufficient number for satisfactory analysis. Other ungrouped and undated individuals samples are longer, the longest being WOR-C178 with 77 rings. Some of these undated samples, WOR-C148 for example, might have slight distortions to their rings, a feature which might account for their not cross-matching and dating. None of the other undated samples appear to have any problems which might make dating difficult. Given the extensive reuse of timbers in these roofs it is possible that some of the undated samples represent singletons of diverse date. Singletons are often difficult to date, particularly when they have lower numbers of growth-rings.

Eight of the 14 ungrouped and undated samples come from the south aisle of the Lady Chapel, a roof which contains a lot of reused material with different felling dates. Two other undated samples (WOR-C167 and C175) come from *ex situ* timbers in this roof, and it is likely, given their *t*-value cross-match, that they are from the same tree.

Using this analysis it may be possible to refine the tree-ring dates obtained with further documentary research into the repair or modification of the roofs. This may aid in the identification of the source roof, or roofs, of the reused material. The documentary sources may also provide information about the woodland sources of this timber.

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Sample number	Sample location	Total rings	*Sapwood rings	First measured ring date	Last heartwood ring date	Last measured ring date
	Lady Chapel north aisle - later timbers					
WOR-C144 WOR-C145 WOR-C146 WOR-C147 WOR-C148 WOR-C149	Lower purlin, east gable to P1 Post, P2 Principal rafter, P2 Tiebeam, P3 Upper strut, P4 Post, P4	80 82 100 55 67 64	20C 18C 23C 10 18C 10	AD 1693 AD 1691 AD 1673 AD 1697	AD 1752 AD 1754 AD 1749 AD 1750	AD 1772 AD 1772 AD 1772 AD 1772
	Lady Chapel north aisle - reused timbers					
WOR-C150 WOR-C151 WOR-C152 WOR-C153 WOR-C155 WOR-C156 WOR-C157 WOR-C158	Common rafter no 4 (from east end) Common rafter no 5 Common rafter no 6 Common rafter no 7 Common rafter no 11 Common rafter no 13 Common rafter no 15 Common rafter no 17 Common rafter no 19	110 64 143 54 54 79 64 54 98	h/s 20C no h/s 17C h/s no h/s h/s h/s no h/s	AD 1109 AD 1709 AD 1143 AD 1719 AD 1151 AD 1095 AD 1148 AD 1099	AD 1218 AD 1752 AD 1755 AD 1204 AD 1211	AD 1218 AD 1772 AD 1285 AD 1772 AD 1204 AD 1173 AD 1211 AD 1196

Table 1: Details of samples from the Lady Chapel north and south aisles, and the Choir south aisle, Worcester Cathedral

Tab	le 1	;	continued

Sample number	Sample location	Total rings	*Sapwood rings	First measured ring date	Last heartwood ring date	Last measured ring date
	Lady Chapel south aisle - reused timbers					
WOR-C159	Tiebeam, P1	67	h/s	an an an an an an	and the field all take for	140 00 00 pp 104 04
WOR-C160	Principal rafter, P1	84	h/s	AD 1315	AD 1398	AD 1398
WOR-C161	Wall plate, P1 – P2	67	h/s	ANT 201 SA 104 104 104	ngang dalah malah kalam hang hann	(a) (a) (a) (a) (a)
WOR-C162	Lower purlin, P1 – P2	95	no h/s	AD 1484	Statution and Para and the	AD 1578
WOR-C163	Principal rafter, P2	106	h/s	AD 1294	AD 1399	AD 1399
WOR-C164	Lower purlin, P2 to east gable wall	55	h/s	مالة كاية غم وت من والا	Jage Salah mini bagi Jage Salah	and the two cast off and
WOR-C165	Common rafter no 7	72	23	And Gel. (MY 44) 144 144	with later with this later with	700 97 400 east and
WOR-C166	Lower purlin, P1 to west gable wall	75	no h/s	AD 1522	ang apag pina nine apar apar	AD 1596
WOR-C167	Ex-situ horizontal wall timber	90	h/s			
WOR-C168	Common rafter no 6	54	15	AD 1567	AD 1605	AD 1620
WOR-C169	Strut at rafter 6	73	3	AD 1682	AD 1751	AD 1754
WOR-C170	Common rafter 8	56	15			
WOR-C171	Common rafter 15	73	15	AD 1552	AD 1609	AD 1624
WOR-C172	Common rafter 16	54	h/s	3535 AD 4545 AD		
WOR-C173	Common rafter 18	57	20C	i den mei anjage ang me		and the second second
WOR-C174	Ex situ timber	64	12C	que économie des sus sins	nin antige sin the last	The set of an an
WOR-C175	Ex situ timber	60	no h/s		mage giber gans spine state state	tige and the second

