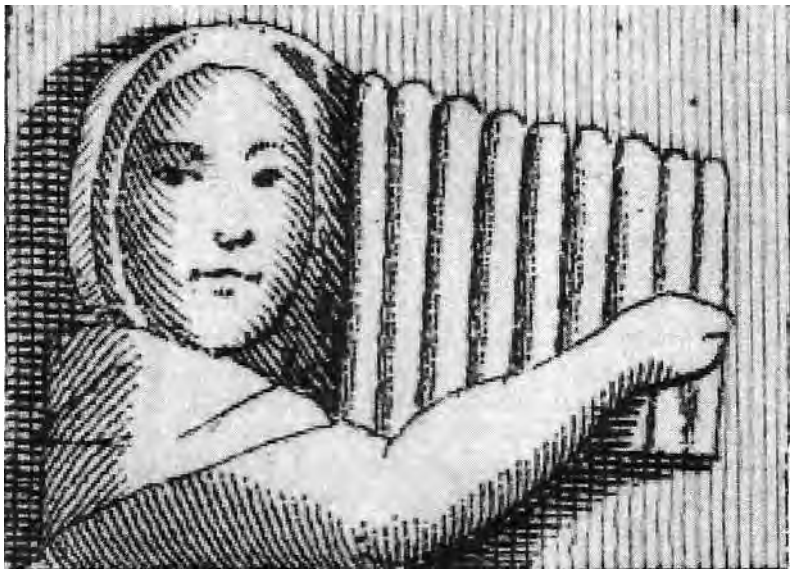
CAKE AND COCKHORSE



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BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Details of the Society's activities and publications will be found inside the back cover.

Cake and Cockhorse

The magazine of the Banbury Historical Society, issued three times a year.

Volume 15 **Number Four** **Autumn/Winter 2001**

It is with enormous sadness that we have to report the death of our co-editor, Joan Bowes, on 17th December 2001. Joan had been in poor health for much of this year, but none of her friends had expected to lose her so soon. We will attempt to write more about her in our next issue. **J.G.** and **B.H.**

There are advantages in living or coming from a famous and historic town. The *Spectator*'s awesomely erudite Christmas Quiz leaves me floundering, but at least I knew immediately the answer to the second question in the 'Mice and men' section: 'Which was the town: "Where I saw a Puritane-one/Hanging of his cat on Monday/For killing of a mouse on Sunday".'

Trying to avoid the challenge of marrying text and illustrations in Nick Allen's piece on Adderbury church carvings, I escapistively turned to Nevil Shute's *The Far Country* (1952). His fictitious Australian town in southern Victoria was 'named in the memory of Banbury near Oxford'. It seems strange that, according to my very out-of-date atlas, there aren't Banburies dotted throughout the world. Perhaps Banburians always liked it too much to emigrate!

Records members have been incredibly patient in receiving no volumes for several years (admittedly as their sub. is only £2.50 above 'Ordinary' members, this is no big rip-off). But we do, at last, have a volume going to press, hopefully before the end of 2001, which will be issued early in the New Year, with another hot on its heels, and two others in prospect.

Finally, a plea. At the A.G.M. at Broughton Castle last summer, we appealed for what used to be called an auditor, though now I think a different terminology is used for societies such as ours. Amazingly, a member present volunteered to undertake this role. Our Hon. Treasurer was not himself present, and in the pressure of the occasion, no one took his name. Please, please, potential 'auditor', would you reveal yourself to our Treasurer, Geoff Griffiths, 39 Waller Drive, Banbury OX16 9NS (01295 263944).

Cover An eighteenth century interpretation of the 'portative organ' on the north frieze of Adderbury Church (see page 139)

Banbury Museum Update

Banbury Museum, under construction, bringing new standards to North Oxfordshire

Banbury's Treasures Uncovered

Construction of the £5 million Banbury Museum will be complete at the end of December 2001, bringing to Cherwell a museum of national standards. Once built, installation of display will take around six months.

The new museum boasts galleries built to a high degree of security with a climate-controlled atmosphere approved to display important national and regional loans.

Banbury Town Council has loaned several artefacts, including the town's maces, the earliest of which is the oldest in Oxfordshire dating from 1628. Many others were destroyed by King Charles I in the 1640s when fighting the Civil War but Banbury's Mace was safely hidden.

St Mary's Church, Banbury has agreed to loan silver cups, one made in 1575 during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. These have been in use for over 400 years.

Rare coins found near Broughton Castle will be loaned by the Ashmolean Museum. Buried since 1640 the coins were probably hidden by a soldier for safe keeping, but he never returned to collect them; perhaps he was killed in battle.

Swords, muskets and armour, dating from the Civil War, are being loaned by the Royal Armouries in Leeds. These objects tell the story of how the war affected Banbury.

The interactive glazed walkway over Tooley's connecting the museum to Castle Quay Shopping Centre

The Council's collection includes a 17th Century cannon found when Castle Quay Shopping Centre was built and the macabre town gibbet where criminals were left after execution.

Future issues of Cherwell Link will keep you up to date with progress at Banbury Museum. Watch this space.

Tourist Information Centre

The new Banbury Tourist Information Centre and Shop (TIC) opens at Castle Quay Shopping Centre in December. It is the first phase of the Banbury Museum project to open and provides information using its new multi-function computer system.

The main attraction is the shop stocking local crafts, toys, history books, Banbury souvenirs and greetings cards.

For details, contact the Banbury Tourist Information Centre (01295) 259855.

Restoration Completed

Tooley's Boatyard, part of Banbury Museum, is famous as the birthplace of the modern canal age and has been in business for over 200 years. Cherwell District Council has painstakingly restored Tooley's, preserving its past and redesigning features to allow public access and facilitate its reopening.

The process began with archaeological investigations by Birmingham University which involved the removal of thousands of artefacts, some dating to early 1800s, along with sections of the historic buildings, after their exact position had been recorded. Each has now been replaced in its original position and a new workshop and cover for the dry dock constructed. The historic buildings have been rebuilt, using corrugated steel transported to the site by - how else - canal.

Tours will be available. Please contact Banbury Tourist Information Centre for details

01295 259855

THE MEDIEVAL GLASS AT ST ETHELDREDA'S, HORLEY

Margaret Condon

The north aisle of St Etheldreda's church, Horley, contains some highly distinctive medieval glass.[1] Donor portraits – that is, stylised pictures of the men and women who paid for making and installing a stained glass window – aren't actually all that uncommon. But what is unusual about Horley's two pictures of medieval clergymen is that they are high up in the pointed window tracery, the region usually reserved for angels, saints, or as mere decoration, rather than being placed at eye level at the bottom of the window where their demand for prayers might more easily be seen. Both pictures are of canons of Lincoln. The reason that they are here, so far from home, is that the living of Horley was appropriated to a prebend (the name given to the 'seat' which provided the canon's income) of the cathedral of Lincoln, so that the prebendary of Sutton-cum-Buckingham took the revenues of the benefice, appointing a vicar or curate to take the church services. Horley itself was, until the mid-fifteenth century, treated as a chapelry of King's Sutton, one of the two name-churches of the prebend; and the vicar in Sutton appointed the curate to take the services in Horley.

Close connection between the Lincoln canons who drew income from their prebendal churches and the churches themselves cannot be assumed. In 1383 and 1385-1389, to take an extreme example, the prebendary was an Italian cardinal, Perinus Tomacelli, who was said to have spent little on the churches annexed to his prebend and can never have been expected to visit, let alone take up residence: indeed

[1] Technical descriptions of the glass and its dating are heavily dependent on the important catalogue by Peter Newton which forms the first British volume of the *Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi*: P.A. Newton, *The county of Oxford A Catalogue of medieval Stained Glass* (Oxford, 1979). Some coloured glass fragments have been moved from the locations there described;, and the inner robe of the portrait of Robert Gilbert, in particular, is now more sympathetically treated and differs from the archive photograph in the records of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments which shows a central portion of plain blue glass.

