spanning the main space from one pier to the other. The restorers presumably decided not to rebuild this arch because it would have obscured the traceried windows of the fourteenth-century clerestory. Lower down, however, they pressed their restoration as far as it could possibly go, in the form of the incomplete arch with which this essay began. There was only one bay of Goldwell's work in which it was possible to indicate the form of the Norman arcade, and that was the easternmost on the north side, the one which is set back behind the line of the Norman wall. Having established the correct springing point from the capitals surviving in the aisle, the restorers went so far as to turn the arch until it impinged on the moulded profile of Goldwell's fifteenth-century arch.

As it stands today the sanctuary is remarkable as an illustration of the singular importance which the nineteenth-century restorers attached to the remains of the Norman church. If a Norman feature was there they would uncover it and if it was lost they would rebuild it, even if this meant destroying later medieval masonry. Such a self-confident attitude to architectural remains would raise a number of objections today, when as much as possible of the pre-modern fabric would be conserved. Yet in a longer perspective one can argue that the nineteenth-century churchmen had as great a right as Bishop Eborard and Bishop Goldwell to make alterations of their choosing to the Cathedral in their care.

July 1984

1. *Primum Registrum,* ed. H.W. Saunders, Norfolk Record Society, XI, 1939, folios 1-3 and 8-9; Bartholomew Cotton, *Historia Anglicana,* ed. H.R. Luard, Rolls Series, London, 1859, pp. 53-4, 60 and 67.
2. *Primum Registrum,* f.9.
3. C.A.R. Radford, 'The Bishop's throne in Norwich Cathedral', *Archaeological Journal,*CXVI (1959), p.118.
4. J. Britton, *The History and Antiquities of the See and Cathedral Church of Norwich,* (London, 1836), p.64.
5. S. Pierce, ed., *John Adey Repton: Norwich Cathedral,* Society of Antiquaries (Farnborough, 1965), p.8.
6. *Annual Report of the Friends of Norwich Cathedral,*XIII (1959), facing page 5, and A.B. Whittingham, 'Norwich Cathedral Throne', *Archaeological Journal,* CXXXVI (1979), p.60.

THREE THIRTEENTH-CENTURY SEAL MATRICES WITH INTAGLIO STONES IN THE CASTLE MUSEUM, NORWICH.
by Martin Henig and T.A. Heslop

The re-use of Roman intaglios as an element in contemporary seals was widespread in the Middle Ages. In part this was because they were well adapted to their original purpose; in part because their new owners could assign to them an amuletic character as *objets trouvées*.[1] To the student of ancient glyptics such seals, and the sealings of wax impressed from them and attached to charters, are a valuable source of evidence although, as far as we know, only one attempt has been made to collect and publish gems in 'medieval settings' on a systematic basis.[2]

There is one example of such re-use in the Castle Museum, Norwich. It is a nicolo portraying a satyr walking to the right, of classicising style and datable to the end of the first century A.D. For similar gems re-used in the Middle Ages we may turn to the seal of Elias de Herte at Oxford and to that of a priest of Reims called William of Amiens. The Norwich seal which was found at North Walsham is anonymous, merely being inscribed LECTA TEGE[3] (Plate I, nos. 1-2).

Two other gem-seals in Norwich are of greater interest for they contain stones which were almost certainly engraved by medieval seal-cutters. In one instance indeed this was recognised when it was first published, but it is worth restating here and also pointing out the resemblance to the other medieval gem in the collection. They have in common the obvious feature that they were produced with very broad drills, leaving distinctively coarse, v-shaped cuts on the stone; this is very much in contrast to the finely worked group of thirteenth-century intaglios discussed by Wentzel.[4] Styles of cutting relying on patterning with parallel lines were widespread in the Middle Ages but they were also employed earlier—in Late Antique and Byzantine times. In Germany all such intaglios are designated 'Strobündelgemmen', as human bodies often look like corn-stooks. Descriptive as this term is, it has little use as a chronological indicator although in practice it is often quite easy to distinguish between the Late Roman/Byzantine gems and those of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[5] Both the gems in Norwich are bloodstones of rather inferior quality and it is suggested here that they are examples of more run-of-the-mill work within the range of many medieval seal makers.

The intaglio showing a cockerel which Hudson Turner described as 'a medieval attempt at counterfeiting an ancient gem' carries the surrounding legend on the matrix: AMICE CRISTI IOHANNES (Plate I, nos 3-4). It was found at Thwaite in Suffolk. While no masterpiece, the vigour of execution is pleasing and the subject fills the field well.[6] The other intaglio portrays a hippocamp with a prominent wing, boldly hatched body and curved and star-like tail. It was actually found at Norwich Castle and the legend, SIGILL' GILEBERTI DE HULCOTE, identifies the owner (Plate I, nos. 5-6). The execution is similar to the last, and it may also be compared with the winged hippocamp on an amethyst found at Diss and with a sealing, in the Public Record Office, by Richard de Wendlebury on a document of 1289.[7]