Table 1: continued

Sample number	Sample location	Total rings	*Sapwood rings	First measured ring date	Last heartwood ring date	Last measured ring date
	Choir south aisle - reused timbers					
WOR-C176	Tiebeam, P4	54	13			Sair all, dia gao pap an
WOR-C177	Tiebeam, P5	68	18	AD 1357	AD 1406	AD 1424
WOR-C178	Common rafter 8	77	h/s	and the life just up and	પ્રાણ સીવે તેમ મન્દ્ર હેવા હેવ	148 TH het die ged an
WOR-C179	Common rafter 6	78	12	AD 1546	AD 1611	AD 1623
WOR-C180	Lower purlin, P1 – P2	93	20	AD 1538	AD 1610	AD 1630
WOR-C181	Tiebeam, P1	69	18	AD 1671	AD 1721	AD 1739
WOR-C182	Tiebeam, P3	63	13	AD 1677	AD 1726	AD 1739
	Choir south aisle - later timbers					
WOR-C183	Wall post, P4	60	11		-ad 100 170 271 500 500	100 cm /cr .cq .qq .cc
WOR-C184	Principal rafter, P4	55	15	AD 1685	AD 1724	AD 1739
WOR-C185	Principal rafter, P5	54	12	AD 1686	AD 1727	AD 1739
WOR-C186	Wall post, P6	54	12C	and and and and set one.	ويت تلكي الله عنه دوب ويت	and the first first form that
WOR-C187	Strut, wall post - purlin, P1	84	no h/s	AD 1304	Max 400 (HDL 300 and new	AD 1387
WOR-C188	Principal rafter, P3	62	16C	AD 1681	AD 1726	AD 1742

Table 1: continued

Sample number	Sample location	Total rings	*Sapwood rings	First measured ring date	Last heartwood ring date	Last measured ring date
	Choir south aisle - horizontal brace structure at east end					
WOR-C189	North strut	54	h/s	AD 1663	AD 1716	AD 1716
WOR-C190	North brace	57	6	AD 1666	AD 1716	AD 1722
WOR-C191	King post	69	h/s	AD 1653	AD 1721	AD 1721
WOR-C192	South brace	98	13C	AD 1630	AD 1714	AD 1727
WOR-C193	South strut	55	h/s	AD 1665	AD 1719	AD 1719

*h/s = the heartwood/sapwood boundary is the last ring on the sample C = complete sapwood on sample, last measured ring date is felling date of the timber

Table 2: Results of the cross-matching of site chronology WORCSQ01 and relevant reference chronologies
when first ring date is AD 1484 and last ring date is AD 1772

Reference chronology	Span of chronology	<i>t</i> -value	
East Midlands	AD 882 - 1981	13.6	(Laxton and Litton 1988)
England	AD 401-1981	11.3	(Baillie and Pilcher 1982 unpubl)
Quenby Hall	AD 1575 – 1724	10.6	(Howard et al 1993)
St Hugh's Choir, Lincoln Cathedral	AD 1575 – 1724	10.5	(Laxton and Litton 1988)
Bolsover Castle, Derby (Riding house)	AD 1494 – 1744	10.2	(Howard et al forthcoming)
England, London	AD 413-1728	9.6	(Tyers 1999 unpubl)
26 Westgate Street, Gloucester	AD 1399 – 1622	9.6	(Howard <i>et al</i> 1998)
Wales and West Midlands	AD 1341 – 1636	9.0	(Siebenlist-Kerner 1978)

Table 3: Results of the cross-matching of site chronology WORCSQ02 and relevant reference chronologies when first ring date is AD 1057 and last ring date is AD 1285

Reference chronology	Span of chronology	<i>t</i> -value	
Salisbury Cathedral, Wilts	AD 1155 – 1228	7.1	(Howard et al 1991)
Angel Choir, Lincoln Cathedral	AD 912 – 1248	6.9	(Howard <i>et al</i> 1985)
East Midlands	AD 882 – 1981	6.2	(Laxton and Litton 1988)
Brecon Cathedral, Powys	AD 996 – 1227	6.2	(Howard et al 1994)
England	AD 401 – 1981	6.0	(Baillie and Pilcher 1982 unpubl)
England, London	AD 413-1728	5.9	(Tyers 1999 unpubl)
Southern England	AD 1083 – 1589	5.8	(Bridge 1988)