Henry Rumworth

Tomacelli was elected to the papacy in 1389, taking the name Boniface IX. His successor in the prebend was Henry Beaufort, the future cardinal-bishop of Winchester, admitted at a time when he was still pursuing his studies and before he had achieved even orders as a deacon. Prebends in Lincoln, York and Salisbury were intended to provide sufficient income to support the teenaged Henry in his Oxford studies. Beaufort was, in turn, followed in Sutton-cum-Buckingham by two more Italians. In contrast, the siting of the donor portraits suggests that two others of the fifteenth-century prebendaries were responsible for the glazing of the north aisle and possibly other building work, and that one man completed the work begun by the other, just as he succeeded him directly in the prebend.

Henry Rumworth (prebendary 1412-1420)

The earlier of the two 'portraits', and the finer piece of painting, is the depiction of Henry Rumworth. It shows him kneeling and asking forgiveness for his sins and thus, implicitly, for prayers for his soul. ('[*miserere*] *mei deus*') He has the priest's tonsure, and wears a mantled and fur-lined cloak or 'armilausa', now blue-black, over his red robes. A large white drawstring purse, fringed with silk and gold thread tassels, hangs from his ornate belt. Beneath the figure (but not shown here) the inscription names him and reads '[?magister] henricus [rumw]orthe archidiaconus cantuarie'.[2] The figure is placed against a background of seaweed foliage diapers, picked out of a light matt wash. The painting is in the style of the school of Thomas of Oxford, a highly skilled glazier active in Oxford and Adderbury at the end of the fourteenth century. The glass from the lower part of the window is now lost, although it survived into the early eighteenth century. It included the Virgin in glory holding a sword and a bishop holding a cross. The description is too vague for the subject to be identifiable.

Henry Rumworth was the principal, or head, of St Edmund Hall in Oxford *c.*1395-1402, and later became a fellow and college officer of Queen's. As principal he extended St Edmund's by leasing a newly built hall (now 46 and 47 High Street, Oxford) adjacent to the old buildings, and the siting of his portrait suggests that he brought the same energy and financial acumen to bear on the little church in Horley, which came

[2] The second line of the inscription is visible only when the observer stands some distance away from the window. Richard Rawlinson (d. 1755) recorded an inscription *'Henricus numeravit pec* .', cited Newton, *Stained Glass*, p. 115.

with his 'job' as a canon and prebendary of Lincoln cathedral. Henry Rumworth was instituted to the Lincoln prebend of Sutton-cum-Buckingham on 24 September 1412. As already noted, this meant that tithe and other church revenues went towards the prebendary's income and the support of a curate to take the church services. Rumworth, if he came to Horley at all, will have been but an infrequent visitor, although he held the living from 1412 until his death in 1420. Rumworth owed his tenure of Horley directly to the king, Henry V, who granted him the prebend of Sutton under letters patent sealed on 12 September 1412. The bishop of Lincoln collated him to the prebend only under protest, after strongly worded letters had been received from the king.

Born in Hanbury, in Staffordshire, Henry Rumworth had a distinguished career in royal service, in academic life, and in the church. Under Henry IV he served as a 'king's clerk', a rather loose but honourable title indicating his attachment to the court and the person of the king. As one of the royal chaplains he accompanied Henry V to France in 1415 on what became the victorious Agincourt campaign, returning to France in the royal retinue in 1417. He stood sufficiently high in the king's esteem for Henry V to leave him a valuable breviary, or prayer book, in his will of 1415 – although since Henry Rumworth predeceased the king he never received this legacy. On 5 June 1416 Rumworth was appointed to the important archdeaconry of Canterbury. This office provides the date for the glass (1416x1420) since the inscription below his portrait names him as archdeacon. His canonry, supported by the prebend which included the income from Horley, was a lesser dignity and is therefore not mentioned.

Henry Rumworth drew up his last will at Porchester, Hampshire, whilst waiting to cross to France with the king in 1417: a reminder of the dangers of the channel crossing and the military expedition ahead. In this will he left a number of books to friends – but also gave them oxen, cows and sheep! The will shows a concern for the education of poor children, since he supported several young scholars in his lifetime and directed that the financial support should continue for a year after his death, provided that his estate had sufficient funds to cover the expense. Rumworth's will also tells us that he had a special devotion to St Rumbold, an Anglo-Saxon boy saint, who among other wonders gave a sermon on the Trinity shortly after his baptism and died aged three days. Rumbold was born in (Kings) Sutton and was initially buried there, although the body was later transferred to Brackley and then Buckingham. His cult is local

to this area. Moreover, below Spring Cottage in Kings Sutton lies St Rumbold's Well, which has recently been restored. It is tempting to speculate that Henry Rumworth at least once made a pilgrimage to its healing waters, visiting his prebend's name church of Kings Sutton, and perhaps going thence to its chapelry of Horley.

Robert Gilbert (prebendary 1420-1436)

The man with the over-sized hand, and the later of the two portraits, is Robert Gilbert, who held the living from 1420 to 1436 in succession to Henry Rumworth. The glass is quite badly damaged, the robes have been been restored and the painting is artistically crude by comparison with the Rumworth glass. But it is easy to see the fur lining of his outer robe, expensively trimmed with ermine, and the black hat or *pileus* which indicates that he holds the degree of doctor – in this case, of theology. A strong back light brings out details of the modelling, less well-developed and less subtle than in the earlier window. The rather eccentric inscription reads 'Magister Roberus Gylbard'. The figure is set against a strongly painted seaweed diaper, with the background picked out in dark paint. The side lights are made up with much displaced glass, including quarries of standard design, a white 'Tudor' type rose and a seaweed border similar to that which circles Gilbert's head.

Robert Gilbert was a scholar of some distinction. A fellow of Merton College 1398-1402, he was renting a room at Oriel by 1411. The University included him in the committee which produced a list of 267 errors leading to the condemnation of the works of John Wyclif as heretical in 1411. In 1417, as the University's spokesman to the assembled clergy of the archdiocese of Canterbury, Gilbert made an important speech which passed into legend for its eloquence and elegant latinity. He argued that as a way of increasing the number of students the richest benefices should be reserved for a limited period for graduates, thus providing encouragement and incentive and better career prospects – a programme actually adopted twenty years later. Like Henry Rumworth before him, he was a warden of an Oxford College, this time of Merton, holding office from 1417-1421. His attendance at the church councils of Constance in 1417 and Pavia in 1423, to which he was an official envoy, suggests a diplomat and an orator as well as a scholar. Already a pluralist, which means that he held a number of benefices simultaneously, during the time he held Horley he was presented to a

Robert Gilbert

further succession of prestigious livings and senior cathedral offices, including those of treasurer and then, in 1426, Dean of York.

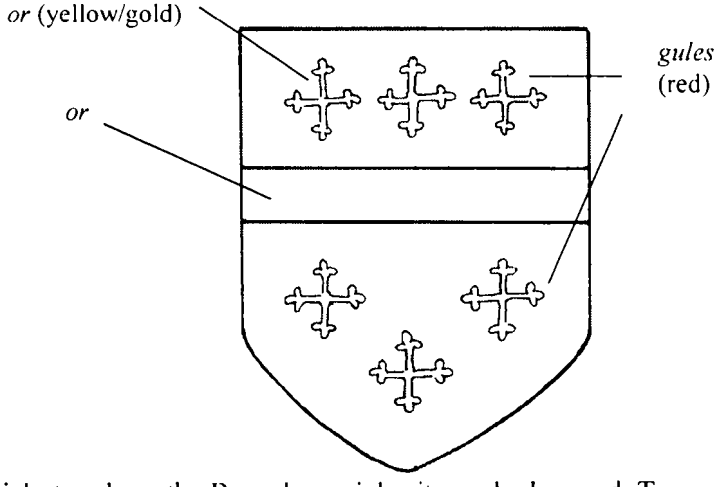
As Dean of the Chapel Royal, he went repeatedly with Henry V to France, and was frequently in the king's company and confidence in times of both peace and war. Although the king's confessor theoretically outranked him (being the king's spiritual advisor), the Dean was the next most important household cleric and far more important in terms of everyday responsibilities and patronage. At table he was served 'as a baron', and one of the perks of his office was the swords offered up in the king's chapel by new knights of the Bath. His principal duties would have been the provision of daily services for the king and his household, including oversight of the children and gentlemen of the chapel who provided the music of which the king was particularly fond; and the care of the valuable plate and books for the chapel. These chapel goods were further augmented by books and plate seized as booty in France. Indeed, Gilbert's last service to the king was to ensure the transfer of the books and plate to Henry's widow, Katherine de Valois, according to the terms of the king's will. He remained as Dean under Henry's baby son, Henry VI, continuing until March 1432 when he and others were displaced in a political putsch orchestrated by Humphrey duke of Gloucester, the king's uncle. The climax of Gilbert's career came in May 1436 when he was promoted to be bishop of London. This ended his connection with Horley, since it meant the resignation of all his many lesser benefices and church offices.

