ENGLISH CATHEDRALS

Cathedrals are organized in the same sequence as the class sessions and the Great Courses lectures. Material is taken from the internet, primarily from Wikipedia.

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ENGLISH CATHEDRALS AFTER THE REFORMATION

Cathedrals of the Old Foundation
These cathedrals were staffed by secular clergy before the Reformation and retained their medieval statutes at the Reformation.


Cathedrals of the New Foundation
These cathedrals were staffed by monastic congregations before the Reformations and had new constitutions imposed by Henry VIII after the dissolution of monasteries.

Medieval Dioceses
Canterbury, Carlisle, Durham, Ely, Norwich, Rochester, Winchester, Worcester

The prince bishop of Durham also functioned as the secular authority in the County Palatine of Durham until the nineteenth century.

Dioceses Created at the Reformation (whose cathedrals were formerly monastic churches)
Bristol, Chester, Gloucester, Oxford, Peterborough

English Cathedrals customarily include in their daily schedule matins, the eucharist, and evensong. Evensong is usually sung daily; matins is often sung on Sundays and said on other days; the eucharist is sung on Sundays and major feasts and said on other days. Cathedral choirs have traditionally been choirs of men and boys; at present many cathedral choirs include girls as well. Choir schools are customarily attached to cathedrals; the school at Wells dates to 909 A.D. Daily evensong is ordinarily sung in the choir, where the congregation may be seated as well. Smaller services may be held in the choir or one of the chapels. A nave altar is often used for the major eucharist on Sundays and major feast days. The schedule for Wells Cathedral is typical:

Monday to Saturday
7:30 a.m. Matins
8:00 a.m. Holy Communion;
also Tuesday at 12:25 p.m. and Wednesday at 9:30 a.m.
5:15 p.m. Evensong with choir (said on Fridays)

Sundays
8:00 a.m. Holy Communion
9:45 a.m. Cathedral Eucharist with choir
11:30 a.m. Choral Matins with choir
3:00 p.m. Choral Evensong with choir

The canons of the cathedral clergy form the cathedral chapter, whose head is the dean. Other dignitaries generally include the precentor, the treasurer, and the chancellor. Canons are sometimes known as prebendaries, so named because their income came from properties (prebends) assigned to them. Non-residentiary canons, who lived at their prebends, were expected to appoints choral vicars to perform their duties at the cathedral. The cathedral chapter theoretically elects the bishop of the diocese; in actual fact, they are required by law to elect the nominee forwarded by the monarch.

The cathedral grounds are often enclosed, and so the grounds are known as the cathedral close.
Destruction during the Reformation and Commonwealth and Restoration

In the sixteenth-century Reformation several cathedrals were structurally damaged or left incomplete because of the Dissolution of the Monasteries, 1537–1540. The late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries saw repairs to the fabric of many cathedrals and some new building and stained glass as well as many new fittings.

During the period of the Commonwealth, 1649–1660, wholesale iconoclasm led to the destruction of many of the pictorial elements of Christian buildings. Most of England’s medieval stained glass was smashed. The majority of England’s medieval statues were smashed or defaced leaving only a few isolated examples intact. Medieval paintings almost disappeared. Vestments embroidered in the famous style known as Opus Anglicanum were burnt. Those medieval Communion vessels that had escaped the Dissolution were melted down so that only about 50 items of pre-Reformation church plate remain.

The Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660 also brought about some restoration work at cathedrals, such as that at Lichfield by Sir William Wilson, and enrichment with new fittings, new church plate, and many elaborate memorials. The loss of the ancient St. Paul’s Cathedral in the Great Fire of London in 1666 meant that an entirely new cathedral, the present St. Paul’s, was built on its site to a design in the Baroque style by Sir Christopher Wren.

In general, from the time of the Reformation onwards, apart from necessary repairs so that buildings might remain in use, and the internal adornments of successive generations who wished to be commemorated, there was little building work and only piecemeal restoration. This situation lasted for about 250 years, with the fabric of many major cathedrals suffering from neglect. The severity of the problem was demonstrated by the spectacular collapse of the spire of Chichester Cathedral, which suddenly telescoped in on itself in 1861.

By this date medieval architecture was back in fashion. A growing awareness of the value of England’s medieval heritage had begun in the late eighteenth century, with the publication of the journal *Archæologia* (1770) by the London Society of Antiquaries, leading to some work on a number of the cathedrals by the architect James Wyatt. The consciousness accelerated until in the 1840s two academic groups, the Oxford Society and the Cambridge Camden Society, both pronounced that the only suitable style in which to design a church was Gothic. The critic John Ruskin was an ardent advocate of all things medieval and popularized these ideas. The architect Augustus Welby Pugin, who designed mainly for the growing Roman Catholic Church, set himself to recreate not only the structural appearance of medieval churches, but also the richly decorated and colorful interiors that had been almost entirely lost, existing only as a painted screen here and there, a few tiled floors such as those at Winchester and Canterbury, and the intricate painted wooden ceiling of Peterborough Cathedral.

The Victorian era saw the restoration of all of England’s cathedrals and remaining major abbey churches. Some buildings left incomplete were completed at this time and the greater part of existent church furniture, fittings, and stained glass dates from this period. The architects included George Gilbert Scott, John Loughborough Pearson, George Frederick Bodley, Arthur Blomfield, and George Edmund Street.
General Characteristics of English Cathedrals

Plan and Section

Plan of Salisbury Cathedral

Like the majority of medieval cathedrals, those of England are cruciform. While most are of the Latin Cross shape with a single transept, several, including Salisbury, Lincoln, Wells, and Canterbury, have two transepts, which is a distinctly English characteristic. The transepts, unlike those of many French cathedrals, always project strongly. The cathedral, whether of monastic or secular foundation, often has several clearly defined subsidiary buildings, in particular the chapter house and cloister.

With two exceptions, the naves and eastern arms of the cathedrals have single lower aisles on either side with a clerestory that illuminates the central space. At Bristol the aisles are at the same height as the medieval choir like some German cathedrals, and at Chichester there are two aisles on either side of the nave as in some French cathedrals. At a number of the cathedrals where the transepts are large they also have aisles, either on the eastern side as at Peterborough, Durham, Lincoln and Salisbury or both, as at Winchester, Wells, Ely, and York.

Length

The nave and sometimes the eastern arm are often of great length by comparison with the medieval cathedrals of other countries, seven of the twenty-five English cathedrals, Canterbury, Durham, Ely, Lincoln, St. Albans, Winchester, and York, exceeding 150 meters (being between 509 and 554 feet, 155–169 meters), only equaled by the cathedrals of Milan and Florence. Another 9 of the cathedrals, Norwich, Peterborough, Salisbury, Worcester, Gloucester, Wells, Exeter, Chichester, and Lichfield, are between 120–150 meters long (being between 397–481 feet, 121-146.5 meters). By comparison, the largest cathedrals of Northern France, Notre Dame de Paris, Amiens, Rouen, Reims, and Chartres, are all about 135–140 meters in length, as is Cologne in Germany. The longest cathedrals of Spain, including Seville, which has the largest floor area of any medieval church, are about 120 meters. Five English cathedrals — Chester, Hereford, Rochester, Southwell, and Ripon — are 90–115 meters (318–371 feet, 97–113 meters). The last four cathedrals all, for various reasons, either have no medieval nave or only a few remaining bays. At Bristol and Southwark the naves were built in the Victorian era, leaving Carlisle and Oxford, with naves of only two and four bays respectively, as the smallest of England’s ancient cathedrals at 73 meters (239 feet) and 57 meters (187 feet).

Height

By contrast with their tendency towards extreme length, the vaults of English cathedrals are low compared with many of those found in other countries. The highest medieval stone vault in
England is at Westminster Abbey at 102 feet (31 meters), that at York Minster being of the same height but despite its appearance, not actually of stone, but wood. The majority of English cathedrals have vaults ranging in height from 20–26 meters (65–86 feet). These contrast with cathedrals such as Beauvais, Amiens, and Cologne with internal heights of over 42 meters (140 feet).

**Towers**

An important feature of English cathedrals, uncommon elsewhere except in Normandy, is the large and often elaborate square central tower over the crossing. The larger of these towers range from 55 meters (182 feet) at Wells to 82.5 meters (271 feet) at Lincoln. The central tower may exist as a single feature, as at Salisbury, Gloucester, Worcester, Norwich, and Chichester, or in combination with paired towers at the west front, as at York, Lincoln, Canterbury, Durham, and Wells. Among the cathedrals that have three towers, the central tower is usually much the tallest. At Southwell the two western towers are capped by pyramidal spires sheathed in lead.

Tall Gothic central spires remain at Salisbury and Norwich, that at Chichester having been rebuilt in the nineteenth century after its collapse. The spire of Salisbury at 404 feet (123 meters) is the tallest in Britain. It is also the tallest fourteenth-century spire, the tallest ashlar masonry spire (as against the openwork spires of Germany and France), and tallest spire in the world that remains from the medieval period that has not been entirely rebuilt. However, it was greatly surpassed in height by the spires of Lincoln and Old St. Paul’s. At Lincoln, between the early fourteenth century and 1548, the central tower was surmounted by the tallest spire in the world at about 170 meters (557 feet) but this fell in a storm. Lichfield Cathedral, uniquely in England, has three medieval masonry spires.

Although single western towers are common in English parish churches, only one medieval cathedral, Ely, retains a centrally placed western tower, and in that case, it was framed by two lower lateral towers, one of which has since fallen down. Ely, alone among England’s cathedrals, has a central feature over the crossing that somewhat resembles the polygonal vaulted lantern towers of Spain. This elaborate lantern-like structure known as “the Octagon” spans both the nave and aisles, and is thus said to have inspired Christopher Wren’s design for the dome of St. Paul’s Cathedral. Its upper parts are supported by hidden wooden hammer-beams, an architectural device unique to English Gothic.

**Façades**

The façades of English cathedrals show a considerable diversity, rather than a consistent progression, as is the case in Northern France and other cathedrals influenced by the French Gothic style. In many cases, regardless of the architectural form, the English façade was treated as a decorative screen with many niches occupied by statues. A great number of these were toppled or defaced during the seventeenth century, however a “gallery of kings” remains high on the façade of Lincoln, and many of the original weather-worn figures remain at Exeter.

Most English cathedral façades fall into two basic types, with several variations.

The most typical cathedrals are those that have large paired towers at their western end, as at Canterbury, Durham, Southwell, Wells, Ripon, and York.

Between the towers is either a single large tracery window, as at York and Canterbury, or an arrangement of untracery lancets, as at Ripon and Wells, rather than the rose windows typical of French façades. There are usually three doors but unlike those of French cathedrals, they are rarely highly elaborate and far more emphasis is placed on the central door than those to either
side. The entrance in most common use is sometimes located in a porch at one side of the nave. Where there are not two large towers at the west front, there are generally two pinnacled turrets that frame the façade or the central nave much in the nature of very large buttresses. This arrangement may be seen at Salisbury, Winchester, and Rochester.

At Lincoln a vast Gothic screen with similar buttress-like terminals was built across the front of the cathedral, incorporating the Norman portals, but hiding the Norman towers. The towers were then greatly heightened to be visible above the screen.

A Gothic screen was also added to the Norman nave at Peterborough, but this is an architectural oddity with no precedent or successor. The screen is composed of three enormous open arches, the two outer ones being much wider than that which frames the central door. The overwhelming composition is somewhat spoilt by the later porch and the fact that two towers of very different height pop up from behind the screen. Despite this, it is regarded as one of the supreme masterpieces of Gothic, revealing the enormous diversity and imagination of English medieval architects.

**Eastern End**

The eastern ends of English cathedrals show a greater diversity than those of any other country. Those built in the Norman era had high apsidal ends surrounded by a lower ambulatory, as is typical of Northern France. This arrangement still exists at Norwich and in part at Peterborough and also, with variation, in the Early English Gothic east end at Canterbury, but in every other case has been modified.

The typical arrangement for an English Gothic east end is square, and may be an unbroken cliff-like design as at York, Lincoln, Ripon, Ely, and Carlisle or may have a projecting Lady Chapel of which there is a great diversity as at Salisbury, Lichfield, Hereford, Exeter, and Chichester.

The ends of Norwich and Canterbury also have projecting chapels, that at Norwich being a Gothic addition to the Norman east end, while that at Canterbury, known as the Corona, being designed as part of the Early English plan, specifically to enshrine the relic of the crown of Thomas Becket’s skull, sliced off at the time of his assassination. The east ends of a number of other cathedrals, such as Durham, Peterborough, and Gloucester, have been modified in various ways and do not fit any particular model.

**External Appearance**

As English cathedrals are often surrounded by an expanse of green lawn, the plan is usually clearly visible at ground level, which is not the case with the many European cathedrals that are closely surrounded by town or monastic buildings. The general impression is that the English cathedral sprawls across its site with many projecting limbs. These horizontal projections are visibly balanced by the strong verticals of the massive towers, which may be one, two or three in number. Many of the cathedrals, particularly those like Winchester, St. Albans, and Peterborough where the towers are not particularly high, give an impression of tremendous length and have been described as resembling “aircraft carriers.”