Table 4: Results of the cross-matching of site chronology WORCSQ03 and relevant reference chronologies when first ring date is AD 1294 and last ring date is AD 1424

Reference chronology	Span of chronology	<i>t</i> -value	
The Post Office, Oxhill Warwick	AD 1322 - 1447	8.5	(Alcock <i>et al</i> 1989)
Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwicks	AD 1319-1462	8.5	(Alcock et al 1991)
East Midlands	AD 882-1981	8.3	(Laxton and Litton 1988)
Mercers Hall, Gloucester	AD 1289 – 1541	8.1	(Howard <i>et al</i> 1997)
Sinai Park, Burton on Trent, Staffs	AD 1227 – 1750	7.3	(Tyers 1997)
Southern England	AD 1083 - 1589	7.0	(Bridge 1988)
England	AD 401-1981	6.9	(Baillie and Pilcher 1982 unpubl)
England, London	AD 413-1728	6.9	(Tyers 1999 unpubl)

Table 5: Results of the cross-matching of sample WOR-C169 and relevant reference chronologies when first ring date is AD 1682 and last ring date is AD 1754

Reference chronology	Span of chronology	<i>t</i> -value	
Catholme, Staffs	AD 1649 - 1750	7.2	 (Howard et al 1992 unpubl) (Howard et al 2000) (Laxton and Litton 1988) (Arnold et al forthcoming) (Howard et al forthcoming)
Stoneleigh Abbey, Warwicks	AD 1646 - 1813	6.2	
East Midlands	AD 882 - 1981	5.8	
Grimston Bell-frame, Grimstone, Leics	AD 1674 - 1754	5.0	
Bolsover Castle, Derby (Riding house)	AD 1494 - 1744	4.8	

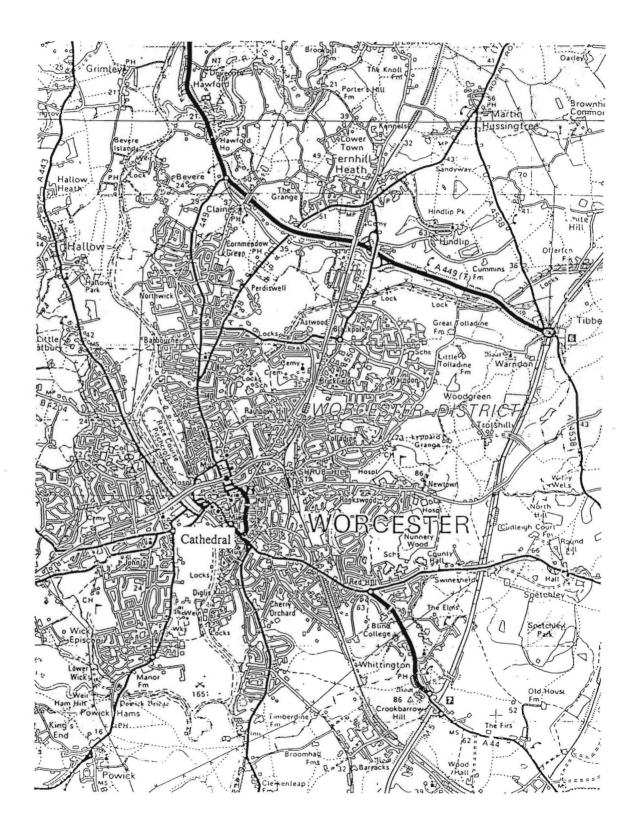
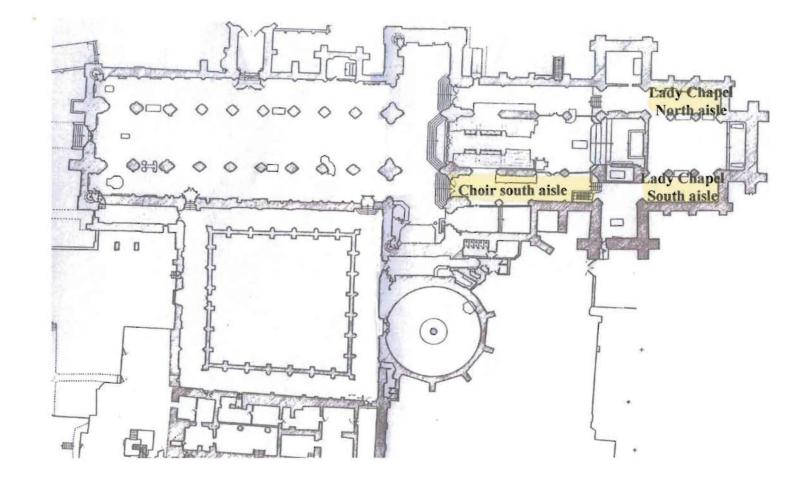