Robert Gilbert died in 1448; and, although we may doubt that he ever even came to the little church, the Horley glass, together with his official register as bishop of London, are his chief surviving memorials.

Other Glass

Other medieval glass in the north aisle of the church includes fragments of figured glass, foliage, roundels and quarries and patterned borders of standard type of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Some pieces are in their original position, as in the Rumworth window, although this, too, has alien elements; others have been re-used to fill the window tracery, most noticeably in the westernmost window where borders, quarries and figured glass, possibly including what is either a crown or the headress of a prophet or saint, have been brought together to form the meaningless jigsaw typical of much nineteenth century restoration; it has at least ensured their preservation. The tracery in the

Gilbert window has a mixture of re-used infill and original glass. Medieval glass in the South aisle Lady Chapel has been concentrated in the east window, above the altar. The tracery includes a border pattern of a stylised bird, identified by Joan Bowes as a peacock. The central light includes patterned borders, painted fragments and foliage designs. More striking are the finely drawn but badly decayed remains of paintings of two large fish, possibly from a St Christopher,[3] and thought to date from the fourteenth century; and a montage consisting of quarries with a standard quatrefoil leaf design surrounding a shield of arms. The medieval fragments of this have been identified as part of a shield of the Beauchamp earls of Warwick, *gules a fess or between six cross-crosslets or*, and the shield has been restored in that form. Although there are no antiquarian notes to support this possible identification, the fifteenth century Rous Roll includes these arms in a slightly different arrangement from the time of Edward Beauchamp (temp. Edward I) onwards; and it receives support from an inquisition of 1458 which found that [the lay manors of] Horley and Hornton were held of the Neville earls of



Warwick, to whom the Beauchamp inheritance had passed. Traces of the same coat may be painted on the north wall of the central tower.

[3] The large painting of St Christopher on the north wall is the best known feature of Horley's church. The glass is said to have come from a window in the chancel. Since the fish appears to be swimming into the neck of a net the calling of Simon Peter may be an alternative subject.

Sources used:

J. P. Bowes, *Walking through the Centuries* (Oxford, 1991).

A. B. Emden, *An Oxford Hall in Medieval Times, being a History of St. Edmund Hall* (Oxford, 1927).

A. B. Emden, *A Biographical Dictionary of the University of Oxford* (3 vols, Oxford, 1957-8).

Victoria County History of the County of Oxford, vol. 9, *Bloxham Hundred*, ed. M. D. Lobel and A. Crossley (Oxford, 1969).

A. R. Myers, *The Household of Edward IV* (Manchester, 1959).

John le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesie Anglicanae 1300-1501, Lincoln Diocese*, ed. H. P. F. King (London, 1962).

P. A. Newton, *The County of Oxford: A Catalogue of Medieval Stained Glass* (Oxford, 1979).

Recent Publications

BANBURY: a photographic history of your town, Brian Little, Black Horse Books for W.H.Smith, 2001, 64pp., £5.99.
No one but Brian Little could have made the captions to this selection of commercial photographs from the Francis Frith Collection, formed over the past 150 years, so informative. History of the pre-photographic centuries is not so reliable.

The Meeting House of the Religious Society of Friends in Banbury, Nick Allen. Society of Friends, Banbury Meeting, 2001. 16pp. n.p. but suggest £2.00 (from Nick Allen, as inside front cover).

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Adderbury, Nick Allen, Adderbury P.C.C., 2001. 12pp. n.p., but suggest £2.00 (from Nick Allen).

Aspects of Helmdon, No. 4, Helmdon Branch W.E.A., 2001. 44pp. £3.50 incl. p&p from Audrey Harwood, Secretary, Helmdon W.E.A., The Old Bakehouse, 44 Church Street, Helmdon, N'hants. NN13 5QJ.
Contents: Jeff's Coaches, Helmdon Stone, Cross Lane Reminiscences, The Old Cross, Manorial History of Helmdon, The Gullivers of Helmdon, History from Falcutt Fields, Roll of Honour of Old Boys of Helmdon School, Great War 1914-18.

Syd Tyrrell's Eydon, by Syd Tyrrell, Eydon Historical Research Group, 2001. 380pp., h'back, £15 (+£2 p&p) from EHRG, Mrs L. Leeson, 12 Moreton Road, Eydon, Daventry, N'hants NN11 3PA.
The previously unpublished sequel to *A Countryman's Tale.*

THE MEDIEVAL STONE CARVINGS OF THE CHURCH of ST. MARY'S, ADDERBURY

Part One

Nicholas J. Allen

Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.

Verses from Psalm 150.

Introduction

Adderbury's parish church of St Mary the Virgin is rightly well known for its large and varied collection of medieval stone carvings. There are, in total, well over three hundred corbel heads, gargoyles, decorative features and many weird creatures, both inside and outside the church. Many of the blocks of stone that carry these carvings do have a practical use; some, of course, are purely decorative.

Frequently the weird and wonderful monsters seen on the north and south aisle corbel-table friezes are what puzzle visitors the most. Often they ask, why were such horrific creatures carved on the exterior walls of God's house; do they serve any purpose or have a meaning? The aim of this paper is to examine the images used to decorate Adderbury's church and to ascertain whence they come and what they mean, if anything; also to find out something about the largely anonymous men who made these wonderfully strange carvings.

There are several churches in North Oxfordshire decorated with medieval carvings using similar images and of a comparable quality and in some cases reflecting the same sense of humour as those at Adderbury, notably the churches at Alkerton, Hanwell and Bloxham, but no other church locally has such a rich variety of carvings as those at Adderbury.

Historical context and overview

The twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were great church building centuries in England. Image carving in stone for both functional and decorative purposes became very much part of the ecclesiastical architectural vocabulary. However as early as 1125, St Bernard, Abbot of the monastery at Clairvaux in Burgundy, was writing to his opposite number the Abbot of Cluny, a Benedictine monastery also in Burgundy,

on the subject of the decorative carvings on his monastery: *'Of what use to the brothers reading piously in the cloisters are these ridiculous monstrosities, these prodigies of deformed beauty, these beautiful deformities? Almighty God! If we are not ashamed of these unclean things, we should at least regret what we have spent on them'* (Blackwood, 1986). The Benedictines, however, took a somewhat different view; they postulated the thesis that as God is beyond description of any kind these grotesque carvings stretched our imaginations to their limits to remind us of that.

Most of the carvings, on and in St Mary's, are datable to within forty-five years; those in the chancel not only can be much more closely dated, but we even know who carved them. The most prominently seen carvings are the gargoyles on the exterior of the chancel and at the top of the west tower. These do, or they did in their day, serve a practical purpose, they were there to drain away the rainwater that would otherwise collect on the chancel roof or around the base of the spire; in effect they were rainspouts. One can well imagine just how careful a member of the medieval congregation would have had to be on a wet Sunday when he or she approached the church from the west, as water would have spurted out in at least six directions. There were four large gargoyles at the top of the tower and two lower down.

Why are gargoyles so called, what does the term mean? The dictionary defines it as a projecting spout', a word stemming from the Latin 'gugulio', meaning throat; the word also means windpipe, possibly a more accurate description of a large piece of stone with a hole cut along its length to take rainwater away. Other words also derive from 'gurgilo' – gurgle, the noise a baby makes; to gargle, to swish medicines around the throat.