**Internal Appearance**

1. **Horizontal Emphasis**

Because the architecture of English cathedrals is so diverse and inventive, the internal appearances differ a great deal. However, in general, English cathedral interiors tend to give an impression of length. This is in part because many of the buildings are actually very long, but also because more than in the medieval architecture of any other country, the horizontal direction
is given as much visual emphasis as the vertical. This is particularly the case at Wells where, unlike most Gothic buildings, there are no vertical shafts that continue from the arcade to the vault and there is a very strong emphasis on the triforium gallery with its seemingly endless and undifferentiated row of narrow arches. Salisbury has a similar lack of verticals while the course below the triforium and the undecorated capitals of Purbeck stone create strong visual horizontals. In the cases of Winchester, Norwich, and Exeter the horizontal effect is created by the emphasis on the ridge rib of the elaborate vaults.

2. Complex Vaulting

The complexity of the vault is another significant feature of English cathedrals. The vaults range from the simple quadripartite vault in the French manner at Chichester through increasingly elaborate forms including the multi-ribbed (“tierceron”) vault at Exeter, the similar vault with inter-connecting (“lierne”) ribs at Norwich, the still more elaborate variation at Winchester, the array of unique lierne vaults at Bristol, the net-like stellar vaulting of the choirs at Gloucester and York, the fan vaulting of the retro-choir at Peterborough, and the pendant vaulting of the choir at Oxford, where elaborate long stone bosses are suspended from the ceiling like lanterns. Many of the more elaborate forms are unique to England, with stellar vaulting also occurring in Spain and Germany.

Architectural Styles

Saxon

While in most cases a Norman church entirely replaced a Saxon one, at Ripon the cathedral uniquely retains its early Saxon crypt, while a similar crypt also survives below the former cathedral of Hexham. At Winchester the excavated foundations of the tenth-century cathedral – when built, the largest church in northern Europe – are marked on grass of the cathedral close. At Worcester, a new cathedral was built in the Norman style from 1084, but the crypt contains reused stonework and columns from its two Saxon predecessor churches. Elsewhere, the abbey church of Sherborne preserves much masonry from the former Saxon cathedral, in the west front, transepts, and crossing, so that the nave and crossing of present late medieval abbey retains the proportions of the previous Saxon structure.

Norman

The comprehensive reconstruction of the Saxon cathedral churches of England by the Normans represented the single largest ecclesiastical building program of medieval Europe and when built, these were the biggest structures to have been erected in Christian Europe since the end of the Roman Empire. All the medieval cathedrals of England, with the exception of Salisbury, Lichfield, and Wells, have evidence of Norman architecture. Peterborough, Durham, and Norwich remain for the greater part Norman buildings, while at many others there are substantial parts of the building in the Norman style, such as the naves of Ely, Gloucester, and Southwell, and the transepts at Winchester. The Norman architecture is distinguished by its round-headed arches and bold tiers of arcades on piers, which originally supported flat wooden roofs of which two survive, at Peterborough and Ely. Columns, where used, are massive, as in the nave at Gloucester, and are alternated with piers at Durham. Moldings were cut with geometric designs and arcading was a major decorative form, particularly externally. Little figurative sculpture has survived, notably the “barbaric” ornament around the west doors at Lincoln, the bestial capitals of the crypt at Canterbury and the tympanum of the west door at Rochester.
Lancet Gothic

Many of the cathedrals have major parts in the late-twelfth-to-early-thirteenth-century style known as Lancet Gothic or Early English Gothic, and defined by its simple, untraceried lancet-like openings. Salisbury Cathedral is the major example of this style, which is also seen at Wells and Worcester, at the eastern arms of Canterbury, Hereford, and Southwark, and at the transepts of York. Also of this period is the spectacular façade of Peterborough, and the less grand but harmonious façade of Ripon.

Decorated Gothic

The Decorated Gothic style, with traceried windows, is further subdivided dependent upon whether the tracery is Geometric or Curvilinear. Many cathedrals have important parts in the Geometric style of the mid-thirteenth to early fourteenth centuries, including much of Lincoln, Lichfield, the choir of Ely, and the chapter houses of Salisbury and Southwell. By the late thirteenth century the style of tracery evolved to include a greater number of narrow shapes that adapted easily to Gothic openings in combination with circular shapes, as can be seen in the windows of the chapter house of York, the Octagon of Ely, and the west window of Exeter.

Further development included the repetition of Curvilinear or flame-like forms that occur in a great number of windows of around 1320, notably in the retro-choir at Wells and the nave of Exeter Cathedral. This type of tracery is often seen in combination with vaulting ribs of extreme projection and very rich molding, as is seen in the chapter house at Wells, and the vault at Exeter, which stretches, uninterrupted by a central tower, for 91 meters (300 feet) and is the longest medieval vault in the world.

The last stage of Curvilinear or Flowing Decorated Gothic, is expressed in tracery of very varied and highly complex forms. Many of the largest and most famous windows of England date from 1320–1330 and are in this style. They include the south transept rose window known as the “Bishop’s Eye” at Lincoln, the “Heart of Yorkshire” window in the west end of York and the famous nine-light east window of Carlisle.

There are many smaller architectural works within cathedrals which have the curvilinear tracery. These include the arcading in the Lady Chapel at Ely, which also has the widest vault in England, the pulpitum screen at Lincoln and richly decorated doorways at Ely and Rochester. Characteristic of this period of Gothic is elaborate lierne vaulting in which the main ribs are connected by intermediate ribs which do not spring from the wall and so are not major structural members. The vaults of Bristol are the most famous examples of this style, which can also be seen at York.

Perpendicular Gothic

In the 1330s, when the architects of Europe were embracing the Flamboyant style, English architecture moved away from the Flowing Decorated in an entirely different and much more sober direction with the reconstruction, in highly modular form, of the choir of the Norman abbey, now cathedral, at Gloucester. The Perpendicular style, which relies on a network of intersecting mullions and transoms rather than on a diversity of richly carved forms for effect, gives an overall impression of great unity, in which the structure of the vast windows of both clerestory and east end are integrated with the arcades below and the vault above. The style proved very adaptable and continued with variations in the naves of Canterbury and Winchester, and in the choir of York.
During the fifteenth century, many of England’s finest towers were either built or extended in the Perpendicular style including those of the cathedrals of Gloucester, Worcester, Wells, York, Durham, and Canterbury, and the spires of Chichester and Norwich.

The design of church interiors went through a final stage that lasted into the sixteenth century. This was the development of fan vaulting, first used in about 1370 in the cloisters at Gloucester, then in the retrochoir at Peterborough in the early fifteenth century. In a still more elaborate form with stone pendants it was used to roof the Norman choir at Oxford and in the great funerary chapel of Henry VII at Westminster Abbey, at a time when Italy had embraced the Renaissance.

DURHAM CATHEDRAL
The Cathedral Church of Christ, Blessed Mary the Virgin, and St. Cuthbert of Durham

The present cathedral was designed and built under William of St. Carilef (or William of Calais) who was appointed as the first prince-bishop by William the Conqueror in 1080. Since that time, there have been major additions and reconstructions of some parts of the building, but the greater part of the structure remains true to the Norman design. Construction of the cathedral began in 1093 at the eastern end. The choir was completed by 1096 and work proceeded on the nave, whose the walls were finished by 1128, and the high vault was completed by 1135. The chapter house, demolished in the eighteenth century, was built between 1133 and 1140. William died in 1099 before the building’s completion, passing responsibility to his successor Ranulf Flambard, who also built Flamwell Bridge, the first crossing of the River Wear in the town. Three bishops William of St. Carilef, Ranulf Flambard, and Hugh de Puiset are all buried in the rebuilt chapter house.
In the 1170s, Bishop Hugh de Puiset, after a false start at the eastern end, where the subsidence and cracking prevented work from continuing, added the Galilee Chapel at the west end of the cathedral. The five-aisled building occupies the position of a porch; it functioned as a Lady Chapel and the great west door was blocked during the Medieval period by an altar to the Virgin Mary. The door is now blocked by the tomb of Bishop Langley. The Galilee Chapel also holds the remains of the Venerable Bede. The main entrance to the cathedral is on the northern side, facing towards the Castle.

In 1228 Richard le Poore came from Salisbury, where a new cathedral was being built in the Gothic style. At this time, the eastern end of the cathedral was in urgent need of repair and the proposed eastern extension had failed. Richard le Poore employed the architect Richard Farnham to design an eastern terminal for the building in which many monks could say the Daily Office simultaneously. The resulting building was the Chapel of the Nine Altars. The towers also date from the early thirteenth century, but the central tower was damaged by lightning and replaced in two stages in the fifteenth century, the master masons being Thomas Barton and John Bell.

The shrine of St. Cuthbert was located in the eastern apsidal end of the cathedral. The location of the inner wall of the apse is marked on the pavement, and St. Cuthbert’s tomb is covered by a simple slab. However, an unknown monk wrote in 1593:

[The shrine] “was estimated to be one of the most sumptuous in all England, so great were the offerings and jewels bestowed upon it, and endless the miracles that were wrought at it, even in these last days.”

—Rites of Durham

Dissolution

Cuthbert’s tomb was destroyed on the orders of Henry VIII in 1538, and the monastery’s wealth handed over to the king. The body of the saint was exhumed, and, according to the Rites of Durham, was discovered to be uncorrupted. It was reburied under a plain stone slab worn by the knees of pilgrims, but the ancient paving around it remains intact. Two years later, on December 31, 1540, the Benedictine monastery at Durham was dissolved, and the last prior of Durham — Hugh Whitehead — became the first dean of the cathedral’s secular chapter.

Seventeenth century

After the Battle of Dunbar on September 3, 1650, Durham Cathedral was used by Oliver Cromwell as a makeshift prison to hold Scottish prisoners-of-war. It is estimated that as many as 3,000 were imprisoned of whom 1,700 died in the cathedral itself, where they were kept in inhumane conditions, largely without food, water or heat. The prisoners destroyed much of the cathedral woodwork for firewood, but Prior Castell’s Clock, which featured the Scottish thistle, was spared. It is reputed that the prisoners’ bodies were buried in unmarked graves. The survivors were shipped as slave labor to North America.

In 1946 during work to install a new central heating system for the University, a mass grave of the Scottish soldiers was allegedly uncovered. Towards the end of 2007 a campaign was launched to commemorate the Dunbar Martyrs. Further to this and with the agreement of Durham University, Historic Scotland funded a geophysical survey of Palace Green. It was hoped that this might provide clarity on the final resting place of the dead, but results were inconclusive. During 2010 the Cathedral Chapter agreed to the installation of a memorial plaque within St. Margaret of Scotland’s chapel at the Cathedral. The “Dunbar Martyr” campaigners are
raising funds to assist with the cost of creation and installation of the plaque, which will bear a Scots Thistle.

Bishop John Cosin, who had previously been a canon of the cathedral, set about restoring the damage and refurnishing the building with new stalls, the litany desk and the towering canopy over the font. An oak screen to carry the organ was added at this time to replace a stone screen pulled down in the sixteenth century. On the remains of the old refectory, the Dean, John Sudbury founded a library of early printed books.

1700–1900

During the eighteenth century, the deans of Durham often held another position in the south of England, and after spending the statutory time in residence, would depart to manage their affairs. Consequently, after Cosin’s refurbishment, there was little by way of restoration or rebuilding. When work commenced again on the building, it was of a most unsympathetic nature. In 1773 the architect George Nicholson, having completed the Prebends’ Bridge across the Wear, persuaded the Dean and Chapter to let him smooth off much of the outer stonework of the cathedral, thereby considerably altering its character.

The architect James Wyatt greatly added to the destruction by demolishing half the chapter house, altering the stonework of the east end, and inserting a large rose window that was supposed to be faithful to one that had been there in the thirteenth century. Wyatt also planned to demolish the Galilee Chapel, but the Dean, John Cornwallis, returned and prevented it, just as the lead was being stripped from the roof.

The restoration of the cathedral’s tower between 1854 and 1859 was by the architect Sir George Gilbert Scott, working with Edward Robert Robson, who went on to serve as architect in charge of the cathedral for six years. and a statue of William Van Mildert, the last prince-bishop (1826–1836) and driving force behind the foundation of Durham University. In 1858 Anthony Salvin restored the cloisters.

Architecture

The building is notable for the ribbed vault of the nave roof, with pointed transverse arches supported on relatively slender composite piers alternated with massive drum columns, and buttresses or lateral abutments concealed within the triforium over the aisles. These features appear to be precursors of the Gothic architecture of Northern France a few decades later, doubtless due to the Norman stonemasons responsible, although the building is considered Romanesque overall. The skilled use of the pointed arch and ribbed vault made it possible to cover far more elaborate and complicated ground plans than before. Buttressing made it possible to build taller buildings and open up the intervening wall spaces to create larger windows.

Saint Cuthbert’s tomb lies at the East in the feretory and was once an elaborate monument of cream marble and gold. It remains a place of pilgrimage.


Durham Castle (formerly the Bishop’s Palace

History

The castle was originally built in the eleventh century as a projection of the Norman king’s power in the north of England, as the population of England in the north remained “wild and
fickle” following the disruption of the Norman Conquest in 1066. It is an example of the early motte and bailey castles favored by the Normans. The holder of the office of the Bishop of Durham was appointed by the King to exercise royal authority on his behalf, the castle was his seat.

It remained the bishop’s palace for the bishops of Durham until the bishops made Auckland Castle their primary residence and the castle was converted into a college.