The devices of cockerel and hippocamp are both found on Roman gems, and it is legitimate to suppose that the two stones under discussion were derived from Antique models. However it may be pointed out that other examples of the medieval coarse-grooved style depict contemporary themes such as the knight on horseback and the Agnus Dei. Griffins too are popular, giving the gem-cutter an opportunity to engrave a wing in the same manner portrayed for the cockerel.[8]

A precise idea of the numbers of medieval as against ancient gems used in seals must depend on further study of seal-dies which contain intaglios and sealings which carry their impression. An indication that the production of cut gems was not unusual in the high Middle Ages is provided by a statute of Edward I dating from 1300 which, in a long list of legislation affecting goldsmiths, orders that 'gravers or cutters of stones, and of seals shall give to each their weight of silver and gold, as near as they can, upon their fidelity'. Apart from the suggestive linking of seal and gem-cutters there is another point which should be drawn out of this sentence. If a matrix were solid metal, there would be no difficulty in weighing it to show the customer how much silver, or more

1. *Lecta Tege*, obverse.

3. *Amice Cristi Iohannes*, obverse.

5. Gilbert dc Hulcote, obverse.
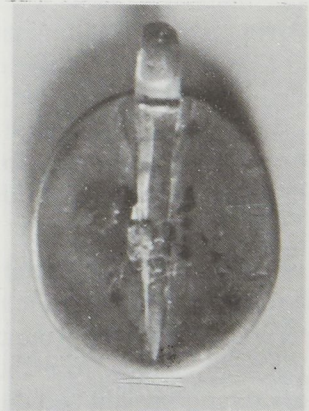
2. *Lecta Tege*, reverse.

4. *Amice Cristi Iohannes*, reverse.

6. Gilbert dc Hulcote, reverse

Plate I

rarely gold, was there. However if a stone were set in it the weight of the object would not indicate the amount of metal in any straightforward way. Thus the purchaser would be dependent on the honesty of the craftsman when paying for the materials.[9]

The date of this statute may well be significant, for the end of Edward I's reign saw what appears on the available evidence to have been a substantial increase in the use of gem seals on surviving charters. The only large collection of English medieval seals to have anything resembling a full catalogue is that at Durham.[10] An examination of it reveals the following statistics: of approximately 2760 English personal seals dating from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries 211 incorporated gems, of which 156 occur on dated charters. Exactly half of these come from the relatively short period from 1290-1350. In part this reflects the survival of more dated charters from this time, but

this is only a contributory factor. 9.25% of dated charters at Durham carry impressions from seal-dies with gems set in them, and this would lead us to expect that in the 1290s, from which there are 92 dated charters, we would have 8 or 9 of them. In fact there are 19, and this decade marks the height of their popularity. From the 112 charters dated between 1300-1310 we would expect 10 gem-seals, actually there are 14. On the Durham evidence the decade either side of 1300 shows an upsurge in the use of gems, and this subsequently declines towards the middle of the fourteenth century.

The other catalogue of personal seals which, although not complete, is large and comprehensive enough to yield results which can claim statistical validity is that from the Public Record Office.[11] Of the 42 gem-seals published so far, 19 occur on charters datable between 1288 and 1342, almost equivalent to the 50% from this period at Durham.

Until there was a significant production of medieval intaglios, their use in seal-dies was, of course, restricted by the availability of ancient material. Since this was relatively rare, it was presumably expensive. This is reflected in the status of the people who used gem-seals; often men of rank and wealth.[12] There is another reason why such seals were costly for, rather than being of brass or lead like most dies, gems were set in silver and occasionally in gold. This facilitated the soldering of two fitted metal units, the legend rim and the back-plate, which between them held the stone firmly in position. On all three Norwich examples it is possible to detect the join between the rim, which has the gem fitted into it from the back, and the plate of silver which retains it. In the case of two of them an elaborate handle was soldered on as well, a refinement seldom found on brass seals where any handle or loop was either cast in one piece with the matrix or cut and filed from the lump of metal.

In the small collection at Norwich we have an interesting cross-section of material. Gilbert de Hulcote's matrix, to judge by the lettering of the legend and the foliate handle, contains a relatively early example of a medieval intaglio from around 1220-30.[13] The other two, with their swelled Lombardic lettering, come from the period when gem-seals were most favoured.[14] The fact that one has an ancient and the other a contemporary cut stone is probably a fair reflection of the number of gems being engraved. For it now seems that about half of those used in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were recent 'imitations' made to satisfy a market eager to own objects of value with the added attraction of a semblance of antiquity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. T. Wright in *Archaeologia*, XXX, 1844, 438-48; Joan Evans and M.S. Serjeantson, *English Medieval Lapidaries*, London 1933. M. Henig, 'Archbishop Hubert Walter's Gems', *Journal of the British Archaeologial Association*, CXXXVI, 1983, 56-61.
2. G. Demay, *Des Pierres Gravées employées dans les sceaux du Moyen Age*, Paris 1877.
3. Norwich Castle Museum, *Catalogue of Antiquities*, Norwich 1909, 95, no. 892; also cf. *Norfolk Archaeology*, III, 1852, 422 and fig. no. 2; C. Roach Smith, *Collectanea Antiqua*, iv, 1857, 78 and

pl. xx no. 3; M. Henig, *A corpus of Roman engraved gemstones from British sites,* 2nd edn., BAR. 8, 1978, 285 no. M.12.