Where the carvings fit into the church's history

The corbel was (and still is) an architectural device used in the construction of medieval and later buildings. It is a projecting cantilevered block, of stone or timber, supporting elements over it, such as a parapet or beam. The corbel tables on St Mary's Church, for instance, support, externally, the parapets to both the north and south aisles; they also support, internally, the massive timber beams of the nave and chancel roofs.

In some churches the corbels can be plain baulks of timber or blocks of stone. St Mary's over the years has been fortunate with its various wealthy donors and patrons, such as New College, Oxford, who could

afford to be lavish with such decoration. Almost all the corbels were executed in stone, carved either with human faces or with an imaginative range of strange creatures. There are four timber corbels in the north aisle supporting roof timbers: these are carved with similar images to the stone corbels. The use of the word corbel in an architectural context might thought to be strange as it comes from the Latin corvellus, the diminutive of 'corbus', a raven! Early corbel stones, looked at head-on, were carved rather like a raven.

John Dando Sedding, the eminent Victorian church architect and historian, speaking to a large audience in Adderbury church in August 1885 '*...and one may say that this fine church would, of itself, go far to justify the study of Gothic architecture in this present day ...*' St Mary's, Adderbury, is a splendid exemplar of the story of the three orders that comprise the English Gothic period of architecture: Early English (*c.*1200-1300), Decorated (*c.*1300-1350) and Perpendicular (*c.*1350-1540). Between each order there would have been a transitional period.

By observing stylistic forms and conventions of building and carving peculiar to the Gothic period it is possible to date fairly accurately the three construction phases of the nave, aisles and tower, the church underwent in the fourteenth century. With the chancel, we have specific dates for its building 1408-19. It is therefore quite likely that the decorative carving in the chancel was done somewhere between 1412 and 1418, by which time most of the major construction would probably have been completed. The final year was spent tidying up and relaying paths and generally getting the church ready for reopening.

The sequence of building the present church is as follows: the north and south transepts were built *c.*1250 (during the Early English period) but were of two separate builds, probably quite close together. These were followed in the very early part of the fourteenth century, possibly around 1315 (during the Decorated period), by the alteration of both the nave arcades at the west end of the Church to accommodate the addition of the west tower to the nave.

Once this work was done it was probably considered necessary, either aesthetically or structurally, to widen aisles and raise the roof level to allow in more light, in what must have been, originally, two very narrow aisles. The style of the tracery of the aisle windows, which are of the Decorated period, indicates that the work would have taken place during the first half of the fourteenth century. They are, in fact, Victorian reconstructions by Sir Gilbert Scott based on careful research and

copying Bloxham Church's surviving contemporary tracery. The north and south porches were added at this stage. Stylistic evidence and historic records would suggest that the south aisle was built *c.*1325 to 1330 and the north aisle *c.*1330 to 1345. A lengthy period then elapsed before the final major building campaign took place. This was the construction of the new chancel starting in 1408, initiated and financed by New College, Oxford.

The Rectorial manor (which includes St Mary's) was one of two manors given by William of Wykeham (1324-1404), bishop of Winchester (in whose gift Adderbury was), as initial endowments to his new foundation of 'Seinte Marie College of Wynchestre' in Oxford, which came to be known as New College, Oxford. Wykeham died in 1404, four years before the work began on Adderbury's new chancel. However it is quite clear from the quality of the work, and its cost, that he must have been involved in approving the planning and raising of the funds to do the work. The whole project was conceived on a lavish scale as master mason, Richard of Winchcombe, a man of some reputation, was contracted to do this work.

It would have been most unusual to have someone of Winchcombe's standing to work on a humble country church. Wykeham before being consecrated as bishop of Winchester (1367) was the Royal Surveyor to Edward III, so he was vastly experienced in producing high quality building work. Indeed, much of medieval Windsor Castle is his work. He would, of course, know the best craftsmen in the business; he was also an immensely wealthy prelate.

Winchcombe had, by 1404, built himself a considerable reputation as a master mason. After Adderbury he went on to to build perhaps one of the finest, not only of England's but of Europe's Gothic buildings, the Divinity School at Oxford, now part of the Bodleian Library. Sadly Winchcombe's ego got the better of him for the University pensioned him off as he had become far too expensive for their taste. But his superbly elegant carving still stands as witness to his genius.

It is more than likely that whilst work on the chancel was proceeding that the nave roof was raised. This would allow a clerestory level to be accommodated permitting more light to enter the church. At the same time it would have been necessary to raise the height of transepts to match this new clerestory level. On careful observation of the gable end of the north transept it is possible to see this increase in height, from the colour of the stone used and the different way of coursing the stones.

The carvings

There are three hundred and seventeen stone carvings in or on Adderbury's church visible from the ground. Twenty-six are gargoyles, one hundred and sixteen are corbel heads, one hundred and twenty-one have a purely decorative function (these include the sixty-one carvings that constitute the two corbel-tables). There are twenty-five label stops (that can be seen from the ground, though there may well be more) which are the carvings at the foot of and on either side of the hooded mouldings that surround arched windows.

There are also the two slender Early English pillars with clustered shafts, one to each transept and capped with a set of deeply cut figures. Cutting stone deeply is a mark of the Early English image carver. In the chancel there are eight very small but exquisitely carved decorative figures over the sedilia, with one slightly larger figure to the right. Finally, there are sixteen figures on the reredos: they are Victorian replacements of the originals probably destroyed during the reformation, as were those of New College's chapel. They therefore will not be considered in this paper.

It was the patron of the church who was responsible for the maintenance and repair of the chancel. The vicar and churchwardens had responsibility for the nave and tower. The church's medieval accounts kept at New College record before the rebuilding of the chancel that the college was spending a great deal of money on piecemeal repairs to the chancel and the roof in particular; reading between the lines it is quite possible that the chancel was in the process of falling down through lack of attention.

The story of the rebuild of the chancel is extremely well documented as New College holds in its archives the accounts for those important eleven years in the church's history. The accounts are in Latin, but they have been transcribed (Hobson, 1926). They record the whole building process in minute detail; it is from this record that we get to know the name of the master mason who did this superb work in the chancel and also that of the carpenter, John Gilkes (the latter name is a well known name in the building world in Banbury; there is still a Gilkes in the village).

The masons

At this point it would seem appropriate to consider the masons responsible for building our churches; who were they, how did they

come to be masons? In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there was no profession of architect; the master-mason who was hired to supervise the building would have been his own architect. He would also have had to organize the whole complex business that building a vast new cathedral would have been.

One often reads in historical records that bishop so-and-so built this or that cathedral, or the king built his new palace. What it of course meant is that a master-mason was contracted and briefed as to what was required, given a budget and then left to get on with the details of project, no doubt with the close supervision of the patron.

By about 1150 the building trade seems to have achieved a measure of independence: masons were no longer directly employed by the clergy, they were beginning to organize their own 'lodges'. These lodges comprised the travelling masons rather than more static craftsmen based in towns; they banded together to form guilds. The travelling masons were the more skilled and would go where high quality work was required (Batsford, 1960).

There were three grades of masons; the *'cementarii'* – the cutting masons who carried out the more ambitious work of moulding and carving in good quality stone, often referred to as freestone, hence freemasons. Then came the layers or wallers. Last of all were the rough layers and hard hewers – the men who dressed the large stone blocks, who were responsible for the rougher and plainer types of masonry. Then came the specialist craftsmen, the 'imagers', or carvers of statues and other figures.

There would also be similar levels of skills with the carpenters and glaziers. Many of these men came from artisan families who had a long tradition of working in stone, having first served a lengthy apprenticeship before becoming masons in their own right.

The stone monsters and their sources

Some of the most striking carvings a visitor to St Mary's sees are the north and south aisle corbel-table friezes with their wonderfully imaginative collection of creatures, frightening and sometimes humorous faces and the famous musicians with their instruments. So where did those skilled imagers get their ideas and inspirations from? The figures carved on the south corbel-table are very different in subject and style from those on the north. One of the major sources of ideas for some of the strange animals would have been the medieval Bestiary.