The castle has a large great hall, created by Bishop Antony Bek in the early fourteenth century. It was the largest great hall in Britain until Bishop Richard Foxe shortened it at the end of the fifteenth century. However, it is still 14 meters high and over 30 meters long.

**University College**

In 1837, the castle was donated to the newly formed University of Durham by Bishop Edward Maltby as accommodation for students. It was named University College. Architect Anthony Salvin rebuilt the dilapidated keep from the original plans. Opened in 1840, the castle still houses over 100 students, most of whom are in the keep.

Students and staff of the college eat their meals in Bishop Bek’s Great Hall. The Great Hall’s Undercroft, meanwhile, serves as the Junior Common Room, including its bar — i.e. as the principal common room for the college’s undergraduate members. The two chapels are still used, both for services and other purposes such as theatrical performances. Other facilities contained within the castle include the college’s library, the college offices, and the college’s IT suite. During university vacations, the college offers rooms in the castle for (usually academic) conferences and as hotel accommodation. Access to the castle for the public is restricted to guided tours. Outside of these, only members of the college or vacation guests may visit the castle. In 2011, the castle was closed to guided tours while refurbishments were carried out. It reopened to the general public in autumn 2011.

**Chapels**

The college makes extensive use of the castle’s two chapels: the Norman Chapel, built around 1078, and Tunstall’s Chapel, built in 1540.

The Norman Chapel is the oldest accessible part of the castle. Its architecture is Anglian in nature, possibly due to forced Anglian labor being used to build it. In the fifteenth century, its three windows were all but blocked up because of the expanded keep. It thus fell into disuse until 1841 when it was used as a corridor through which to access the keep. During the Second World War, it was used as a command and observation post for the Royal Air Force when its original use was recognized. It was re-consecrated shortly after the war and is still used for weekly services by the college.

Tunstall’s Chapel is the more heavily-used of the chapels, being somewhat larger. Bishop Cosin and Bishop Crewe extended it in the late seventeenth century. At the back of the chapel, some of the seats are sixteenth-century misericords (literally, mercy seats). These were designed such that a person standing for long periods of time could rest on a ledge of the upturned seat.

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL
The Cathedral and Metropolitical Church of Christ at Canterbury

History

Norman period
The cathedral was destroyed by fire in 1067, a year after the Norman Conquest. Rebuilding began in 1070 under the first Norman archbishop, Lanfranc (1070–1077). He cleared the ruins and reconstructed the cathedral to a design based closely on that of the Abbey of St. Etienne in Caen, where he had previously been abbot, using stone brought from France. The new church, its central axis about 5 meters south of that of its predecessor, was a cruciform building, with an aisled nave of nine bays, a pair of towers at the west end, aisleless transepts with apsidal chapels, a low crossing tower, and a short choir ending in three apses. It was dedicated in 1077.

After this time, the responsibility for the rebuilding or improvement of the cathedral’s fabric was largely left in the hands of the priors. Following the election of Prior Ernulf in 1096, Lanfranc’s inadequate east end was demolished, and replaced with an eastern arm 198 feet long, doubling the length of the cathedral. It was raised above a large and elaborately decorated crypt. Ernulf was succeeded in 1107 by Conrad, who completed the work by 1126. The new choir took the form of a complete church in itself, with its own transepts; the east end was semicircular in plan, with three chapels opening off an ambulatory. A free standing campanile was built on a mound in the cathedral precinct in about 1160.

As with many Romanesque church buildings, the interior of the choir was richly embellished. William of Malmesbury wrote: “Nothing like it could be seen in England either for the light of its glass windows, the gleaming of its marble pavements, or the many-colored paintings which led the eyes to the paneled ceiling above.”

Though named after the sixth-century founding archbishop, The Chair of St. Augustine, the ceremonial enthronement chair of the Archbishop of Canterbury, may date from the Norman period. Its first recorded use is in 1205.

Martyrdom of Thomas Becket
A pivotal moment in the history of the Cathedral was the murder of the archbishop, Thomas Becket, in the north-west transept (also known as the Martyrdom) on Tuesday December 29, 1170 by knights of King Henry II. The king had frequent conflicts with the strong-willed Becket and is said to have exclaimed in frustration, “Who will rid me of this turbulent priest?” The
knights took it literally and murdered Becket in his own cathedral. Becket was the second of four Archbishops of Canterbury who were murdered.

The posthumous veneration of Becket made the Cathedral a place of pilgrimage. This brought both the need to expand the Cathedral, and the wealth that made it possible.

**Rebuilding of the Choir**

In September 1174 the choir was severely damaged by fire, necessitating a major reconstruction, the progress of which was recorded in detail by a monk named Gervase. The crypt survived the fire intact, and it was found possible to retain the outer walls of the choir, which were increased in height by 12 feet (3.7 meters) in the course of the rebuilding, but with the round-headed form of their windows left unchanged. Everything else was replaced in the new Gothic style, with pointed arches, rib vaulting and flying buttresses. The limestone used was imported from Caen in Normandy, and Purbeck marble was used for the shafting. The choir was back in use by 1180, and in that year the remains of St. Dunstan and St. Alphege were moved there from the crypt.

The master-mason appointed to rebuild the choir was a Frenchman, William of Sens. Following his injury in a fall from the scaffolding in 1179 he was replaced by one of his former assistants, known as “William the Englishman.”

In 1180-1184, in place of the old, square-ended, eastern chapel, the present Trinity chapel was constructed, a broad extension with an ambulatory, designed to house the shrine of St. Thomas Becket. A further chapel, circular in plan, was added beyond that, which housed further relics of Becket, widely believed to have included the top of his skull, struck off in the course of his assassination. This latter chapel became known as the “Corona” or “Becket’s Crown.” These new parts east of the choir transepts were raised on a higher crypt than Ernulf’s choir, necessitating flights of steps between the two levels. Work on the chapel was completed in 1184, but Becket’s remains were not moved from his tomb in the crypt until 1220. Further significant interments in the Trinity Chapel included those of Edward Plantagenet (the “Black Prince”) and King Henry IV.

**Shrine of Thomas Becket**

The shrine in the Trinity Chapel was placed directly above Becket’s original tomb in the crypt. A marble plinth, raised on columns, supported what an early visitor, Walter of Coventry, described as “a coffin wonderfully wrought of gold and silver, and marvelously adorned with precious gems.” Other accounts make clear that the gold was laid over a wooden chest, which in turn contained an iron-bound box holding Becket’s remains. Further votive treasures were added to the adornments of the chest over the years, while others were placed on pedestals or beams nearby, or attached to hanging drapery. For much of the time the chest (or “feretory”) was kept concealed by a wooden cover, which would be theatrically raised by ropes once a crowd of pilgrims had gathered. Erasmus, who visited in 1512–1514, recorded that, once the cover was raised, “the Prior . . . pointed out each jewel, telling its name in French, its value, and the name of its donor; for the principal of them were offerings sent by sovereign princes.”

The income from pilgrims (such as those portrayed in Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*) who visited Becket’s shrine, which was regarded as a place of healing, largely paid for the subsequent rebuilding of the Cathedral and its associated buildings. This revenue included the profits from the sale of pilgrim badges depicting Becket, his martyrdom, or his shrine.
The shrine was removed in 1538. Henry VIII summoned the dead saint to court to face charges of treason. Having failed to appear, he was found guilty in his absence and the treasures of his shrine were confiscated, carried away in two coffers and twenty-six carts.

**Monastic Buildings**

A bird’s-eye view of the cathedral and its monastic buildings, made in about 1165 and known as the “waterworks plan” is preserved in the Eadwine Psalter in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. It shows that Canterbury employed the same general principles of arrangement common to all Benedictine monasteries, although, unusually, the cloister and monastic buildings were to the north, rather than the south of the church. There was a separate chapter-house.

The buildings formed separate groups around the church. Adjoining it, on the north side, stood the cloister and the buildings devoted to the monastic life. To the east and west of these were those devoted to the exercise of hospitality. To the north a large open court divided the monastic buildings from menial ones, such as the stables, granaries, barn, bakehouse, brew house and laundries, inhabited by the lay servants of the establishment. At the greatest possible distance from the church, beyond the precinct of the monastery, was the eleemosynary department. The almonry for the relief of the poor, with a great hall annexed, formed the paupers’ hospitium.

The group of buildings devoted to monastic life included two cloisters. The great cloister was surrounded by the buildings essentially connected with the daily life of the monks,— the church to the south, with the refectory placed as always on the side opposite, the dormitory, raised on a vaulted undercroft, and the chapter-house adjacent, and the lodgings of the cellarer, responsible for providing both monks and guests with food, to the west. A passage under the dormitory led eastwards to the smaller or infirmary cloister, appropriated to sick and infirm monks.

The hall and chapel of the infirmary extended east of this cloister, resembling in form and arrangement the nave and chancel of an aisled church. Beneath the dormitory, overlooking the green court or herbarium, lay the “pisalis” or “calefactory,” the common room of the monks. At its north-east corner access was given from the dormitory to the necessarium, a building in the form of a Norman hall, 145 feet (44 meters) long by 25 broad (44.2 meters × 7.6 meters), containing fifty-five seats. It was constructed with careful regard to hygiene, with a stream of water running through it from end to end.

A second smaller dormitory for the conventual officers ran from east to west. Close to the refectory, but outside the cloisters, were the domestic offices connected with it: to the north, the kitchen, 47 feet (14 meters) square (200 square meters), with a pyramidal roof, and the kitchen court; to the west, the butteries, pantries, etc. The infirmary had a small kitchen of its own. Opposite the refectory door in the cloister were two lavatories, where the monks washed before and after eating.

The buildings devoted to hospitality were divided into three groups. The prior’s group were “entered at the south-east angle of the green court, placed near the most sacred part of the cathedral, as befitting the distinguished ecclesiastics or nobility who were assigned to him.” The cellarer’s buildings, where middle class visitors were entertained, stood near the west end of the nave. The inferior pilgrims and paupers were relegated to the north hall or almonry, just within the gate.

Priors of Christ Church Priory included John of Sittingbourne (elected 1222, previously a monk of the priory) and William Chillenden, (elected 1264, previously monk and treasurer of the priory). The monastery was granted the right to elect their own prior if the seat was vacant by the pope, and — from Gregory IX onwards — the right to a free election (though with the
archbishop overseeing their choice). Monks of the priory have included Æthelric I, Æthelric II, Walter d’Eynsham, Reginald fitz Jocelin (admitted as a confrater shortly before his death), Nigel de Longchamps and Ernulf. The monks often put forward candidates for Archbishop of Canterbury, either from among their number or outside, since the archbishop was nominally their abbot, but this could lead to clashes with the king and/or pope should they put forward a different man — examples are the elections of Baldwin of Forde and Thomas Cobham.

Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries

Early in the fourteenth century, Prior Eastry erected a stone choir screen and rebuilt the chapter house, and his successor, Prior Oxenden inserted a large five-light window into St. Anselm’s chapel.

The cathedral was seriously damaged by an earthquake of 1382, losing its bells and campanile.

From the late fourteenth century the nave and transepts were rebuilt, on the Norman foundations in the Perpendicular style under the direction of the noted master mason Henry Yevele. In contrast to the contemporary rebuilding of the nave at Winchester, where much of the existing fabric was retained and remodeled, the piers were entirely removed, and replaced with less bulky Gothic ones, and the old aisle walls completely taken down except for a low “plinth” left on the south side. More Norman fabric was retained in the transepts, especially in the east walls, and the old apsidal chapels were not replaced until the mid-fifteenth century. The arches of the new nave arcade were exceptionally high in proportion to the clerestory. The new transepts, aisles and nave were roofed with lierne vaults, enriched with bosses. Most of the work was done during the priorate of Thomas Chillenden (1391–1411): Chillenden also built a new choir screen at the east end of the nave, into which Eastry’s existing screen was incorporated. The Norman stone floor of the nave, however survived until its replacement in 1786.

From 1396 the cloisters were repaired and remodeled by Yevele’s pupil Stephen Lote who added the lierne vaulting. It was during this period that the wagon-vaulting of the chapter house was created.

A shortage of money, and the priority given to the rebuilding of the cloisters and chapter-house meant that the rebuilding of the west towers was neglected. The south-west tower was not replaced until 1458, and the Norman north-west tower survived until 1834, when it was replaced by a replica of its Perpendicular companion.

In about 1430 the south transept apse was removed to make way for a chapel, founded by Lady Margaret Holland and dedicated to St. Michael and All Angels. The north transept apse was replaced by a Lady Chapel, built in 1448-1455.

The 235-foot crossing tower was begun in 1433, although preparations had already been made during Chillenden’s priorate, when the piers had been reinforced. Further strengthening was found necessary around the beginning of the sixteenth century, when buttressing arches were added under the southern and western tower arches. The tower is often known as the “Angel Steeple,” after a gilded angel that once stood on one of its pinnacles.

Dissolution of the Monastery

The cathedral ceased to be an abbey during the Dissolution of the Monasteries when all religious houses were suppressed. Canterbury surrendered in March 1539, and reverted to its previous status of ‘a college of secular canons.’ The New Foundation came into being on April 8, 1541.
Eighteenth century to the present

The original Norman northwest tower, which had a lead spire until 1705, was demolished in 1834, owing to structural concerns. It was replaced with a Perpendicular-style twin of the southwest tower, now known as the “Arundel Tower.” This was the last major structural alteration to the cathedral to be made.

