

The ChapterHouse(II)

Mr. Jos Hall.

- N.B. 1. Numbers of capitals referred to go from the right of the entrance as you face it from within. Nos. 1-45.
2. This fact sheet starts where No.6 left off.

Three dates:

1540: After Henry VIII's break with Rome.

1536 Smaller Monasteries dissolved.

1539 Greater Monasteries dissolved.

Henry VIII sovereign, absolute monarch and Head of the Church. It was lawful to surrender Church lands voluntarily (?) to the Crown. So in August 1540 the Chapter decided to do this "separately and collectively" and the Canons came into the Chapter House to sign the deed of surrender. But they then carried on as before, including the occupancy of their prebends, and in 1543 a private Act (not in the Rolls) refounded the Chapter with all its property and members intact. Only change - King, not Archbishop. would have right of appointment to prebendaries.

Could this be due to Cranmer? Not only was he a landowner in the area, but at this time he wrote to his sister recommending the Minster School for her son. Funny times, you had to move rather quickly to keep your head on, let alone your hat.

1875. By then, despoiled of its colours and ancient glass, the Chapter House was being prepared by Ewan Christian for the new Cathedral Chapter. A letter of this date from Ewan Christian to Bishop Wordsworth of Lincoln mentions "Chapter House walls covered with deal boarding" (!). No further correspondence survives, unless it is with the Church Commissioners, who paid for the work.

1288. Correspondence of Archbishop John Romanes implies building of Chapter House already in progress. Four Masons at work.

Foliage carving: foliage as main subjects start c.1260 at Rheims. Next in Naumburg, then in Southwell. Masons often had wanderjahre (sabbaticals) when they went off with sketchbooks. Naturalist foliage lasted only a short time. Southwell represents its peak.

- a) 16 varieties of leaves, including passage and vestibule.
30 maple 26 oak, 19 hawthorn, 18 vine, 12 ivy and others (some disputed by botanists).
- b) 10 green men:
No.43 at bottom of canopy
Nos. 40/41. Nos. 16/17
Nos. 34/35. Nos. 15/16
No.31 immediately over capital - a fertility
symbol mask? Nos.6/7- hops coming out of left of mouth, strawberry
leaves from right, may be a ref. to James 3 11-12
Nos. 27/28.
Nos 17/18
- c) 4Masons and 4 Bishops.
Master Mason the one at No.4,
Bishops may be John Romaine, Henry of
Newark. Thomas Corbridge and - if
work started in 1286, Wm. Widdowson.

Symbolism of carvings

Hawthorn (May) - the change from spring to summer, protection against lightning.

Oak - strength, durability, antiquity. A sacred tree.

Ivy and buttercup, used in Mayday rites, kept evil from animals and their milk. Hung in byres and round cows' necks.

Rose - used in heraldry, stood for nobility. A rose capital at No.9 under master Mason's head.

The-badge of Edward I, King at this time and of his mother.

Maple and bryony - magic and medicine.

Beasts - basilisk had the body of a dragon but with feathers, not scales, and head and feet of a cock. Dangerous, as if it saw you before you saw it you would die (and vice versa). Protection - a crystal ball. Shown on the right of entrance arch and perhaps at Nos. 26 and 30,

Left of entrance arch a dragon.

Nos. 31/32 canopy - Dolphins? in Greek mythos they carried the souls of the dead to Elysium.

N.B. identification difficult, as no regard to scale.

Vaulting - Look up! Tiercerous (connecting; ribs) possibly copies from Lincoln. The only Chapter House in England with a stone vault and no central pillar.

York, twice as large, has wooden roof.

Central boss anticipates 14th century style - return to stylized foliage,

Probably done by a younger man, not one of the four masons.

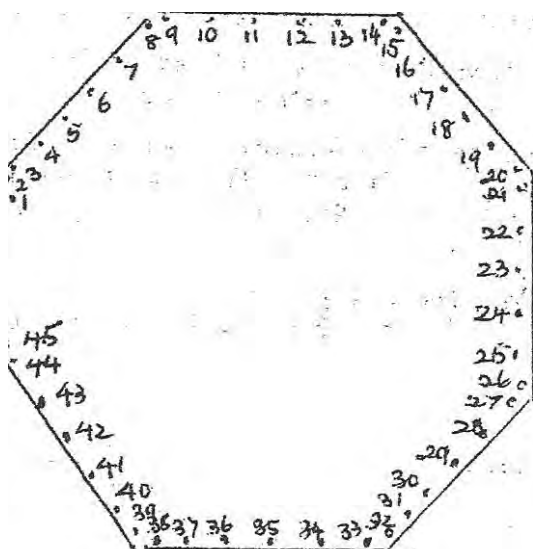
Individual leaf carvings

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Doorway- the Master Mason's work. Sets the standard. .

CAPITALS.

1. Ivy--a clumsy carving.
2. Can't be certainly identified.
3. Vine_ - good standard.
4. Buttercup.
5. Nailhead frieze and maple,
<see winged seed at left>
6. Buttercup.
7. Ivy – like No 1
8. Buttercup or potentilla
- 9, Rose - cultivated, not wild.
as has more than five petals.
10. Hop - Master Mason's work?
11. Vine - mason No.2?
12. Oak, with oak gall on leaf.
13. Buttercup.
14. Hop, with nailhead frieze but
different mason from No,5
15. Bryony, with tendrils at base,
16. Maple, crudely carved.
17. Stiff-leaved, as in quire 40-50
years earlier. An old mason's
work?
- 18, Ivy.
- 19, Maple.
- 20, Vine growing across, not up.
Basilisk underneath.
21. Vine



23. Oak
24. Ivy with hare and hounds
25. Hop - rather crude
26. Hop or vine with birds...
cocks? basilisk?
27. Buttercup.
28. Ivy and birds, badly worn
29. Vine or perhaps mulberry.
Fruits very large.
30. Oak with birds.
31. Hawthorn--with many blossom or
perhaps potentilla.
32. Oak. Pigs under.
33. Hawthorn and birds.
34. Hop with strong veins on leaves.
35. Buttercup.
36. Vine or mulberry.
Mason No.2
37. Hop.
- 38 Hawthorn with haws,
39. Maple with smaller leaves.
- 40, Buttercup.
41. Oak
42. Bryony.
43. Hawthorn.
- 44 and 45. -. Buttercup

Attention was also drawn to the very high carvings at the top of the column over 14/16. These include a goatherd with goat eating ivy.