The dictionary defines a Bestiary as a mixture of natural and unnatural animals allegorised for edification. M.R. James' definition in his *'Bestiary', 1928,* 'a moralized Natural History illustrated with various pictures ranking with the Psalter and Apocalpse', is far more explanatory. Medieval Bestiaries were based on the Greek 'Physiologus', the earliest version of which was produced towards the end of the fourth century, in itself based on Pliny's (The Elder AD 23/24-79) last work *Naturalis Historia'* published in AD 77.

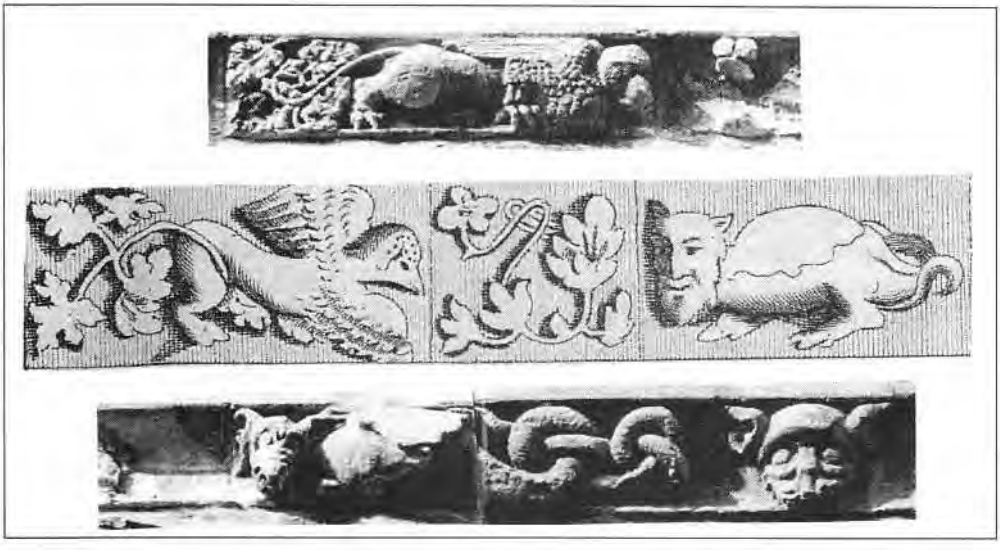
The Bestiary, compiled by monks, was in its time an exceedingly popular picture book illustrating and describing all animals, both real and imagined, known to twelfth century man. For instance, the facsimile of a twelfth century bestiary reproduced in M.R. James' *'Bestiary'*, 1928, shows a griffin and a unicorn, written up as known animals. The Latin text accompanying the illustration of a griffin translates as follows: *'This is called a Griffin, that such an animal exists which is both winged and quadruped ... it has a body of a lion and the face of an eagle. It will tear men to pieces'.*

We can now begin to look at the subjects of images carved on the exterior of the St Mary's church in detail. As mentioned above, many of the animals were copied from a Greek source that was already six hundred years old when the twelfth century monks were compiling their Bestiaries. The first animal carvings to appear on St Mary's are the two gargoyles in the form of bats, placed half way down the north window to the north transept carved *c.*1250.

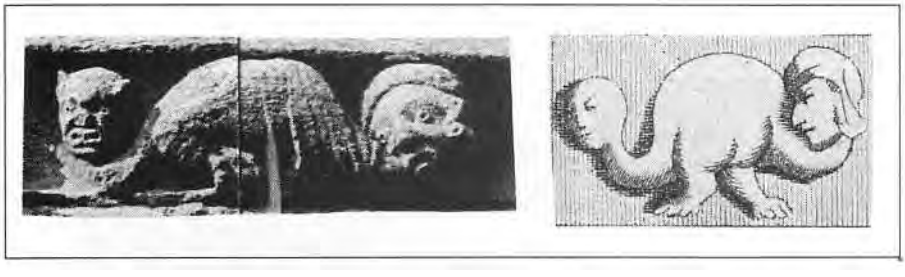
The corbel-table carvings

South aisle frieze

Starting with the decorative carving on the south aisle corbel-table, it has twenty-eight carvings, six of which, to our eyes, could be regarded as weird creatures, five are various types of plants, six are so badly eroded that they are indecipherable, four are probably domestic animals, two are musicians, two are symbols, one of which is the star of David and the other one is very badly eroded; but a careful look will show it to be the letter 'W' (possibly the initial of the carver) and three human heads; one of which looks to be a negroid head.



One of the creatures, over the south-east window, is a griffin in a dramatic pose. Facing the griffin, across the window, is a rather bored looking wyvern, also featured in the Bestiary as 'real' animals. Dragons, wyverns, unicorns, lions and griffins were subjects of medieval ecclesiastical carving long before they came to be used as supporters to coats of arms and even later before they became supporters of royal heraldry.



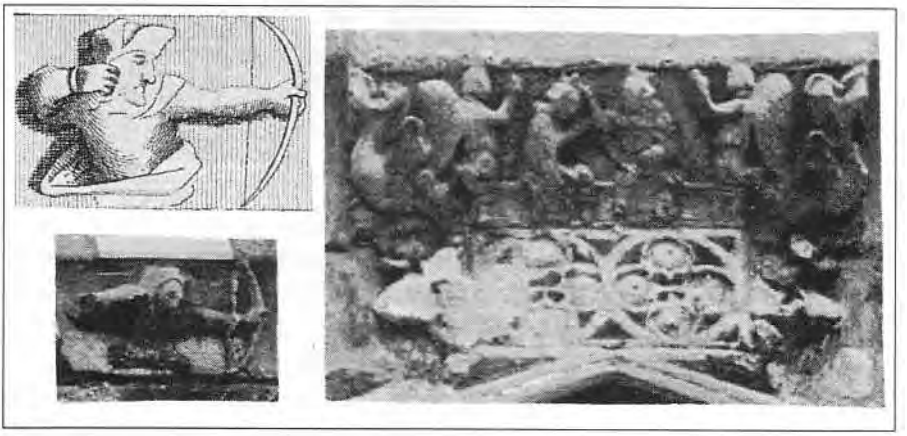
There are, on the south corbel-table, four monsters, two of which have animal bodies with a human head either end. The heads in one case have positively miserable expressions. The body of the creature with the two miserable heads is one that frequently appears in medieval books and plaques, a two-legged dragon-like animal known as an amphisbaena. In this case the head on the right-hand side sits very uncomfortably on its body, almost as an afterthought. The other two-headed creature is quite

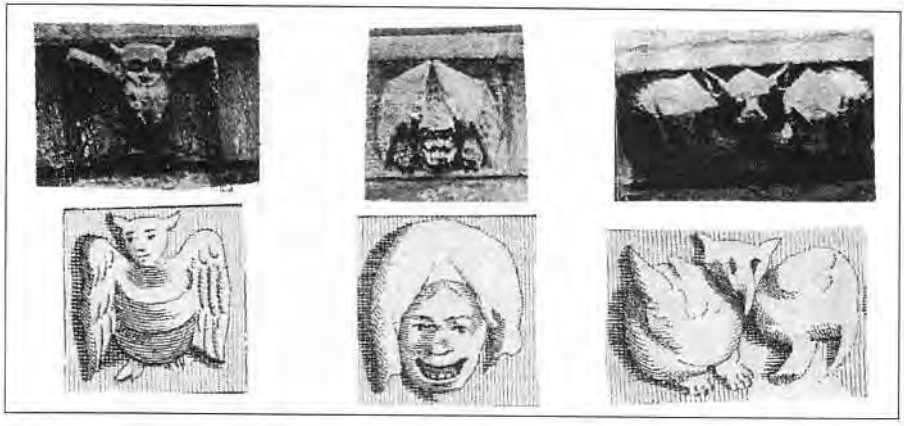
badly eroded so it is difficult to determine quite what it represents. It is just possible to see that one head is probably human and the other dog-like. There are two more creatures with long animal bodies, possibly a lion's, each with only one human head. These heads rather looked as if they might have been someone known to the carver. The seventh creature resembles a rather evil-looking bat.