Furnishings

In 1688, the joiner Roger Davis, citizen of London, removed the thirteenth century misericords and replaced them with two rows of his own work on each side of the choir. Some of Davis’s misericords have a distinctly medieval flavor and he may have copied some of the original designs. When Sir George Gilbert Scott carried out renovations in the nineteenth century, he replaced the front row of Davis’ misericords, with new ones of his own design, which seem to include many copies of those at Gloucester Cathedral, Worcester Cathedral and New College, Oxford.


SALISBURY CATHEDRAL
The Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary

History

As a response to deteriorating relations between the clergy and the military at Old Sarum Cathedral, the decision was taken to re-site the cathedral and the bishopric was moved to Salisbury. The move occurred during the tenure of Bishop Richard Poore, a wealthy man who donated the land on which it was built. The new cathedral was paid for by donations, principally from the canons and vicars of southeast England who were asked to contribute a fixed annual sum until it was completed. A legend tells that the Bishop of Old Sarum shot an arrow in the direction he would build the cathedral but the arrow hit a deer that died in the place where Salisbury Cathedral is now. The cathedral crossing, Old Sarum and Stonehenge are reputed to be aligned on a ley line, though Clive L. N. Ruggles asserts that the site, on marshland, was chosen because a preferred site several miles to the west could not be obtained.
The foundation stone was laid on April 28, 1220. Much of the freestone for the cathedral came from Teffont Evias quarries. As a result of the high water table in the new location, the cathedral was built on only four feet of foundations, and by 1258 the nave, transepts and choir were complete. The west front was ready by 1265. The cloisters and chapter house were completed around 1280. Because most of the cathedral was built in only 38 years, it has a single consistent architectural style, Early English Gothic.

The only major sections built later were the cloisters, chapter house, tower, and spire, which at 404 feet (123 meters) dominated the skyline from 1320. Although the spire is the cathedral’s most impressive feature, it has proved to be troublesome. Together with the tower, it added 6,397 tons (6,500 tonnes) to the weight of the building. Without the addition of buttresses, bracing arches and anchor irons over the succeeding centuries, it would have suffered the fate of spires on later great ecclesiastical buildings (such as Malmesbury Abbey) and fallen down; instead, Salisbury remains the tallest church spire in the United Kingdom. The large supporting pillars at the corners of the spire are seen to bend inwards under the stress. The addition of reinforcing tie beams above the crossing, designed by Christopher Wren in 1668, arrested further deformation. The beams were hidden by a false ceiling, installed below the lantern stage of the tower.

Significant changes to the cathedral were made by the architect James Wyatt in 1790, including replacement of the original rood screen and demolition of a bell tower which stood about 320 feet (100 meters) north west of the main building. Salisbury is one of only three English cathedrals to lack a ring of bells, the others are Norwich Cathedral and Ely Cathedral. However it does strike the time every 15 minutes with bells.

**Chapter house and the Magna Carta**

The chapter house is notable for its octagonal shape, slender central pillar and decorative medieval frieze. It was redecorated in 1855-1859 by William Burges. The frieze circles the interior above the stalls and depicts scenes and stories from the books of Genesis and Exodus, including Adam and Eve, Noah, the Tower of Babel, and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The chapter house also displays the best-preserved of the four surviving original copies of the Magna Carta. This copy came to Salisbury because Elias of Dereham, who was present at Runnymede in 1215, was given the task of distributing some of the original copies. Elias later became a canon of Salisbury and supervised the construction of the cathedral.

**West Front**

The west front is composed of two stair turrets at each extremity, with two niched buttresses nearer the center line supporting the large central triple window. The stair turrets are topped with spirelets and the central section is topped by a gable which contains four lancet windows topped by two round quatrefoil windows surmounted by a mandorla containing Christ in Majesty. At ground level there is a principal door flanked by two smaller doors. The whole is highly decorated with quatrefoil motifs, columns, trefoil motifs and bands of diapering. The west front was almost certainly constructed at the same time as the cathedral. This is apparent from the way in which the windows coincide with the interior spaces. The entire façade is about 33 meters high and wide.

The front accommodates over 130 shallow niches of varying sizes, 73 of these niches contain a statue. The line of niches extend round the turrets to the north, south and east faces. There are five levels of niches (not including the mandorla) which show, from the top, angels and archangels, Old Testament patriarchs, apostles and evangelists, martyrs, doctors and philosophers and, on the lower level, royalty, priests and worthy people connected with the
cathedral. The majority of the statues were placed during the middle of the nineteenth century, however seven are from the fourteenth century and several have been installed within the last decade.

Clock

The Salisbury cathedral clock dating from about A.D. 1386 is supposedly the oldest working modern clock in the world. The clock has no face because all clocks of that date rang out the hours on a bell. It was originally located in a bell tower that was demolished in 1792. Following this demolition, the clock was moved to the Cathedral Tower where it was in operation until 1884. The clock was then placed in storage and forgotten until it was discovered in 1929, in an attic of the cathedral. It was repaired and restored to working order in 1956. In 2007 remedial work and repairs were carried out to the clock.


WELLS CATHEDRAL
The Cathedral Church of St. Andrew, Wells


(adapted from a plan by Georg Dehio)

Wells Cathedral in Wells, Somerset, is dedicated to St. Andrew the Apostle, and is the seat of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. As with other cathedrals, it is the central church of a diocese and contains the bishop’s throne (cathedra). The present building dates from 1175 to 1490, an earlier church having been built on the site in 705. It is moderately sized among the medieval cathedrals of England, falling between those of massive proportion, such as Lincoln and York, and the much smaller cathedrals of Oxford and Carlisle. With its broad west front and large central tower, it is the dominant feature of its small cathedral city and a landmark in the Somerset countryside. Wells has been variously described as “unquestionably one of the most beautiful” and as “the most poetic” of English cathedrals.

The architecture of the cathedral presents a harmonious whole which is entirely Gothic and mostly in a single style, the Early English Gothic of the late twelfth and early thirteenth
centuries. In this Wells differs from most other English medieval cathedrals, which have parts in the earlier Romanesque architectural style introduced to Britain by the Normans in the eleventh century.

Work on the cathedral commenced in about 1175 at the eastern end with the building of the choir. The historian John Harvey considers this to be the first truly Gothic structure in Europe, having broken from the last constraints of Romanesque. The stonework of its pointed arcades and fluted piers is enriched by the complexity of the pronounced moldings and vitality of the carved capitals in a foliate style known as “stiff leaf.” The exterior has an Early English façade displaying more than three hundred sculpted figures, and described by Harvey as “the supreme triumph of the combined plastic arts in England.” The eastern end retains much ancient stained glass, which is rare in England.

Unlike the many English cathedrals of monastic foundation, Wells has an exceptional number of surviving secular buildings associated with its chapter of secular canons, such as the Bishop’s Palace and the Vicars’ Close, a residential street which has remained intact from the fifteenth century. The cathedral is a scheduled monument and is designated by English Heritage as a Grade I listed building.

History

Early years

The earliest remains of a building on the site are of a late Roman mausoleum, identified during excavations in 1980. An abbey church was built in Wells in 705 by Aldhelm, first bishop of the newly established Diocese of Sherborne during the reign of King Ine of Wessex. It was dedicated to Saint Andrew and stood at the present site of the cathedral’s cloisters, where some excavated remains can be seen. The baptismal font in the cathedral’s south transept is from this church and is the oldest part of the present building. In 766 Cynewulf, King of Wessex, signed a charter endowing the church with eleven hides of land. In 909 the seat of the diocese was moved from Sherborne to Wells.

The first Bishop of Wells was Athelm (909), who crowned King Æthelstan. Athelm and his nephew Dunstan both became Archbishops of Canterbury. During this period a choir of boys was established to sing the liturgy. Wells Cathedral School dates its foundation to this point. Following the Norman Conquest, Bishop John de Villula moved the seat of the bishop from Wells to Bath in 1090. The church at Wells, no longer a cathedral, had a college of secular clergy.

Seat of the bishop

The cathedral is thought to have been conceived and commenced in about 1175 by Bishop Reginald Fitz Jocelin, who died in 1191. Although it is clear from its size that, from the outset, the church was planned to be the cathedral of the diocese; the seat of the bishop moved between Wells and the abbeys of Glastonbury and Bath, before settling at Wells. In 1197 Bishop Reginald’s successor, Bishop Savaric FitzGeldewin, with the approval of Pope Celestine III, officially moved his seat to Glastonbury Abbey. The title of Bishop of Bath and Glastonbury was used until the Glastonbury claim was abandoned in 1219.

Bishop Savaric’s successor, Jocelin of Wells, again moved the bishop’s seat to Bath Abbey, with the title Bishop of Bath. Jocelin was a brother of Bishop Hugh II of Lincoln and was present at the signing of the Magna Carta. Bishop Jocelin continued the building campaign begun by Bishop Reginald and was responsible for the Bishop’s Palace, the choristers’ school, a grammar
school, a hospital for travelers and a chapel. He also had a manor house built at Wookey, near Wells. Jocelin saw the church dedicated in 1239 but, despite much lobbying of the pope by Jocelin’s representatives in Rome, did not live to see cathedral status granted. The delay may have been a result of inaction by Pandulf Masca, a Roman ecclesiastical politician, papal legate to England and Bishop of Norwich, who was asked by the pope to investigate the situation but did not respond. Jocelin died at Wells on November 19, 1242, and was buried in the choir of the cathedral; the memorial brass on his tomb is one of the earliest brasses in England. Following his death the monks of Bath unsuccessfully attempted to regain authority over Wells.

In 1245 the ongoing dispute over the title of the bishop was resolved by a ruling of Pope Innocent IV who established the title as the “Bishop of Bath and Wells,” as it has remained until this day, with Wells as the principal seat of the bishop. Since the eleventh century the church has had a chapter of secular clergy, like the cathedrals of Chichester, Hereford, Lincoln, and York. The chapter was endowed with twenty-two prebends (lands from which finance was drawn) and a provost to manage them. On acquiring cathedral status, in common with other such cathedrals, it had four chief clergy, the dean, precentor, chancellor, and sacristan, who were responsible for the spiritual and material care of the cathedral.

Building the cathedral

The building program which was begun by Bishop Reginald Fitz Jocelin in the twelfth century continued under Jocelin of Wells, who was a canon from 1200, then bishop from 1206. Adam Locke was master mason from about 1192 until 1230. It was designed in the new style with pointed arches, later known as Gothic, and which was introduced at about the same time at Canterbury Cathedral. Work was halted between 1209 and 1213 when King John was excommunicated and Bishop Jocelin was in exile, but the main parts of the church were complete by the time of the dedication by Bishop Jocelin in 1239.

By the time the cathedral, including the chapter house, was finished in 1306, it was already too small for the developing liturgy, and unable to accommodate increasingly grand processions of clergy. Bishop John Droxford initiated another phase of building under master mason Thomas of Whitney, during which the central tower was heightened and an eight-sided Lady chapel, completed by 1326, was added at the east end. Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury followed, continuing the eastward extension of the choir and retrochoir beyond. He oversaw the building of Vicars’ Close and the Vicars’ Hall, to give the men who were employed to sing in the choir a secure place to live and dine, away from the town and its temptations. He had an uneasy relationship with the citizens of Wells, partly because of his imposition of taxes, and he surrounded his palace with crenellated walls, a moat, and a drawbridge.

Bishop John Harewell raised money for the completion of the west front by William Wynford, who was appointed as master mason in 1365. One of the foremost architects of his time, Wynford worked for the king at Windsor, Winchester Cathedral, and New College, Oxford. At Wells, he designed the western towers of which north-west was not built until the following century. In the fourteenth century, the central piers of the crossing were found to be sinking under the weight of the crossing tower which had been damaged by an earthquake the previous century. Strainer arches, sometimes described as scissor arches, were inserted by master mason William Joy to brace and stabilize the piers as a unit.

Tudors and Civil War

By the reign of Henry VII the cathedral building was complete, appearing much as it does today (though the fittings have changed considerably). From 1508 to 1546, the eminent Italian
humanist scholar Polydore Vergil was active as the chapter’s representative in London. He donated a set of hangings for the choir of the cathedral. While Wells survived the Dissolution of the Monasteries better than those cathedrals of monastic foundation, the abolition of chantries in 1547 resulted in a reduction in the cathedral’s income. Medieval brasses were sold, and a pulpit was placed in the nave for the first time. Between 1551 and 1568, in two periods as dean, William Turner established a herbal garden, which was recreated between 2003 and 2010.

Elizabeth I gave the chapter and the Vicars Choral a new charter in 1591, creating a new governing body, consisting of the dean and eight residentiary canons with control over the church estates and authority over its affairs, but no longer entitled to elect the dean (that entitlement thenceforward belonged ultimately to the Crown). The stability brought by the new charter ended with the onset of the Civil War and the execution of Charles I. Local fighting damaged the cathedral’s stonework, furniture, and windows. The dean, Walter Raleigh, a nephew of the explorer Sir Walter Raleigh, was placed under house arrest after the fall of Bridgwater to the Parliamentarians in 1645, first in the rectory at Chedzoy and then in the deanery at Wells. His jailer, the shoe maker and city constable, David Barrett, caught him writing a letter to his wife. When he refused to surrender it, Barrett ran him through with a sword and he died six weeks later, on October 10, 1646. He was buried in an unmarked grave in the choir before the dean’s stall. During the Commonwealth of England under Oliver Cromwell no dean was appointed and the cathedral fell into disrepair. The then bishop went into retirement and some of the clerics were reduced to performing menial tasks.