Figure 1: Map to show general location of Worcester Cathedral

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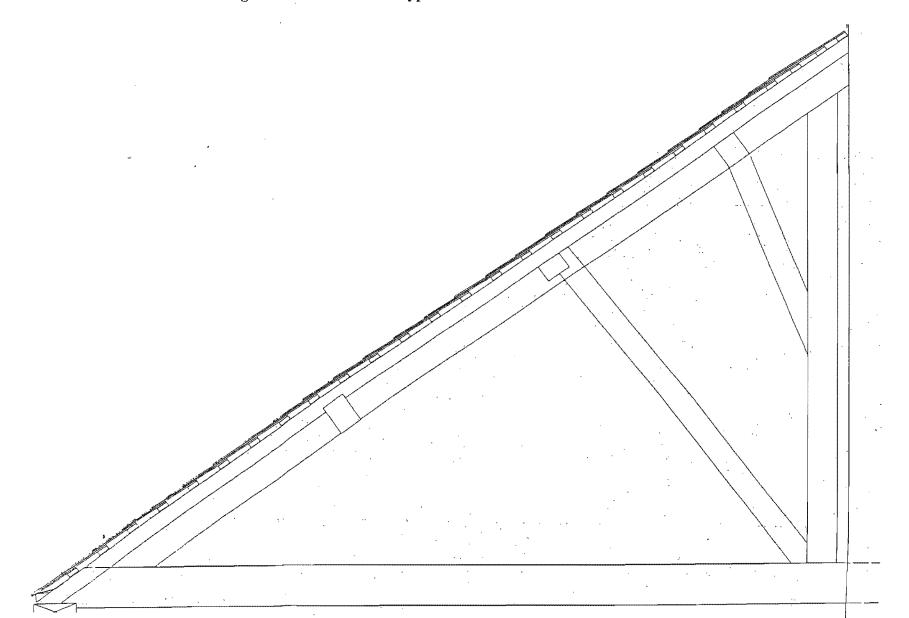


Figure 3: Illustration of a typical truss from the Choir south aisle roof

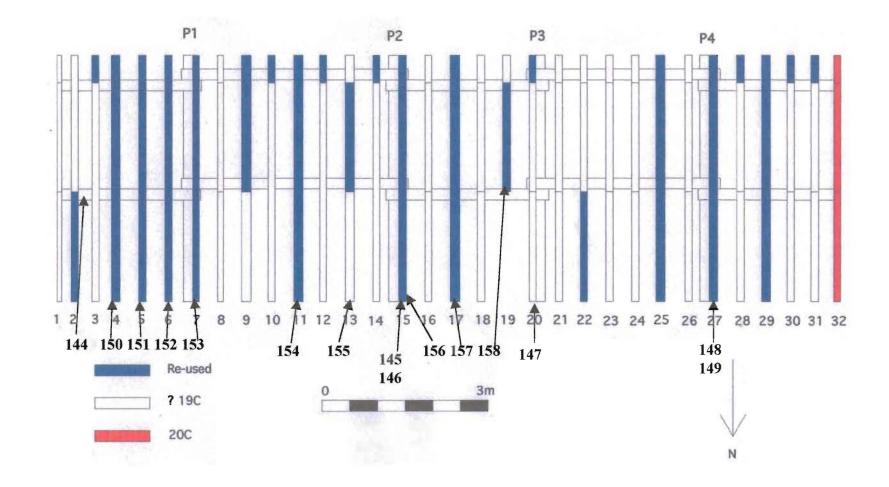


Figure 4a: Long-section of Lady Chapel north aisle roof to show probable phasing of timbers and location of timbers sampled (viewed from the north looking south)