It would seem likely therefore that some of the creatures depicted on medieval churches would not necessarily have been seen as monsters by medieval man. Also I am sure that on occasions human nature will out and an imager would carve a human face on to one of his creatures; that maybe represented someone he did not much like.

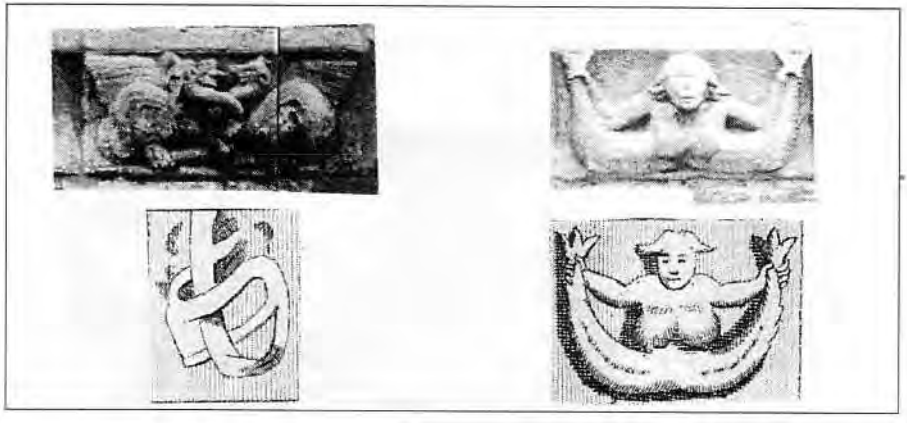
North aisle corbel-table frieze

This was carved some years after the south face was completed. The style of carving and subjects portrayed are completely different. There are thirty-one carvings on this frieze: the famous ten musicians, seven animals with nothing quite as weird as those on the south side. Five are oddities that are difficult to explain, seven could be portrait faces of people, there is an odd man out: a man with a bow and arrow. The *pièce de resistance* of the frieze is the only religious subject out of all the 316 carvings gracing St Mary's; it is the celebration of 'The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary', a central theme of Catholic Marian theology. This beautifully carved group is set over the north-west window. It is one of nature's minor miracles that such a delicate carving should survive as well as it has when it has faced over six hundred and fifty English winters.





The quality of the carving and the sense of humour expressed on the north frieze is superior to that of the south. The animals are largely indigenous and recognisable as such there is an eagle, an owl, a peacock, a fox, a sheep, a bat, and a bat-like animal with very large eyes, ears and a beak. Of the two on the north corbel-table, one has two two-legged, winged dragons thoroughly entwined and snarling at each other, the other also appears to have the bodies of two dragons but with only one head. Both these creatures would seem to far less menacing than those on the south side. There is one extraordinary figure which appears to be a mermaid (they represented vanity and temptation) with two tails, alongside which is a man's head with a very unhappy face set between the legs of a lion (known as a blemyae) in the best traditions of medieval scatalogical carving – very popular with the carvers of misericords.

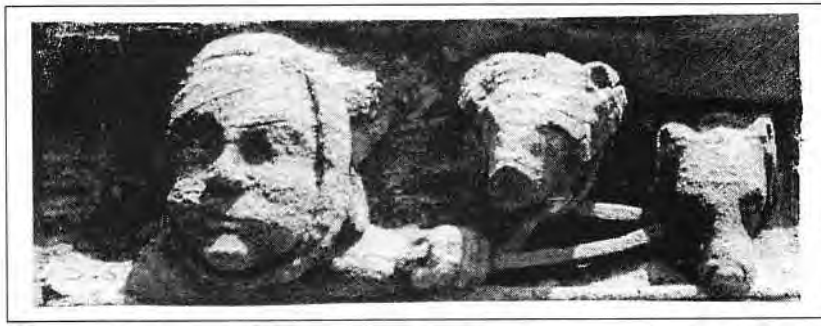


The carvings that interest visitors to Adderbury the most are the twelve medieval musicians. It is most unusual for a village church to have such a fine collection; most other churches in the locality only run to three or four. Canon Francis Galpin, a leading Edwardian authority on medieval carvings and his contemporary Elizabeth Prideaux, who wrote and presented her paper *'The Carvings of Medieval Musical Instruments in Exeter Cathedral Church'* to the Royal Archaeological Institute in the cathedral in May 1914, both favourably compare Adderbury with Exeter's very fine set of twelve carvings.

The Exeter figures, believed to have been carved in 1353, two-thirds full-size figures, are inside the cathedral. They are grouped together on to one large panel, superimposed on the triforium over the north aisle. Each of the figures is surmounted by an ogee canopy decorated with crockets. At some time during the Victorian era someone decided to colour them; they are still so. Intriguingly, the fabric rolls of 1330 (about the time our north frieze was carved) for Exeter Cathedral, record a Thomas of Adderbury at work as a mason (Goodall, 1993). Could he have learnt his skills at Adderbury and taken them to Exeter?

Adderbury's men of stone

Returning to the carvings of the musicians, the two instrumentalists on the south frieze have only been mentioned so far *en passant.* One of the two figures is a hooded man, probably a hunter holding a dog on a lead and blowing a horn (due to erosion it is not easy to see that it is a horn he is holding, but early photographs show quite clearly that it is). In the fourteenth century, when that piece was carved, the bull's horn was used in a dual roll of drinking vessel and hunting horn, referred to as a bugle, the old French word for an Ox. It would only have been a matter of putting a plug in the base to change its role. It was the forerunner of the military bugle.



The other instrument is a pair of hand-bells, played on similar occasions as they are now. This musician is portrayed looking very unhappy with a bald head and jug ears; the clapper in his top bell can be seen quite clearly. That there are only two musicians on the south corbel-table may well reflect the carver's limited knowledge or experience of musical instruments.

It is an entirely different story when it comes to considering the range of instruments and instrumentalists on the north corbel-table. One can clearly see that they are real people, who are holding and fingering their instruments correctly; it is almost as if the carver was an instrumentalist. Also the instruments depict a wide spectrum of medieval music.

Starting from the east end of the corbel-table the first instrument looking very much like an old fashioned bellows camera is a portative organ, used to play sacred music by both the Greeks and Romans. It is being played by what looks like a very real person, with a splendid air of authority. His features are not stylised and his right hand is in the correct

position on the keyboard. His left hand, not seen, would be operating the bellows. Its weight was supported by a strap, partially seen across the right arm. The organ would usually have eight or sixteen pipes. The portative organ represented on the carving must be, perhaps, the earliest of keyboard instruments. Its first recorded appearance is in the second century BC at Alexandria, in Egypt.

Next is the timbrel or tabor (also sometimes referred to as a tambourine) the instrument of dance. It is a member of the drum family, made from a circle of wood with a skin stretched over it and pinned or glued down. It was known to the Romans and possibly the Celts. Careful observation will reveal that the skin is crossed from left to right with a snare or vibrating cord.

Alongside the strange looking beaked creature is a hooded man playing a bagpipe (in the singular). This instrument originally came to Europe via Central Asia with the Celt migrations to the west. The carving shows the musician with his cheeks puffed out. The instrument

used has a windbag usually made of pigskin, a chanter with a pipe which goes into the mouth of the player.

The muscular man who appears to be carrying a block of stone using hooks is actually playing an instrument called a symphony. It consists of a long box with four strings inside it. The strings can be 'stopped' by a hand mechanism outside the box, whilst the other hand turns a handle which activates a small rosined (resined) wheel which sets the strings vibrating. The symphony developed from the twelfth century organistrum. This instrument was well in use into the eighteenth century in the shape of the fair-ground hurdy gurdy. By then it was carried on a pole with a handle on the side, often accompanied by a monkey which collected coins.