1660–1800

In 1661, after Charles II was restored to the throne, Robert Creighton, who had served as the king’s chaplain in exile, was appointed dean and then served as the bishop for two years before his death in 1672. His brass lectern, given in thanksgiving, can be seen in the cathedral. He also donated the great west window of the nave at a cost of £140. Following Creighton’s appointment as bishop, Ralph Bathurst, who had been chaplain to the king, president of Trinity College, Oxford, and fellow of the Royal Society, became dean. During Bathurst’s long tenure the cathedral was restored; however, in the Monmouth Rebellion of 1685, Puritan soldiers damaged the west front, tore lead from the roof to make bullets, broke the windows, smashed the organ and furnishings, and for a time stabled their horses in the nave.

Restoration began again under Bishop Thomas Ken who was appointed by the Crown in 1685 and served until 1691. He was one of seven bishops imprisoned for refusing to sign King James II’s “Declaration of Indulgence,” which would have enabled Catholics to resume positions of political power, but popular support led to their acquittal. Ken refused to take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary because James II had not abdicated and with others, known as the Nonjurors, was put out of office. His successor, Bishop Kidder, was killed in the Great Storm of 1703 when two chimney stacks on the palace fell on him and his wife, while they were asleep in bed.

Victorian era to present

By the middle of the nineteenth century, a major restoration program was needed. Under Dean Goodenough, the monuments were moved to the cloisters and the remaining medieval paint and whitewash was removed in an operation known as “the great scrape.” Anthony Salvin took charge of the extensive restoration of the choir. Wooden galleries that had been installed in the sixteenth century were removed and the stalls were given stone canopies and placed further back within the line of the arcade. The medieval stone pulpitum screen was extended in the center to support a new organ.
The late twentieth century saw an extensive restoration program, particularly of the west front. The stained glass is currently under restoration, with a program underway to conserve the large fourteenth-century Jesse tree window at the eastern terminal of the choir.

Architecture

Dates, styles, and architects

Construction of the cathedral began in about 1175, to the design of an unknown architect. Wells is the first cathedral in England to be, from its foundation, built in the Gothic style. According to art historian John Harvey, it is the first truly Gothic cathedral in the world, its architects having entirely dispensed with all the features that bound the contemporary east end of Canterbury Cathedral and the earlier buildings of France, such as the east end of the Abbey of St. Denis, to the Romanesque. Unlike these churches, Wells has clustered piers rather than columns and has a gallery of identical pointed arches rather than the typically Romanesque form of paired openings. The style, with its simple untraceried lancet arches and convoluted moldings, is known as Early English Gothic.

From about 1192 to 1230, Adam Lock, the earliest architect at Wells for whom a name is known, continued the transept and nave in the same manner as his predecessor. Lock was also builder of the north porch, to his own design.

The Early English west front was commenced around 1230 by Thomas Norreys, with building and sculpture continuing for thirty years. Its south-west tower was begun 100 years later and constructed between 1365 and 1395, and the north-west tower between 1425 and 1435, both in the Perpendicular Gothic style to the design of William Wynford, who also filled many of the cathedral’s early English lancet windows with delicate tracery. Between 1275 and 1310 the undercroft and chapter house were built by unknown architects, the undercroft in the Early English and the chapter house in the Geometric style of Decorated Gothic architecture. In about 1310 work commenced on the Lady Chapel, to the design of Thomas Witney, who also built the central tower from 1315 to 1322 in the Decorated Gothic style. The tower was later braced internally with arches by William Joy. Concurrent with this work, in 1329–1345 Joy made alterations and extensions to the choir, joining it to the Lady Chapel with the retrochoir, the latter in the Flowing Decorated style.

Later changes include the Perpendicular vault of the tower and construction of Sugar’s Chapel, 1475–1490 by William Smyth. Also, Gothic Revival renovations were made to the choir and pulpitum by Benjamin Ferrey and Anthony Salvin, 1842–5187.

Plan

Wells has a total length of 415 feet (126 meters). In common with Canterbury, Lincoln and Salisbury cathedrals, it has the distinctly English arrangement of two transepts, with the body of the church divided into distinct parts: nave, choir, and retrochoir, beyond which extends the Lady Chapel. The façade is wide, with its towers extending beyond the transepts on either side. There is a large projecting porch on the north side of the nave forming an entry into the cathedral. To the north-east is the large octagonal chapter house, entered from the north choir aisle by a passage and staircase. To the south of the nave is a large cloister, unusual in that the northern range, that adjacent the cathedral, was never built.

Elevation

In section, the cathedral has the usual arrangement of a large church: a central nave with an aisle on each side, separated by two arcades. The elevation is in three stages, arcade, triforium gallery,
and clerestory. The nave is 67 feet (20 meters) in height, very low compared to the Gothic cathedrals of France. It has a markedly horizontal emphasis, caused by the triforium having a unique form, a series of identical narrow openings, lacking the usual definition of the bays. The triforium is separated from the arcade by a single horizontal string course that runs unbroken the length of the nave. There are no vertical lines linking the three stages, as the shafts supporting the vault rise above the triforium.

**Exterior**

The exterior of Wells Cathedral presents a relatively tidy and harmonious appearance since the greater part of the building was executed in a single style, Early English Gothic. This is uncommon among English cathedrals, where the exterior usually exhibits a plethora of styles. At Wells, later changes in the Perpendicular style were universally applied, such as filling the Early English lancet windows with simple tracery, the construction of a parapet that encircles the roof, and the addition of pinnacles framing each gable, similar to those around the chapter house and on the west front. At the eastern end there is a proliferation of tracery with repeated motifs in the Reticulated style, a stage between Geometric and Flowing Decorated tracery.

**West front**

**Iconography of the west front**

The sculptures on the west front at Wells include standing figures, seated figures, half-length angels and narratives in high relief. Many of the figures are life-sized or larger, and together they constitute the finest display of medieval carving in England. The figures and many of the architectural details were painted in bright colors, and the coloring scheme has been deduced from flakes of paint still adhering to some surfaces. The sculptures occupy nine architectural zones stretching horizontally across the entire west front and around the sides and the eastern returns of the towers which extend beyond the aisles. The strongly projecting buttresses have tiers of niches which contain many of the largest figures. Other large figures, including that of Christ, occupy the gable. A single figure stands in one of two later niches high on the northern tower.

In 1851 the archaeologist Charles Robert Cockerell published his analysis of the iconography, numbering the nine sculptural divisions from the lowest to the highest. He defined the theme as “a calendar for unlearned men” illustrating the doctrines and history of the Christian faith, its introduction to Britain, and its protection by princes and bishops. He likens the arrangement and iconography to the Te Deum.

According to Cockerell, the side of the façade that is to the south of the central door is the more sacred and the scheme is divided accordingly. The lowest range of niches each contained a standing figure, of which all but four figures on the west front, two on each side, have been destroyed. More have survived on the northern and eastern sides of the north tower. Cockerell speculates that those to the south of the portal represented prophets and patriarchs of the Old Testament while those to the north represented early missionaries to Britain, of which Augustine of Canterbury, St. Birinus, and Benedict Biscop are identifiable by their attributes. In the second zone, above each pair of standing figures, is a quatrefoil containing a half-length angel in relief, some of which have survived. Between the gables of the niches are quatrefoils that contain a series of narratives from the Bible, with the Old Testament stories to the south, above the prophets and patriarchs, and those from the New Testament to the north. A horizontal course runs around the west front dividing the architectural stories at this point.
Above the course, zones four and five, as identified by Cockerell, contain figures which represent the Christian Church in Britain, with the spiritual lords such as bishops, abbots, abesses, and saintly founders of monasteries on the south, while kings, queens, and princes occupy the north. Many of the figures survive and many have been identified in the light of their various attributes. There is a hierarchy of size, with the more significant figures larger and enthroned in their niches rather than standing. Immediately beneath the upper course are a series of small niches containing dynamic sculptures of the dead coming forth from their tombs on the Day of Judgment. Although naked, some of the dead are defined as royalty by their crowns and others as bishops by their miters. Some emerge from their graves with joy and hope, and others with despair.

The niches in the lowest zone of the gable contain nine angels, of which Cockerell identifies Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel. In the next zone are the taller figures of the twelve apostles, some, such as John, Andrew, and Bartholomew, clearly identifiable by the attributes that they carry. The uppermost niches of the gable contained the figure of Christ the Judge at the center, with the Virgin Mary on his right and John the Baptist on his left. The figures all suffered from iconoclasm. A new statue of Jesus was carved for the central niche, but the two side niches now contain cherubim. Christ and the Virgin Mary are also represented by now headless figures in a Coronation of the Virgin in a niche above the central portal. A damaged figure of the Virgin and Christ Child occupies a quatrefoil in the spandrel of the door.

The west front is 100 feet (30 meters) high and 147 feet (45 meters) wide, and built of Inferior Oolite of the Middle Jurassic period, which came from the Doulting Stone Quarry, about 8 miles (13 kilometers) to the east. According to the architectural historian Alec Clifton-Taylor, it is “one of the great sights of England.”

West fronts in general take three distinct forms: those that follow the elevation of the nave and aisles, those that have paired towers at the end of each aisle, framing the nave, and those that screen the form of the building. The west front at Wells has the paired-tower form, unusual in that the towers do not indicate the location of the aisles, but extend well beyond them, screening the dimensions and profile of the building.

The west front rises in three distinct stages, each clearly defined by a horizontal course. This horizontal emphasis is counteracted by six strongly projecting buttresses defining the cross-sectional divisions of nave, aisles, and towers, and are highly decorated, each having canopied niches containing the largest statues on the façade.

At the lowest level of the façade is a plain base, contrasting with and stabilizing the ornate arcades that rise above it. The base is penetrated by three doors, which are in stark contrast to the often imposing portals of French Gothic cathedrals. The outer two are of domestic proportion and the central door is ornamented only by a central post, quatrefoil, and the fine moldings of the arch.

Above the basement rise two stories, ornamented with quatrefoils and niches originally holding about four hundred statues, with three hundred surviving until the mid-twentieth century. Since then, some have been restored or replaced, including the ruined figure of Christ in the gable.

The third stages of the flanking towers were both built in the Perpendicular style of the late fourteenth century, to the design of William Wynford; that on the north-west was not begun until about 1425. The design maintains the general proportions, and continues the strong projection of the buttresses.
The finished product has been criticized for its lack of pinnacles, and it is probable that the
towers were intended to carry spires which were never built. Despite its lack of spires or
pinnacles, the architectural historian Banister Fletcher describes it as “the highest development in
English Gothic of this type of façade.”

Crossing tower
The central tower appears to date from the early thirteenth century. It was substantially
reconstructed in the early fourteenth century during the remodeling of the east end, necessitating
the internal bracing of the piers a decade or so later. In the fourteenth century the tower was
given a timber and lead spire which burnt down in 1439. The exterior was then reworked in the
Perpendicular style and given the present parapet and pinnacles. Alec Clifton-Taylor describes it
as “outstanding even in Somerset, a county famed for the splendor of its church towers.”

North porch
The north porch is described by art historian Nikolaus Pevsner as “sumptuously decorated,” and
intended to be the main entrance. Externally it is simple and rectangular with plain side walls.
The entrance is a steeply arched portal framed by rich moldings of eight shafts with stiff-leaf
capitals each encircled by an annular molding at middle height. Those on the left are figurative,
containing images representing the martyrdom of St. Edmund the Martyr. The walls are lined
with deep niches framed by narrow shafts with capitals and annulets like those of the portal.

Cloisters
The cloisters were built in the late thirteenth century and largely rebuilt from 1430 to 1508 and
have wide openings divided by mullions and transoms, and tracery in the Perpendicular Gothic
style. The vault has lierne ribs that form octagons at the center of each compartment, the joints of
each rib having decorative bosses. The eastern range is of two stories, of which the upper is the
library built in the fifteenth century.

Because Wells Cathedral was secular rather than monastic, cloisters were not a practical
necessity. They were omitted from several other secular cathedrals but were built here and at
Chichester. Explanations for their construction at these two secular cathedrals range from the
processional to the aesthetic. As at Chichester, there is no northern range to the cloisters. In
monastic cloisters it was the north range, benefiting most from winter sunlight, that was often
used as a scriptorium.

Restoration
In 1969, when a large chunk of stone fell from a statue near the main door, it became apparent
that there was an urgent need for restoration of the west front. Detailed studies of the stonework
and of conservation practices were undertaken under the cathedral architect, Alban D. R. Caroe
and a restoration committee formed. The methods that were selected for conservation were those
devised by Eve and Robert Baker. W. A. (Bert) Wheeler, clerk of works to the cathedral 1935–
1978, had previously experimented with washing and surface-treatment of architectural carvings
on the building and his techniques were among those tried on the statues.

The conservation was carried out between 1974 and 1986, wherever possible using non-invasive
procedures such as washing with water and a solution of lime, filling gaps and damaged surfaces
with soft mortar to prevent the ingress of water and stabilizing statues that were fracturing
because of the corrosion of metal dowels. The surfaces were finished by painting with a thin coat
of mortar and silane to resist further erosion and attack by pollutants. The restoration of the
façade revealed much paint adhering to the statues and their niches, indicating that it had once been brightly colored.