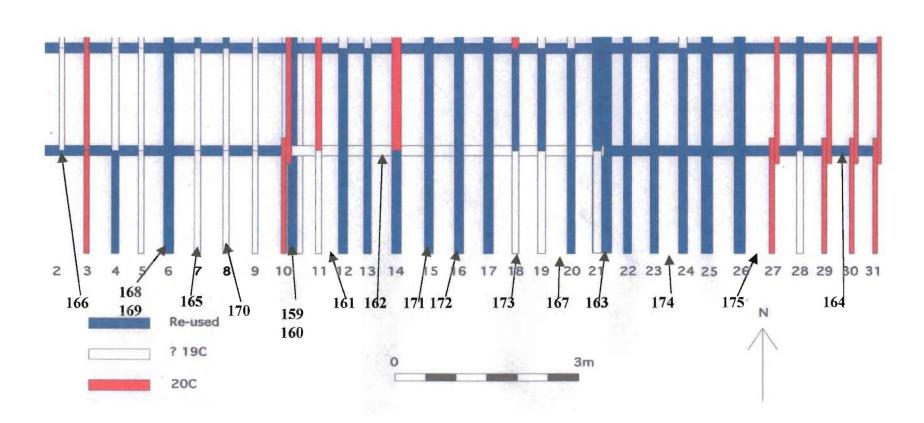


Figure 4b:Long-section of the Lady Chapel south aisle roof to show possible phasing of timbers and position of timbers sampled (viewed from the south looking north)

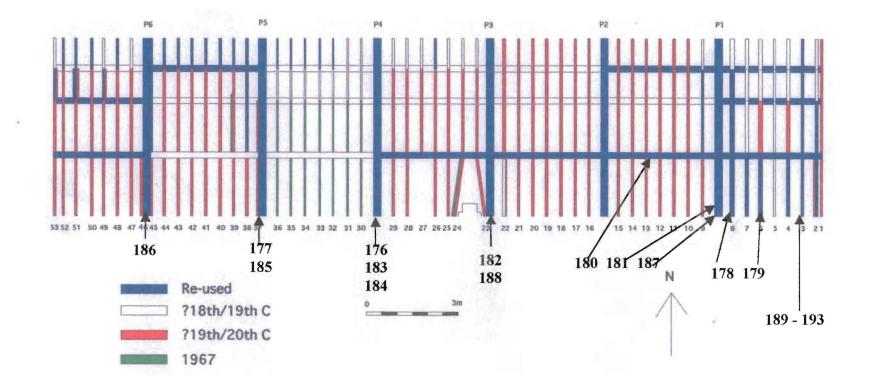


Figure 4c: Long-section of the Choir south aisle roof to show probable phasing of timbers and location of timbers sampled (viewed from the south looking north)





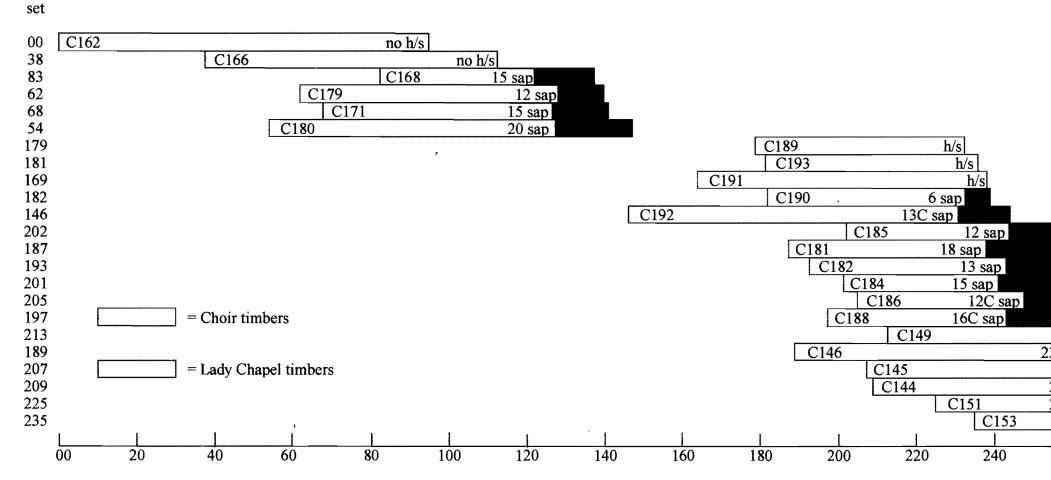
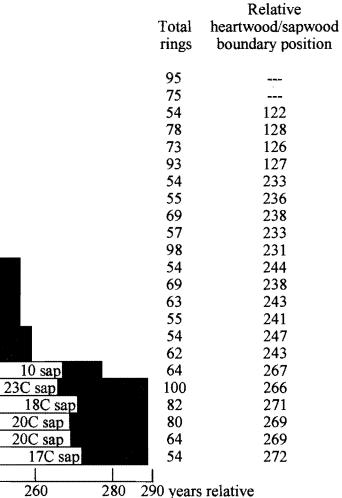


Figure 6: Bar diagram of cross-matching samples (WOR-C144 – 193) in site chronology WORCSQ01, in last measured ring position

white bars = heartwood rings, shaded area = sapwood rings h/s = heartwood/sapwood boundary is last ring on sample