Comparanda: ibid., no. M.13 (=M. Henig, 'A Medieval sealing in Exeter College Archives,' *Oxoniensia,* 39, 1974, 98f. pl. viii C.); Demay, *op.cit.* no. 116.

4. H. Wentzel, 'Portraits ''à l'Antique'' on French medieval gems and seals', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes,* XVI, 1953, 342-50.

5. H. Wentzel, 'Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den sammlungen Italiens', *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz,* VII, 1956, 239-78, esp. 241-2, abb. 3, 268-9, abb. 43 and 268, abb. 44 dated to the twelfth century and fairly close in style to our gems. Also see P. Zazoff, *Die Antiken Gemmen-* Handbuch der Archäologie, Munich 1983, 379-80.

6. Norwich Castle Museum, *Catalogue…,* 95, no. 894, cf. *Norfolk Archaeology,* III, 1852, 422, no. 3 and T. Hudson Turner, 'Remarks on personal seals during the Middle Ages', *Archaeological Journal,* 5, 1848, 6-7 (both suggesting a medieval date); Roach Smith, op.cit. 75 and pl. XVIII, 9.

7. Norwich Castle Museum, *Catalogue…,* 95, no. 893. *Norfolk Archaeology,* III, 1852, 422; Roach Smith, *op.cit.,* 74 and pl. XVIII, 4. Henig, *op.cit.,* no. M.33 suggests a medieval date as also for the comparable specimen from Diss, no. M.32 (=P. Nelson, 'Some British medieval seal-matrices', *Archaeological Journal,* 93, 1936, 19, no.28).

The seal of Richard of Wendlebury is published in R.H. Ellis, *Catalogue of seals in the Public Record Office. Personal seals vol 1,* London 1978, 39, no. P.470, pl. 13.

8. O.M. Dalton, *Catalogue of the engraved gems of the post classical periods in the British Museum,* London 1915, 131, no. 895 (recognised as medieval, thirteenth century), and the same in A.B. Tonnochy, *Catalogue of British seal-dies in the British Museum,* London 1952, 145, no. 704, also *ibid.* 147, no. 717; Henig, *op.cit.,* 286 no. M.34 (=Roach Smith, *op.cit.,* 74-5 no. 8, pl. XVIII).

Other coarsely cut medieval gems include Roach Smith, *op.cit.,* 74 pl. XX, no. 5 (Angel); also 76, pl. XIX no. 5 (sea-creature); 77, pl. XIX no. 6 (wingless griffin). For the influence of ancient glyptics on medieval art including gems, see J. Baltrusaitis, *Le Moyen Age Fantastique, Antiquities et exotismes dans l'Art Gothique,* Paris 1955, in particular discussing grotesques.

9. *Statutes of the Realm,* I. 1810, 141 'Qe nul mette piere en or si ele ne soit naturele. Qe taillurs de amans et de Seals, q'il rendent a chesquny son poys, dargent et dor, aussi avant come il le poent sauver sur leur leaute'. We are most grateful to Marian Campbell for discussing with us the implications of the legislation of 1300.

10. W. Greenwell and C. Hunter Blair, *Durham seals.* The English personal seals were published in consecutive issues of *Archaeologia Aeliana* from volume VII, 1910, to XI, 1913.

11. See R.H. Ellis, *op. cit.,* note 7 above and now also volume 2 of the same catalogue which appeared in 1981. For some reason less than 2% of the P.R.O. holdings so far catalogued consist of gem-seals as against 7% at Durham.

12. See e.g. R.H. Mortimer, ed., *The Cartulary of Leiston Abbey and Butley Priory Charters,* Suffolk Record Society/Suffolk Charters I, 1974, 48-9. It is as yet unclear why women almost never used gem-seals.

13. Gilbert de Hulcote's biography is unknown, but he probably came from the village of that name near Towcester, Northants. It is worth noting that John de Hulcote was appointed sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk in 1239 'cum castris nostris de Norwico et Oreford', *Close Rolls of the reign of King Henry III, A.D. 1237-42,* 1911, 152. That Gilbert's matrix was found in Norwich Castle suggests he was a relative of John's or in his entourage. A similar seal of the same date is reproduced in *Archaeologia Aeliana,* xv, 1918, plate v. It belonged to Roger de Burton who died in 1239, see Edward Bateson, *A History of Northumberland,* II, 1895, 275 and note 3.

14. For the lettering on English seals see W.H. St. John Hope, 'The seals of the English Bishops', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries,* 2nd series XI, 1887, 271-306 and H.S. Kingsford, 'The epigraphy of Medieval English seals', *Archaeologia,* 79, 1929, 149-178.