Chapter House

The chapter house was begun in the late thirteenth century and built in two stages, completed about 1310. It is a two-storied structure with the main chamber raised on an undercroft. It is entered from a staircase which divides and turns, one branch leading through the upper storey of Chain Gate to Vicars’ Close. The Decorated interior is described by Alec Clifton-Taylor as “architecturally the most beautiful in England.” It is octagonal, with its ribbed vault supported on a central column. The column is surrounded by shafts of Purbeck Marble, rising to a single continuous rippling foliate capital of stylized oak leaves and acorns, quite different in character to the Early English stiff-leaf foliage. Above the molding spring thirty-two ribs of strong profile giving an effect generally likened to “a great palm tree.” The windows are large with Geometric Decorated tracery that is beginning to show an elongation of form, and ogees in the lesser lights that are characteristic of Flowing Decorated tracery. The tracery lights still contain ancient glass. Beneath the windows are fifty-one stalls, the canopies of which are enlivened by carvings including many heads carved in a light-hearted manner.

Artworks and treasures

Stained glass

Wells Cathedral contains one of the most substantial collections of medieval stained glass in England, despite damage by Parliamentary troops in 1642 and 1643. The oldest surviving glass dates from the late thirteenth century and is in two windows on the west side of the chapter house staircase. Two windows in the south choir aisle are from 1310–1320.

The Lady Chapel has five windows of which four date from 1325–1330 and include images of a local saint, Dunstan. The east window was restored to a semblance of its original appearance by Thomas Willement in 1845. The other windows have complete canopies, but the pictorial sections are fragmented.

The east window of the choir is a broad seven-light window dating from 1340–1345. It depicts the tree of Jesse (the genealogy of Christ) and demonstrates the use of silver staining, a new technique that allowed the artist to paint details on the glass in yellow, as well as black. The combination of yellow and green glass and the application of the bright yellow stain gives the window its popular name, the “Golden Window.” It is flanked by two windows each side in the clerestory, with large figures of saints, also dated to 1340–1345. In 2010 a major conservation program was undertaken on the Jesse Tree window.

The panels in the chapel of St. Katharine are attributed to Arnold of Nijmegen and date from about 1520. They were acquired from the destroyed church of Saint-Jean, Rouen, with the last panel having been purchased in 1953.

The large triple lancet to the nave west end was glazed at the expense of Dean Creighton at a cost of £ 140 in 1664. It was repaired in 1813, and the central light was largely replaced to a design by Archibald Kightley Nicholson between 1925 and 1931. The main north and south transept end windows by James Powell and Sons were erected in the early twentieth century.

Carvings

The greater part of the stone carving of Wells Cathedral comprises foliate capitals in the stiff-leaf style. They are found ornamenting the piers of the nave, choir, and transepts. Stiff-leaf foliage is highly abstracted, and although possibly influenced by carvings of acanthus leaves or vine
leaves, cannot be easily identified as representing any particular plant. At Wells, the carving of the foliage is varied and vigorous, the springing leaves and deep undercuts casting shadows that contrast with the surface of the piers. In the transepts and towards the crossing in the nave the capitals have many small figurative carvings among the leaves. These include a man with a toothache and a series of four scenes depicting the “wages of sin” in a narrative of fruit stealers who creep into an orchard and are subsequently beaten by the farmer. Another well-known carving is in the north transept aisle, a foliate corbel on which climbs a lizard, sometimes identified as a salamander, a symbol of eternal life.

Carvings in the Decorated Gothic style may be found in the eastern end of the buildings, where there are many carved bosses. In the chapter house, the carvings of the fifty-one stalls include numerous small heads of great variety, many of them smiling or laughing. A well-known figure is the corbel of the dragon-slaying monk in the chapter house stair. The large continuous capital that encircles the central pillar of the chapter house is markedly different in style to the stiff-leaf of the Early English period. In contrast to the bold projections and undercutting of the earlier work, it has a rippling form and is clearly identifiable as grapevine.

The fifteenth-century cloisters have many small bosses ornamenting the vault. Two of these carvings in the west cloister, near the location of the gift shop and café, have been described as sheela na gigs which are female figures displaying their genitals and variously considered to be associated with depictions of the sin of lust or with ancient fertility cults.

**Misericords**

Wells Cathedral has one of the finest sets of misericords in Britain. Its clergy has a long tradition of singing or reciting from the Book of Psalms each day, along with the customary daily reading of the daily office. In medieval times the clergy assembled in the church eight times daily for the canonical hours. As the greater part of the services was recited while standing, many monastic or collegiate churches were fitted with stalls in which the seats tipped up to provide a convenient ledge for the monk or cleric to lean against. They were called “misericords” because their installation was an act of mercy. Misericords typically have a carved figurative bracket beneath the ledge framed by two floral motifs known, in the heraldic manner, as “supporters.”

The misericords date from 1330 to 1340. They may have been carved under the direction of master carpenter John Strode, although his name is not recorded before 1341. He was assisted by Bartholomew Quarter, who is documented from 1343. They originally numbered ninety, of which sixty-five have survived. Sixty-one are installed in the choir, three are displayed in the cathedral and one is held by the Victoria and Albert Museum. New stalls were ordered when the eastern end of the choir was extended in the early fourteenth century. The canons complained that they had borne the cost of the rebuilding and ordered that the prebendary clerics should pay for their own stalls. When the newly refurbished choir opened in 1339 many misericords were left unfinished, including one fifth of the surviving sixty-five. Many of the clerics had not paid, and were required to contribute a total sum of £200. The misericords survived better than the other sections of the stalls, which, during the Protestant Reformation, had their canopies chopped off and galleries inserted above them. One of the misericords, depicting a boy pulling a thorn from his foot, dates from the seventeenth century. In 1848 there was a complete rearrangement of the choir furniture, and sixty-one of the misericords were reused in the restructured stalls.

The subject matter of the carvings of the central brackets on misericords is very varied, but with many common themes occurring in different churches. Typically, the themes are less unified and less directly related to the Bible and Christian theology than are the themes of small sculptures seen elsewhere within churches, such as those on bosses. This is much the case at Wells, where
none of the misericord carvings is directly based on a Biblical story. The subjects, chosen either by the wood-carver, or perhaps by the individual paying for the stall, have no over-riding theme. The sole unifying element is the roundels on each side of the pictorial subject, which are all elaborately carved foliage, in most cases formal and stylized in the later Decorated manner, but with several examples of naturalistic foliage including roses and bindweed. Many of the subjects carry traditional interpretations. The image of the “pelican in her piety” (believed to feed her young on her own blood) is a recognized symbol for Christ’s love for the Church. A cat playing with a mouse may represent the Devil snaring a human soul. Other subjects illustrate popular fables or sayings such as “When the fox preaches, look to your geese.” Many of the subjects are depictions of animals, some of which may symbolize a human vice or virtue, or an aspect of faith.

Twenty-seven of the carvings depict animals: rabbits, dogs, a puppy biting a cat, a ewe feeding a lamb, monkeys, lions, bats, and the early Christian motif of two doves drinking from a ewer. Eighteen of the misericords have mythological subjects, including mermaids, dragons, and wyverns. Five of the carvings are clearly narrative, such as the fox and the geese, and the story of Alexander the Great being raised to heaven by griffins. There are three heads: a bishop in a mitre, an angel, and a woman wearing a veil over her hair arranged in coils over each ear. Eleven carvings are of human figures, among which are several of remarkable design, having been conceived by the artist specifically for their purpose of supporting a shelf. One figure lies beneath the seat, supporting the shelf with his cheek, one hand, and one foot. Another sits in a contorted manner supporting the weight on his elbow, while another figure squats with his knees wide apart and a strained look on his face.

Fittings and monuments

Some of the cathedral’s fittings and monuments are hundreds of years old. The brass lectern in the Lady Chapel dates from 1661, and has a molded stand and foliate crest. In the north transept chapel is a seventeenth-century oak screen with columns, formerly part of cow stalls, with artisan Ionic capitals and cornice, which is set forward over the chest tomb of John Godelee. There is a bound oak chest from the fourteenth century which was used to store the chapter seal and key documents. The bishop’s throne dates from 1340, and has a paneled, canted front and stone doorway, and a deep nodding cusped ogee canopy above it, with three-stepped statue niches and pinnacles. The throne was restored by Anthony Salvin around 1850. Opposite the throne is a nineteenth-century octagonal pulpit on a coved base with paneled sides and steps up from the north aisle. The round font in the south transept is from the former Saxon cathedral and has an arcade of round-headed arches, on a round plinth. The font cover was made in 1635 and is decorated with the heads of putti. The Chapel of St. Martin is a memorial to every Somerset man who fell in World War I.

The monuments and tombs include: Bishop Gisa, died 1088; Bishop Bytton, died 1274; Bishop William of March, died 1302; John Droxford, died 1329; John Godelee, died 1333; John Middleton, died ca. 1350; Ralph of Shrewsbury, died 1363; Bishop Harewell, died 1386; William Bykonyll, died ca. 1448; John Bernard, died 1459; Bishop Bekynton, died 1464; John Gunthorpe died 1498; John Still, died 1607; Robert Creighton, died 1672; Bishop Kidder, died 1703; Bishop Hooper, died 1727; and Bishop Harvey, died 1894.

Clock

In the north transept is Wells Cathedral clock, an astronomical clock from about 1325, believed to be the work of Peter Lightfoot, a monk of Glastonbury. Its mechanism, dated to between 1386 and 1392, was replaced in the nineteenth century, and the original mechanism moved to the
Science Museum in London, where it continues to operate. It is the second-oldest surviving clock in England, after the Salisbury cathedral clock.

The clock has its original medieval face. As well as showing the time on a 24-hour dial, it reflects the motion of the Sun and Moon, the phases of the Moon, and the time since the last new Moon. The astronomical dial represents a geocentric or pre-Copernican view of the universe, with the Sun and Moon revolving round a central fixed Earth, like that of the clock at Ottery St. Mary. Every quarter hour the clock is chimed by a quarter jack in the form of a small automaton known as Jack Blandifers, who hits two bells with hammers and two with his heels. At the striking of the clock jousting knights appear above the clock face.

On the outer wall of the transept, opposite Vicars’ Hall, is a second clock face of the same clock, placed there just over seventy years after the interior clock and driven by the same mechanism. The second clock face has two quarter jacks (which strike on the quarter hour) in the form of knights in armor.

In 2010 the official clock-winder retired and was replaced by an electric mechanism.

--http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wells_Cathedral

**The Bishop’s Palace**

The Bishop’s Palace and accompanying Bishop’s House at Wells in the English county of Somerset is adjacent to Wells Cathedral and has been the home of the Bishops of the Diocese of Bath and Wells for 800 years. It has been designated by English Heritage as a Grade I listed building.

Building of the palace started around 1210 by Bishops Jocelin of Wells and Reginald Fitz Jocelin. The chapel and great hall were added by Bishop Robert Burnell between 1275 and 1292. The walls, gatehouse, and moat were added in the fourteenth century by Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury. The Bishop’s House was added in the fifteenth century by Bishop Thomas Beckington. The great hall later fell into disrepair and was partially demolished around 1830.

The palace was originally surrounded by a medieval deer park. When the walls were built, streams were diverted to form the moat as a reservoir. In the 1820s, the grounds within the walls were planted and laid out as pleasure grounds by Bishop George Law, who created a reflecting pond near the springs. Parts of the buildings are still used as a residence by the current bishop; however, much of the palace is now used for public functions and as a tourist attraction.

**History**

Construction began around 1210 by Bishop Jocelin of Wells but principally dates from 1230. Bishop Jocelin continued the cathedral building campaign begun by Bishop Reginald Fitz Jocelin, and was responsible for building the Bishop’s Palace, as well as the choristers’ school, a grammar school, a hospital for travelers, and a chapel within the liberty of the cathedral. He also built a manor house at Wookey, near Wells. The chapel and great hall were built between 1275 and 1292 for Bishop Robert Burnell. The windows had stone tracery. Stone bosses where the supporting ribs meet on the ceiling are covered with representations of oak leaves and the Green Man. The building is seen as a fine example of the Early English architectural style.

In the fourteenth century, Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury continued the building. He had an uneasy relationship with the citizens of Wells, partly because of his imposition of taxes, and surrounded his palace with crenellated walls, a moat and a drawbridge. The 5 meters (16 feet) high three-story gatehouse, which dates from 1341, has a bridge over the moat. The entrance was protected by a heavy gate, portcullis and drawbridge, operated by machinery above the entrance, and
spouts through which defenders could pour scalding liquids onto any attacker. The drawbridge was still operational in 1831, when it was closed after word was received that the Palace of the Bishop of Bristol was subject to an arson attack during the Bristol riots. These took place after the House of Lords rejected the second Reform Bill. The proposal had aimed to get rid of some of the rotten boroughs and give Britain’s fast growing industrial towns such as Bristol, Manchester, Birmingham, Bradford, and Leeds greater representation in the House of Commons; however there was no rioting in Wells. The water which filled the moat flowed from the springs in the grounds which had previously chosen its own course as a small stream separating the cathedral and the palace and causing marshy ground around the site. The moat acted as a reservoir, controlled by sluice gates, which powered watermills in the town.