Off-

C = complete sapwood retained on sample, the last measured ring date is the felling date of the timber



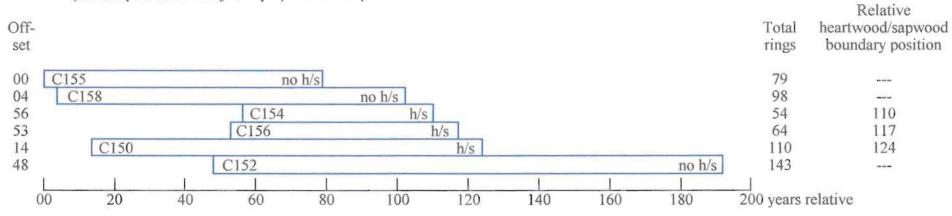


Figure 7: Bar diagram of cross-matching samples (WOR-C144 – 193) in site chronology WORCSQ02, in last measured ring position (all samples from Lady Chapel, north aisle)

white bars = heartwood rings h/s = heartwood/sapwood boundary is last ring on sample

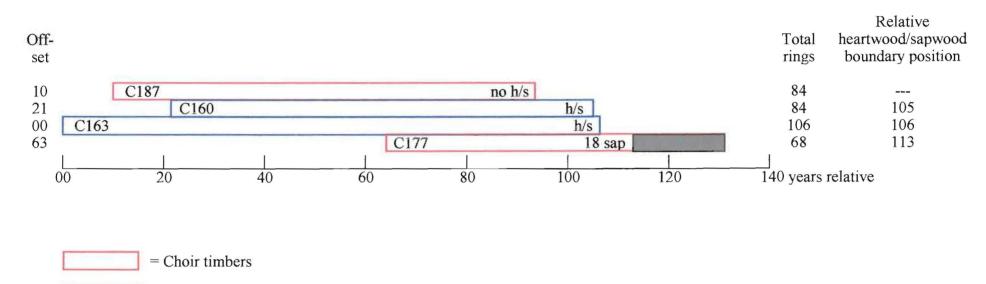


Figure 8: Bar diagram of cross-matching samples (WOR-C144 - 193) in site chronology WORCSQ03, in last measured ring order

= Lady Chapel timbers

white bars = heartwood rings, shaded area = sapwood rings h/s = heartwood/sapwood boundary is last ring on sample

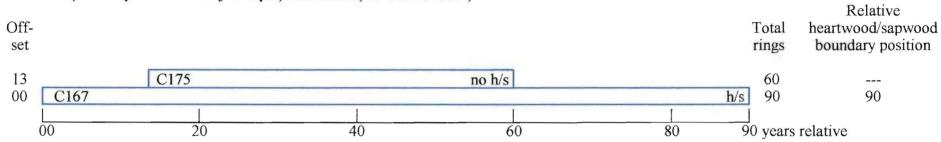


Figure 9: Bar diagram of cross-matching samples (WOR-C144 – 193) in site chronology WORCSQ04, in last measured ring position (all samples from Lady Chapel, north aisle, ex-situ timbers)

white bars = heartwood rings h/s = heartwood/sapwood boundary is last ring on sample