The other side of the two twisted dragons is a woman playing a psaltery, a popular accompaniment to the voice, both for sacred music and with minstrels. This is another instrument that first saw the light of day in the part of Asia that is present day India. The sound-box is

roughly triangular with metal strings that are plucked like the Austrian zither. It developed later into the dulcimer, becoming the forerunner of most of today's keyboard instruments, the spinet, virginal and harpsicord.

The harp is of very ancient origins around long before the Christian era. Diodorus (a first century Alexandrian mathematician) wrote of the Celts singing to an instrument resembling the lyre. It came to Britain in the fourth or fifth centuries, used as an accompaniment to the voice. The Adderbury harp has ten strings and the carving of the instrumentalist's right hand shews a particular knowledge of harp playing. The Adderbury harp is placed immediately to the left of the group of figures representing the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

On the right hand side of the Coronation group again there is a musician playing an instrument rather like a violin: this is the rebec, with a pear-shaped sound-box with sound holes and three strings played with

a bow. It can be played as depicted or as the Irish fiddlers do, held at waist level. This is yet another instrument that started life in the East coming to Europe via Greece in the eighth century. It was the forerunner of all future stringed instruments.

The man who looks as if he is blowing a blowpipe comes next. This instrument is very badly eroded. Some authorities consider it to be a recorder and some a trumpet. There is certainly enough space to the right of the instrument to allow for the length of the trumpet. It obviously requires much puffing of cheeks to obtain a noise. If it is a trumpet it would have been one of the military instruments brought back from the Middle East by the Crusaders. If it is a recorder it would represent the earliest of all the instruments shewn on the corbel-table friezes, having been in use in the third century BC.

The musician with his arms crossed with a drumstick in each hand is beating a drum on either side of himself. He is playing a nakars (or kettledrum) from the Arab word 'naqara', a small hand-drum. It is akin to the timbrel but has skins on both sides of the frame. This instrument was used by the Saracens during the Crusades, and brought back by the

knights. Galpin in his book *Old English Instruments of Music* (1912) records that a man named Yanino le Nakerer was listed in 1304, as one of Edward I's minstrels.

The elderly man, or so he seems, is blowing a brass instrument (a part of it is missing) called a buzine; yet another Arab instrument brought back from the Crusades. With careful observation a banner can be seen hanging from the instrument. With even more care, and very good eyesight, one can see a very small crusader cross superimposed on the banner. This cross was the emblem of the twelfth century Crusader Kings of Jerusalem. The buzine was the forerunner of the modern trombone via the courtly fourteenth century sackbut. It would have required some sophisticated and skillful metal working.

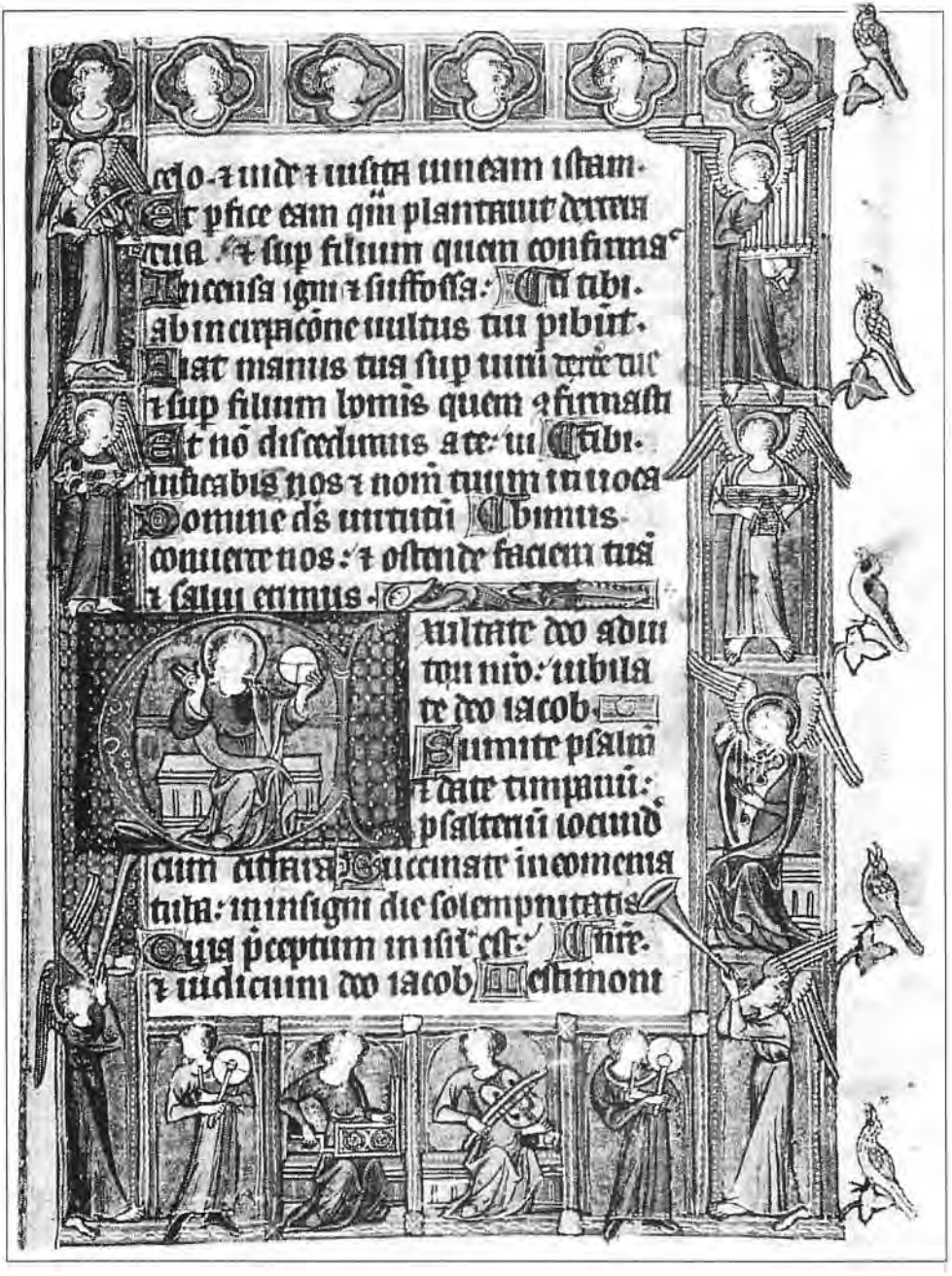
Possible sources of these instruments

The psalter was one of the few medieval books produced by monks that was not only for Church use, but for the laity too. They were popular in their day and sometimes used as pre-school readers. A coloured plate from a psalter produced in the fourteenth century, and contemporary with Adderbury's carvings, has twelve angelic musicians bordering the text, eleven of which are depicted on the north corbel-table frieze.

Note. A bibliography and acknowledgements will appear at the end of the second and concluding part of this paper, in our next issue.

However it is appropriate at once to acknowledge Michael Brownson's photography of the carvings used here; taken originally for my book *Adderbury: A Thousand Years of History.*

Some are juxtaposed with eighteenth century engravings, which reveal the considerable artistic (?) licence taken by the artist or engraver.



Musicians from a psalter copied in England in the mid- fourteenth century
(reproduced by kind permission of Sidney Sussex College Cambridge)

Lecture Reports

Brian Little and Nick Allen

Thursday 13th September 2001.

The Cotswolds in the Wars of the Roses **– Tim Porter (W.E.A.).**

This lecture was based on a substantial collection of slides which showed places and landscapes connected with the turmoils of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Before talking about these, Tim offered some background analysis. His main argument was that despite many brutal skirmishes, the period of the Wars of the Roses was actually a time of growth and prosperity. The desire for peace was always there and so markets on road networks still based on those left by the Romans, such as that at Cirencester, were able to flourish.

It was also an era when certain people became dominant personalities. A good example was Sir John Fortescue, Lord Chief Justice, who was a leading figure in the Court Party.