The north wing (now the Bishop’s House) was added in the fifteenth century by Bishop Beckington, with further modifications in the eighteenth century, and in 1810 by Bishop Beadon. It was restored, divided, and the upper storey added by Benjamin Ferrey between 1846 and 1854. Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1548, Bishop Barlow sold Edward Seymour, first Duke of Somerset, the palace and grounds. These were recovered after the Duke’s execution in 1552.

In the 1550s, Bishop Barlow sold the lead from the roofs of the great hall. This resulted in it falling into a ruined state. It can be seen in an engraving of 1733 but was largely demolished around 1830 by Bishop Law. He created a “more picturesque ruin” by removing the south and east walls and laying out and planting the area previously occupied by the great hall. The palace was used as a garrison for troops in both the English Civil War and Monmouth Rebellion, after which it was used as a prison for rebels after the Battle of Sedgemoor.

Bishop Kidder was killed during the Great Storm of 1703, when two chimney stacks in the palace fell on him and his wife, while they were asleep in bed. A central porch was added around 1824 and, in the 1840s and 1850s, Benjamin Ferrey restored the palace and added an upper story. He also restored the chapel using stained glass from ruined French churches.

In 1953, it was designated as a Grade I listed. In February, 2008, the poet laureate of the United Kingdom, Andrew Motion, was commissioned by the BBC West television program Inside Out West to write a poem in Harry Patch’s honor. Entitled “The Five Acts of Harry Patch” it was first read at a special event at the Bishop’s Palace, where it was introduced by the Prince of Wales and received by Harry Patch.

One of the two surviving Glastonbury chairs is on display in the palace. It was made in Britain from a description brought back from Rome in 1504 by Abbot Richard Beere to Glastonbury Abbey, and was produced for or by John Arthur Thorne, a monk who was the treasurer at the abbey. Arthur perished on Glastonbury Tor in 1539, hanged, drawn, and quartered alongside his master, Richard Whiting, the last Abbot of Glastonbury, during the dissolution of the monasteries. The Abbot sat on a Glastonbury chair of this type during his trial at the Bishop’s Palace. Other chairs of this age and later reproductions can also be seen.

**Current use**

The palace now belongs to the Church Commissioners. The main palace is open to the public, including the chapel and a long gallery, although the Bishop’s House is still used as a residence and offices. There is a restaurant in the medieval undercroft. The palace is licensed for weddings and used for conferences and meetings. The croquet lawn in front of the palace is used on a regular basis. The palace was used as a location for some of the scenes in the 2007 British comedy Hot Fuzz.
Architecture

The Bishop’s Palace lies within the Liberty of St. Andrew, which encloses the cathedral, the Bishop’s Palace, Vicars’ Close and the residences and offices of the clergy who serve the cathedral. The palace is accessible from the adjacent market place through an archway known as The Bishop’s Eye in the gatehouse to the walled precinct. The Bishop’s Eye was built around 1450, by Bishop Beckington. It is a three-story building of Doulting ashlar stone, with a copper roof and has been designated as a Grade I listed building. The Bishop’s Eye forms one of a pair with the Penniless Porch which is the gateway into the Cathedral from the market place, which was built at the same time and in a similar style.

Bishop’s Palace

The palace is a two story building of seven bays, with three gables over alternating bays, two of which are supported by buttresses. There is an attic beneath the coped gables and surmounted by octagonal chimney stacks. The interior is laid out with a hall, solar and gallery with an undercroft. It has flagstone floors and a sixteenth-century stone fireplace.

To the right of the building is an aisleless chapel in the early Decorated Gothic style of the late thirteenth century, built of local stone with Doulting Stone dressings. The remains of the thirteenth-century great hall are the north wall and some column bases of an internal arcade, indicating that it was a five bayed aisled hall with crenellations and tall windows in the Decorated Gothic style.

Bishop’s House

The Bishop’s House consists of two narrow ranges with a narrow courtyard. The front of the building on the south side is crenellated. The arrangement of the rooms inside has been changed many times over the years. It still includes features from the fifteenth century including a doorway and oak screens. The windows include some remnants of sixteenth century stained glass.

Grounds

The grounds of the palace in the thirteenth century included a medieval deer park. The right to form the park was granted by King John to Bishop Jocelin in 1207. The Palace Camery was planted with orchards, a herbarium and kitchen gardens to provide food for the Bishop and staff.

There are now 14 acres (5.7 hectares) of gardens including St. Andrew’s Spring from which the city takes its name. The spring supplies St. Andrew’s Well from which water flows at a rate of 40 imperial gallons (180 liters) per second into the moat which holds 4 million imperial gallons (18,000,000 liters). The water emerging from the spring originates from the cave system of the Mendip Hills including Thrupe Lane Swallet. The Well House was built in 1451, for Bishop Beckington to provide water to the citizens of Wells in the market place. The small stone building with a slate roof has a central hole in the stone floor giving access to the well itself.

The grounds included The Bishop’s Barn which was built as a tithe barn in the fifteenth century, and the area next to it which is now a public park and play area. The barn was built of local stone roughly squared, with Doulting ashlar dressings and a Westmorland slate roof. Royalist troops were quartered in the barn during the Bloody Assizes.

Much of the existing landscaping on the south lawn was carried out by Bishop George Henry Law in the 1820s. This included the incorporation of the remains of the roofless great hall and the construction of a raised rampart around the inside of the wall accessible from one of the towers. Bishop Law also created a grotto which he used to display fossils from Banwell Caves.
which were also part of his estate. A range of trees and shrubs were planted including: a Black Walnut, Lebanon Cedar, Catalpa, and Ginkgo. In the 1830s, Bishop Law had a pool created next to the springs. This acts as a mirror on a still day providing reflections of the east end of the cathedral in the water.

In the outer garden is an arboretum, planted in 1977 by Bishop John Bickersteth to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of Elizabeth II. The Mute Swans on the moat have been trained to ring bells by pulling strings, to beg for food. The first swans were trained by one of the daughters of Bishop Hervey in the 1870s. Two swans which were given to the bishop by Queen Elizabeth II in 2006, are still able to ring for lunch fed to them by the caretakers who live in the gatehouse.

Every August bank holiday, the moat is used for the Wells Moat Boat Race, a charity raft race organized by Wells Lions Club and Air Training Corps. In 2007, the Bishop entered a raft into the race. In 2013, a “tree of heaven” on the south lawn, which had been planted in 1885, was blown down during the St. Jude Storm.

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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop’s_Palace,_Wells

**The Vicars’ Close**

Vicars’ Close, in Wells, Somerset, England, is claimed to be the oldest purely residential street with its original buildings all surviving intact in Europe. John Julius Norwich calls it “that rarest of survivals, a planned street of the mid-fourteenth century.” It comprises numerous Grade 1 listed buildings, comprising 27 residences (originally 44), built for Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury, a chapel and library at the north end, and a hall at the south end, over an arched gate. It is connected at its southern end to the cathedral by way of a walkway over Chain Gate.

The Close is about 460 feet (140 meters) long, and paved with setts. Its width is tapered by 10 feet (3 meters) to make it look longer when viewed from the main entrance nearest the cathedral. When viewed from the other end it looks shorter. By the nineteenth century the buildings were reported to be in a poor state of repair, and part of the hall was being used as a malthouse.

**Origins**

The Close owes its origins to a grant of land and buildings by Walter de Hulle, a canon of the cathedral, for the purpose of accommodating thirteen chantry priests. Bishop Jocelin styled these priests the Vicars Choral, their duty being to chant divine service eight times a day. Previously they had lived throughout the town, and Bishop Ralph resolved to incorporate them and provide subsistence for the future. The Vicars Choral were assigned annuities from his lands and tenements in Congresbury and Wookey, an annual fee from the vicarage of Chew, and endowed with lands obtained from the Feoffees of Walter de Hulle. The residences he built became known as the College, or Close of the Vicars.

**The Vicars’ Hall and gateway**

The first part of the Close to be constructed were a first floor barrel-roofed common hall and store room below, kitchen and bakehouse which were completed in 1348. Chain Gate was abutted to it in 1459 by Thomas Beckington. This included a gallery over the gate into the cathedral for the vicars’ convenience. The entrance arch into the close is divided into a pedestrian gate and a wagon gate, and has a lierne vault ceiling.
**Vicars’ Chapel and Library**

The chapel was built c. 1424-1430 at the north end of the close against the northern boundary wall of the Liberty. The lower floor was a chapel, and a spiral stair lead up to the library. It is now used by Wells Cathedral School.

**The residences**

The residences originally comprised a ground floor hall of approximately 20 feet x 13 feet (6 meters x 4 meters), and an upper floor of the same size. Both had a fireplace in the front wall. The date of some of the buildings is unclear, but it is known that some had been built by 1363 and the rest were completed by 1412. From the fifteenth century onwards many alterations have been made, including extensions at the rear and knocking through walls to create larger dwellings. Following the Reformation when clerical marriage was permitted, larger households would have been required. In a charter of ca. 1582 Queen Elizabeth restricted the number of vicars to twenty.

In the fifteenth century, Bishop Thomas Beckington left much of his estate to the Vicars Choral, enabling repairs to be carried out. The chimney shafts were renewed. Each stack incorporates two heraldic shields and the upper sections of the stacks are octagonal. The shields are those of the Bishop, a beacon above tun, and the arms of his three executors; sugar loaves for Hugh Sugar, three swans for Richard Swan, and the talbot for John Pope.

No. 1 Vicars’ Close was once a larger property, but has since been divided and part is now No. 1 St. Andrew Street.

Shrewsbury House is architecturally different to all the other buildings. It was re-built in the nineteenth century after a fire that burnt down the original structure.

The gardens were not part of the original scheme. The garden walls were added in the fifteenth century. In 2009, two large trees that grew in the front gardens of two residences were cut down because they obscured the view, and the roots were at risk of damaging the ancient buildings.

--http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vicars’_Close,_Wells

**LINCOLN CATHEDRAL**

*The Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Lincoln*
History

Remigius de Fécamp, the first bishop of Lincoln, moved the Episcopal seat there “some time between 1072 and 1092.” About this, James Essex writes “Remigius . . . laid the foundations of his Cathedral in 1088,” and “it is probable that he, being a Norman, employed Norman masons to superintend the building . . . though he could not complete the whole before his death.” Before that, writes B. Winkles, “It is well known that Remigius appropriated the parish church of St. Mary Magdalene in Lincoln, although it is not known what use he made of it.”

Up until then St. Mary’s Church in Stow was considered to be the “mother church” of Lincolnshire (although it was not a cathedral, because the seat of the diocese was at Dorchester Abbey in Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire). However, Lincoln was more central to a diocese that stretched from the Thames to the Humber.

Bishop Remigius built the first Lincoln Cathedral on the present site, finishing it in 1092 and then dying on May 9 of that year, two days before it was consecrated. In 1141, the timber roofing was destroyed in a fire. Bishop Alexander rebuilt and expanded the cathedral, but it was mostly destroyed by an earthquake about forty years later, in 1185 (dated by the BGS as occurring April 15, 1185). The earthquake was one of the largest felt in the UK: it has an estimated magnitude of over 5, with an EMS intensity of 7 estimated in certain locations. The epicenter of the earthquake is debated: some (Throsby, 1790; Mayfield, 1976; Beresford, 1987) think it may have been in Nottinghamshire, where it completely destroyed several villages. Others (Davison, 1931) estimate the epicenter was in the North Sea, as the quake was also felt in Norway. The damage to the cathedral is thought to have been very extensive: the Cathedral is described as having “split from top to bottom”; in the current building, only the lower part of the west end and of its two attached towers remain of the pre-earthquake cathedral. Some (Kidson, 1986; Woo, 1991) have suggested that the damage to Lincoln Cathedral was probably exaggerated by poor build quality or design, with the actual collapse most probably caused by a vault collapse.

After the earthquake, a new bishop was appointed. He was Hugh de Burgundy of Avalon, France, who became known as St. Hugh of Lincoln. He began a massive rebuilding and expansion program. Rebuilding began with the choir (St. Hugh’s Choir) and the eastern transepts between 1192 and 1210. The central nave was then built in the Early English Gothic style. Lincoln Cathedral soon followed other architectural advances of the time — pointed arches, flying buttresses and ribbed vaulting were added to the cathedral. This allowed the creation and support of larger windows. The cathedral is the third largest in Britain (in floor space) after St. Paul’s and York Minster, being 484 feet (148 meters) by 271 feet (83 meters). It is Lincolnshire’s largest building, and until 1549 the spire was reputedly the tallest medieval tower in Europe, though the exact height has been a matter of debate. Accompanying the cathedral’s large bell, Great Tom of Lincoln, is a quarter-hour striking clock. The clock was installed in the early nineteenth century.

There are thirteen bells in the south-west tower, two in the north-west tower, and five in the central tower (including Great Tom). The two large stained glass rose windows, the matching Dean’s Eye and Bishop’s Eye, were added to the cathedral during the late Middle Ages. The former, the Dean’s Eye in the north transept dates from the 1192 rebuild begun by St. Hugh, finally being completed in 1235. The latter, the Bishop’s eye, in the south transept was reconstructed 100 years later in 1330. A contemporary record, “The Metrical Life of St. Hugh,” refers to the meaning of these two windows (one on the dark, north, side and the other on the light, south, side of the building):
For north represents the devil, and south the Holy Spirit, and it is in these directions that the two eyes look. The bishop faces the south in order to invite in and the dean the north in order to shun; the one takes care to be saved, the other takes care not to perish. With these Eyes the cathedral’s face is on watch for the candelabra of heaven and the darkness of Lethe (oblivion).