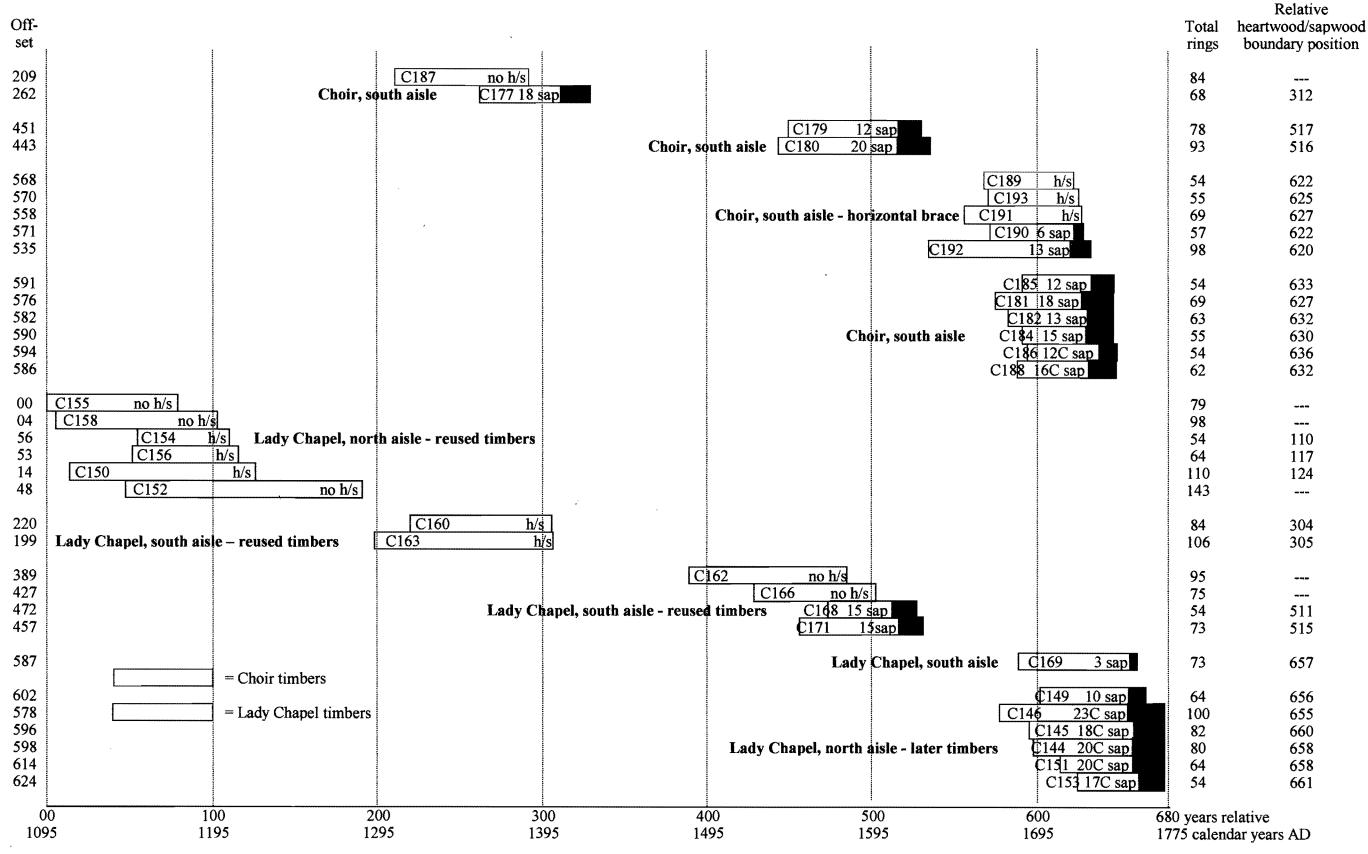


Figure 10: Bar diagram of all dated samples (WOR-C144 – 193) split into Choir and Lady Chapel roof groups in last measured ring position

white bars = heartwood rings, shaded area = sapwood rings. h/s = heartwood/sapwood boundary is last ring on sample C = complete sapwood retained on sample, the last measured ring date is the felling date of the timber