On a wider front it is perhaps no surprise to discover that most families formed more than one style of allegiance during the Wars. This was pure expediency. After all, battles were bloody even if they were brief. Especially notable was the 1469 Battle of Edgcote (or Danesmoor) in which control of a river crossing was an early objective. Overall conflicts were fought out across hedge and ditch. However, towns did suffer. Before Edgcote supposed allies fell out, when 'the erle of Pembroke putte the Lorde Stafforde out of an Inne [in Banbury], wherein he delighted muche to be, for the loue of a damosell that dwelled in the house...', with dire consequences in the forthcoming battle. Afterwards there were brutal executions in the porch of Banbury church [Beesley, pp.178-86]. Tewkesbury, after the battle there in 1471, was a far bloodier example.

Forty-one members attended this first lecture and left feeling glad that they lived in a different century (despite the horrific events in the U.S.A. two days earlier).

Thursday 11th October 2001.

William Morris and Kelmscott **– Mrs Dorothy Wise**

Dorothy Wise, a guide and steward at Kelmscott Manor, in Oxfordshire but near Lechlade, Glos., the country home of William Morris, gave us an eloquent talk about his family, his life and work in the Arts, Crafts Movement, his marriage and subsequent life at Kelmscott Manor.

Morris (1834-96), a child of wealthy parents, whose father died whilst he was still young, leaving him a considerable fortune, was educated at the newly opened Marlborough College and then on to Exeter College, Oxford, to read theology with the idea of entering the church: his mother's ardent wish. Here he met Edward Burne-Jones, who became a lifelong friend and eventual business partner.

William soon discovered that a career in the church was not what he wanted. During his summer vacations he and his friends (whom he financed) toured all the great early Gothic cathedrals of Europe; this set him to wishing to be an architect. On leaving Oxford, with a third class degree (a pass!) he became articled to that great Victorian architect G.E. Street. He soon became frustrated when he found he was still drawing the same church after nine months: such was Street's pernickitness.

Nevertheless Street's influence on Morris was considerable – it set him on the path he was to take for the rest of his life. Morris also met another lifelomg friend and eventual collaborator at Street's office, Philip Webb. It was to Webb that Morris went when he needed a house on getting married to Jane Burden (a daughter of a stable worker) in April 1859; a match very much disapproved of by his family. The famous Red House, at Bexleyheath near London, was Webb's superb design: setting Webb on his way to private practice.

Rosetti, whom the Morris's met in London, became a firm family friend, only to end up having a lengthy affair with Jane, of which Morris was well aware. Even so, they all moved down to Kelmscott, a remote village on the upper Thames on the Oxfordshire/Gloucesterhire border, having in 1871 taken out a joint tenancy of a beautiful late sixteenth/early seventeenth century Cotswold stone manor house. Having installed Jane and Rosetti at Kelmscott, Morris promptly took off for a lengthy stay in Iceland to study Norse sagas.

Rosetti eventually left Kelmscott in 1874 having had a mental breakdown, never to return. Morris settled down with his wife to a domestic life but was still running his business in London. After his death, his widow Jane purchased the house in 1913, leaving it in 1939 to May, her daughter. May then left it to Oxford University, who found it too expensive to maintain. Under her will, it then passed into the hands of the Society of Antiquaries, who administer it still. It is a beautiful house, superbly kept, in a magical situation beside the Thames and well worth visiting (John Rivers took B.H.S. there in June 1989). Dorothy rounded off her fascinating talk with a photographic walk around the house.

Thursday 8th November 2001.

***The Oxfordshire Lieutenancy* – Hugo Brunner, Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire.**

This was a most informative and highly entertaining talk. Mr Brunner began by saying that most people were aware of the Royal accompaniment role but comparatively few were conscious of the military, legal and governmental and social aspects.

He traced the Lieutenancy back to thirteenth century origins though it was not until the sixteenth century that the present role was recognisable. Then fear of invasion suggested the need of a constant regime within the counties. The Spanish Armada prompted provision of a Lieutenant in every shire. Notable names of the times were Henry Norris and Francis Knowles, both important figures north of the Thames. These men had access to the Royal ear. Norris had

been custodian of Princess Elizabeth at Woodstock whilst Knowles married one of her cousins when she was Queen.

These military governors were responsible for raising levies and preventing the outbreak of riots. To these ends they could appoint supportive deputies.

The dualism of military involvement and county government lasted until the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1871 Gladstone's Army Bill authorised Secretaries of State to be responsible for armed forces within the counties. Further legislation of 1907 set up territorials, a move which was unpopular with Lords Lieutenant. Today Hugo Brunner spends a lot of time with the armed services, especially as Oxfordshire has numerous units.

On the legal and governmental side of the work, involvement in the appointment of magistrates was important from the sixteenth century. When County Councils were set up in 1888, six Lords Lieutenants were Chairmen of such councils.

Voluntary work is now all-important for Mr Brunner. He mirrors locally several activities performed by the Queen, notably conferring awards. On the literary front he has had a major involvment with the Victoria County History.

Looking to the future he is concerned about a possible diminished role for the counties. It may be a case of 'regional government rules O.K.!'

He very much feels the need for more power for local government, especially in relation to encouragement of organisations like scouts.

Amongst the few literary references to the Lieutenancy is one in *The Gondoliers* – 'Small beer were Lords-Lieutenant deemed.' Hugo Brunner's talk was anything but. This was vintage stuff for an appreciative audience which included our President and Lady Saye and Sele, herself a Deputy Lieutenant.

Mary Stanton

We record with great regret the recent death of Miss F.M. Stanton. Mary was for many years the 'unqualified' assistant at Banbury Museum who was the human face that visitors first met. That she was also our Society's 'P.R.' person was to our great advantage. She served on our committee from 1974 to 1991, and as Hon. Treasurer (in those days also acting as membership secretary) from 1981 to 1985. Of lasting value is her index to Rusher's Lists and Directories. But what I remember is her enormously unassuming helpfulness which so epitomises 'amateur' local historians.

J.G.

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Banbury Historical Society was founded in 1957 to encourage interest in the history of the town of Banbury and neighbouring parts of Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire.

The magazine *Cake and Cockhorse* is issued to members three times a year. This includes illustrated articles based on original local historical research, as well as recording the Society's activities. Well over a hundred issues and some three hundred articles have been published. Most back issues are still available and out-of-print issues can if required be photocopied.

Records series:

Wigginton Constables' Books 1691-1836 (vol. 11, with Phillimore).
Banbury Wills and Inventories 1591-1650, 2 parts (vols. 13, 14).
Victorian Banbury, by Barrie Trinder (vol. 19, with Phillimore).
Aynho: A Northamptonshire Village, by Nicholas Cooper (vol. 20).
Banbury Gaol Records, ed. Penelope Renold (vol. 21).
Banbury Baptism and Burial Registers, 1813-1838 (vol. 22).
Oxfordshire and North Berkshire Protestation Returns and Tax Assessments 1641-1642 (vol. 24).
The 'Bawdy Court' of Banbury: The Act Book of the Peculiar Court of Banbury and Cropredy 1625-38, ed. R.K. Gilkes (vol. 26).

Current prices, and availability of other back volumes, from the Hon. Secretary, c/o Banbury Museum.

In preparation:

King's Sutton Churchwardens' Accounts 1636-1700, ed. Paul Hayter.
Banbury Chapbooks, by Dr Leo John de Freitas.
Turnpike Roads to Banbury, by Alan Rosevear.
Selections from the *Diaries of William Cotton Risley, Vicar of Deddington 1836-1848*, ed. G.W. Smedley-Stevenson.

The Society is always interested to receive suggestions of records suitable for publication, backed by offers of help with transcription, editing and indexing.

Meetings are held during the autumn and winter, normally at 7.30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, at the North Oxfordshire College, Broughton Road, Banbury. Talks are given by invited lecturers on general and local historical, archaeological and architectural subjects. Excursions are arranged in the spring and summer, and the A.G.M. is usually held at a local country house.

Membership of the Society is open to all, no proposer being needed. The annual subscription is **£10.00** including any records volumes published, or **£7.50** if these are not required; overseas membership, **£12.00.**

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