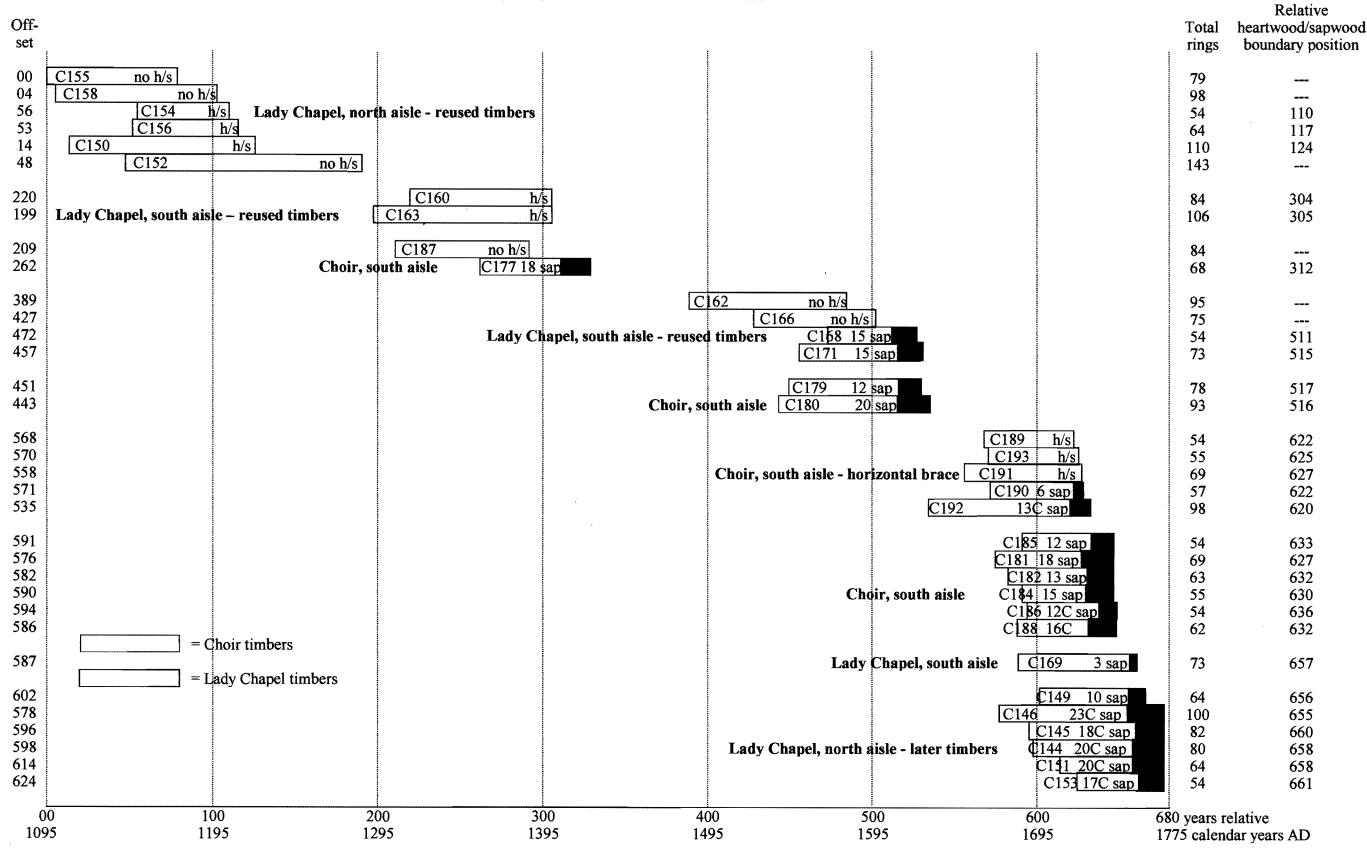
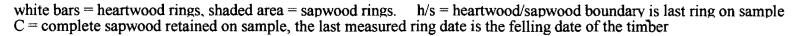


Figure 11: Bar diagram of all dated samples (WOR-C144 – 193) sorted by sampling area in last measured ring position



* 2

Data of measured samples - measurements in 0.01 mm units

WORC144A 80

88 78 112 106 79 75 80 99 96 91 118 102 93 115

WORC158B 95

165 119 84 149 147 142 80 74 134 181 230 133 170 110 62 134 128 127 73 95

241 254 195 199 250 183 232 179 251 220 235 182 216 182

WORC191B 69

197 98 154 212 271 228 212 204 215 234 280 286 253 260 286 310 296 285 208 264 269 254 223 197 319 327 300 296 257 375 271 231 162 153 183 321 335 389 417 267 347 263 320 394 300 349 253 264 301 252 339 319 188 280 302 267 299 213 237 299 296 192 268 255 250 200 203 246 248

WORC192A 98

75 104 130 120 73 103 94 90 162 123 128 80 55 86 76 74 87 52 77 57 77 39 60 37 59 75 48 77 90 95 101 88 74 58 66 60 39 57 66 35 27 108 80 149 108 104 93 104 135 112 122 119 147 111 55 72 127 101 121 145 110 175 100 132 118 91 80 96 110 105 96 81 79 129 162 122 167 174 207 214 144 145 222 211 142 155 169 155 170 181 168 231 161 125 190 155 114 195 WORC192B 98

79 110 126 111 70 94 95 79 149 116 125 78 55 91 76 72 82 45 84 53 77 44 57 28 53 73 51 72 94 91 98 87 71 60 64 69 43 51 70 36 31 112 93 137 105 112 87 104 141 110 121 123 148 120 73 70 141 106 112 150 117 173 102 130 117 86 84 94 116 105 94 80 80 131 152 129 154 176 201 228 123 145 212 221 150 150 166 171 162 181 173 216 161 129 198 146 119 190 WORC193A 55

199 173 345 451 361 359 376 345 370 376 260 215 236 274 308 291 189 204 252 147 128 209 193 181 190 171 215 169 211 150 145 220 233 243 181 207 193 154 176 176 128 150 159 213 212 138 171 158 156 115 156 168 152 113 162 WORC193B 55

245 164 344 443 349 358 373 341 391 387 282 210 241 278 298 303 179 199 252 146 129 209 186 186 197 168 204 173 288 141 148 220 215 247 174 202 199 147 174 154 104 151 148 218 216 145 165 153 151 114 170 156 153 105 174