After the additions of the Dean’s eye and other major Gothic additions it is believed some mistakes in the support of the tower occurred, for in 1237 the main tower collapsed. A new tower was soon started and in 1255 the Cathedral petitioned Henry III to allow them to take down part of the town wall to enlarge and expand the Cathedral, including the rebuilding of the central tower and spire. They replaced the small rounded chapels (built at the time of St. Hugh) with a larger east end to the cathedral. This was to handle the increasing number of pilgrims to the Cathedral, who came to worship at the shrine of Hugh of Lincoln.

In 1290 Eleanor of Castile died and King Edward I of England decided to honor her, his Queen Consort, with an elegant funeral procession. After her body had been embalmed, which in the thirteenth century involved evisceration, Eleanor’s viscera were buried in Lincoln cathedral, and Edward placed a duplicate of the Westminster tomb there. The Lincoln tomb’s original stone chest survives; its effigy was destroyed in the seventeenth century and replaced with a nineteenth-century copy. On the outside of Lincoln Cathedral are two prominent statues often identified as Edward and Eleanor, but these images were heavily restored in the nineteenth century and they were probably not originally intended to depict the couple.

Between 1307 and 1311 the central tower was raised to its present height of 271 feet (83 meters). The western towers and front of the cathedral were also improved and heightened. At this time, a tall lead-encased wooden spire topped the central tower, but it was blown down in a storm in 1548. With its spire, the tower reputedly reached a height of 525 feet (160 meters) (which would have made it the world’s tallest structure, surpassing the Great Pyramid of Giza, which held the record for almost 4,000 years). This height is agreed to by most sources but has been doubted by others. Other additions to the cathedral at this time included its elaborate carved screen and the fourteenth-century misericords, as well as the Angel choir. For a large part of the length of the cathedral, the walls have arches in relief with a second layer in front to give the illusion of a passageway along the wall. However the illusion does not work, as the stonemason, copying techniques from France, did not make the arches the correct length needed for the illusion to be effective.

In 1398 John of Gaunt and Katherine Swynford founded a chantry in the cathedral, to pray for the welfare of their souls, and in the fifteenth century the building in the cathedral turned to chantry or memorial chapels. The chapels next to the Angel Choir were built in the Perpendicular style, with an emphasis on strong vertical lines, which survive today in the window tracery and wall paneling.

Magna Carta

The bishop of Lincoln, Hugh of Wells, was one of the signatories to the Magna Carta and for hundreds of years the cathedral held one of the four remaining copies of the original, now securely displayed in Lincoln Castle. There are three other surviving copies; two at the British Library and one at Salisbury Cathedral. In 2009 the Lincoln Magna Carta was loaned to the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California.
**Little Saint Hugh**

In August 1255 the body of an eight-year old boy was found in a well in Lincoln. He had been missing for nearly a month. This incident became the source of a blood libel in the city, with Jews accused of his abduction, torture, and murder. Many Jews were arrested and eighteen were hanged. The boy became named as Little Saint Hugh to distinguish him from Saint Hugh of Lincoln, but he was never officially canonized (made a saint).

The cathedral benefited from these events because Hugh was seen as a martyr, and many devotees came to the city and cathedral to venerate him. Chaucer mentions the case in “The Prioress’s Tale” and a ballad was written about it in 1783. In 1955 a plaque was put up near “the remains of the shrine of ‘Little St. Hugh’” in the cathedral, that decries the “Trumped up stories of ‘ritual murders’ of Christian boys by Jewish communities.”

**The Lincoln Imp**

One of the stone carvings within the Cathedral is the Lincoln Imp. There are several variations of the legend surrounding the figure.

According to fourteenth-century legend, two mischievous imps were sent by Satan to do evil work on Earth. After causing mayhem elsewhere in Northern England the two imps headed to Lincoln Cathedral, where they smashed tables and chairs and tripped up the Bishop. An angel appeared in the Angel Choir and ordered them to stop. One of the imps sat atop a stone pillar and started throwing rocks at the angel whilst the other cowered under the broken tables and chairs. The angel turned the first imp to stone, allowing the second imp to escape. The imp that turned to stone can still be found sitting atop his stone column in the Angel Choir.

**Wren library**

The Wren Library houses a rare collection of over 277 manuscripts, including the text of works of the Venerable Bede.

**Rose Windows**

Lincoln Cathedral features two major rose windows, which are a highly uncommon feature among medieval architecture in England. On the north side of the cathedral there is the “Dean’s Eye” which survives from the original structure of the building and on the south side there is the “Bishop’s Eye” which was most likely rebuilt circa 1325–1350. This south window is one of the largest examples of curvilinear tracery seen in medieval architecture. Curvilinear tracery is a form of tracery where the patterns are continuous curves. This form was often done within pointed arches and squared windows because those are the easiest shapes, so the circular space of the window was a unique challenge to the designers. A solution was created that called for the circle to be divided down into smaller shapes that would make it simpler to design and create. Curves were drawn within the window which created four distinct areas of the circle. This made the spaces within the circle where the tracery would go much smaller, and easier to work with. This window is also interesting and unique in that the focus of the tracery was shifted away from the center of the circle and instead placed in other sections. The glazing of the window was equally as difficult as the tracery for many of the same reason; therefore, the designers made a decision to cut back on the amount of iconography within the window. Most cathedral windows during this time displayed many colorful images of the bible; however at Lincoln there are very few images. Some of those images that can be seen within the window include saints Paul, Andrew, and James.
Wooden Trusses

One major architectural feature of Lincoln Cathedral are the spectacular vaults. The varying vaults within the cathedral are said to be both original and experimental. Simply comparing the different vaults seen in Lincoln clearly shows that a great deal of creativity was involved when designing the cathedral. The vaults especially, clearly define the experimental aspect seen at Lincoln. There are several different kinds of vaults that differ between the nave, aisles, choir, and chapels of the cathedral. Along the north aisle there is a continuous ridge rib with a regular arcade that ignores the bays. Meanwhile, on the south aisle there is a discontinuous ridge rib that puts an emphasis on each separate bay. The northwest chapel has quadripartite vaults and the south chapel has vaults that stem from one central support columns. The use of sexpartite vaults allowed for more natural light to enter the cathedral through the clerestory windows, which were placed inside of each separate bay. Saint Hugh’s Choir exhibits extremely unusual vaults. It is a series of asymmetrical vaults that appear to almost be a diagonal line created by two ribs on one side translating into only a single rib on the other side of the vault. This pattern divides up the space of the vaults and bays, perfectly placing the emphasis on the bays. The chapter house vaults are also interesting. It is a decagonal building with a single, central column that twenty ribs rise from. Each separate area of Lincoln can be identified solely by the different vaults of the space. Each vault, or each variation of the vault, is fresh and original. They illustrate innovative thinking and great creativity. There is no doubt that these vaults, and all of the other experimental aspects of Lincoln came with a slight risk; however the results are truly wonderful.

Twenty-first Century

According to the cathedral website, over £ 1 million a year is spent keeping the cathedral in shape; the most recent project completed has been the restoration of the west front in 2000. About ten years ago it was discovered that the flying buttresses on the east end were no longer connected to the adjoining stonework, and repairs were made to prevent collapse. The most recent problem was the discovery that the stonework of the Dean’s Eye window in the transept was crumbling, meaning that a complete reconstruction of the window has had to be carried out according to the conservation criteria set out by the International Council on Monuments and Sites.

There was a period of great anxiety when it emerged that the stonework needed to shift only 5 millimeters (0.20 inches) for the entire window to collapse. Specialist engineers removed the window’s tracery before installing a strengthened, more stable replacement. In addition to this the original stained glass was cleaned and set behind a new clear isothermal glass which offers better protection from the elements. By April 2006 the renovation project was completed at a cost of £ 2 million.

Recently, concerns have been growing once more about the state of the west front, as there has been some stonework falling, which has raised questions as to the effectiveness of the repairs carried out in 2000.

--http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lincoln_Cathedral
GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL
The Cathedral Church of St. Peter and the Holy and Indivisible Trinity, Gloucester

History

Foundations

The foundations of the present church were laid by Abbot Serlo (1072–1104). Walter Gloucester (d. 1412) the abbey’s historian, became its first mitred abbot in 1381. Until 1541, Gloucester lay in the see of Worcester, but the separate see was then constituted, with John Wakeman, last abbot of Tewkesbury, as its first bishop. The diocese covers the greater part of Gloucestershire, with small parts of Herefordshire and Wiltshire. The cathedral has a stained glass window containing the earliest images of golf. This dates from 1350, over 300 years earlier than the earliest image of golf from Scotland. There is also a carved image of people playing a ball game, believed by some to be one of the earliest images of medieval football.

Construction and architecture

The cathedral, built as the abbey church, consists of a Norman nucleus (Walter de Lacy is buried there), with additions in every style of Gothic architecture. It is 420 feet (130 meters) long, and 144 feet (44 meters) wide, with a fine central tower of the fifteenth century rising to the height of 225 feet (69 meters) and topped by four delicate pinnacles, a famous landmark. The nave is massive Norman with an Early English roof; the crypt, under the choir, aisles, and chapels, is Norman, as is the chapter house. The crypt is one of the four apsidal cathedral crypts in England, the others being at Worcester, Winchester, and Canterbury.

The south porch is in the Perpendicular style, with a fan-vaulted roof, as also is the north transept, the south being transitional Decorated Gothic. The choir has Perpendicular tracery over Norman work, with an apsidal chapel on each side: the choir vaulting is particularly rich. The late Decorated east window is partly filled with surviving medieval stained glass. Between the
apsidal chapels is a cross Lady chapel, and north of the nave are the cloisters, the carrels or stalls for the monks’ study and writing lying to the south. The cloisters at Gloucester have the earliest surviving fan vaults, designed between 1351 and 1377 by Thomas de Cambridge.

The most notable monument is the canopied shrine of King Edward II of England, who was murdered at nearby Berkeley Castle. The building and sanctuary were enriched by the visits of pilgrims to this shrine. In a side-chapel is a monument in colored bog oak of Robert Curthose, eldest son of William the Conqueror and a great benefactor of the abbey, who was interred there. Monuments of Bishop Warburton and Dr. Edward Jenner are also worthy of note.

Between 1873 and 1890, and in 1897, the cathedral was extensively restored by Sir George Gilbert Scott.

**Misericords**

The cathedral has forty-six fourteenth-century misericords and twelfth-century replacements by George Gilbert Scott. Both types have a wide range of subject matter: mythology, everyday occurrences, religious symbolism, and folklore.

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**YORK MINSTER**

*The Cathedral and Metropolitical Church of St. Peter, York*

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**History**

York has had a verifiable Christian presence from the fourth century. However there is circumstantial evidence pointing to much earlier Christian involvement. According to Bede missionaries were sent from Rome by Eleutherius at the request of the chieftain Lucius of Britain in A.D. 180 to settle controverted points of differences as to Eastern and Western ceremonials which were disturbing the church. Tradition speaks of 28 British bishops, one for each of the greater British cities, over whom presided the Archbishops of London, York, and Caerleon-on-Usk.
The first recorded church on the site was a wooden structure built hurriedly in 627 to provide a place to baptize Edwin, King of Northumbria. Moves toward a more substantial building began in the 630s. A stone structure was completed in 637 by Oswald and was dedicated to Saint Peter. The church soon fell into disrepair and was dilapidated by 670 when Saint Wilfrid ascended to the see of York. He repaired and renewed the structure. The attached school and library were established and by the eighth century were some of the most substantial in Northern Europe.

In 741 the church was destroyed in a fire. It was rebuilt as a more impressive structure containing thirty altars. The church and the entire area then passed through the hands of numerous invaders, and its history is obscure until the tenth century. There was a series of Benedictine archbishops, including Saint Oswald, Wulfstan, and Ealdred, who traveled to Westminster to crown William in 1066. Ealdred died in 1069 and was buried in the church.

The church was damaged in 1069 during William the Conqueror’s harrying of the North, but the first Norman archbishop, Thomas of Bayeux, arriving in 1070, organized repairs. The Danes destroyed the church in 1075, but it was again rebuilt from 1080. Built in the Norman style, it was 111 meters (364.173 feet) long and rendered in white and red lines. The new structure was damaged by fire in 1137 but was soon repaired. The choir and crypt were remodeled in 1154, and a new chapel was built, all in the Norman style.

The Gothic style in cathedrals had arrived in the mid twelfth century. Walter de Gray was made archbishop in 1215 and ordered the construction of a Gothic structure to compare to Canterbury; building began in 1220. The north and south transepts were the first new structures; completed in the 1250s, both were built in the Early English Gothic style, but had markedly different wall elevations. A substantial central tower was also completed, with a wooden spire. Building continued into the fifteenth century.

The Chapter House was begun in the 1260s and was completed before 1296. The wide nave was constructed from the 1280s on the Norman foundations. The outer roof was completed in the 1330s, but the vaulting was not finished until 1360. Construction then moved on to the eastern arm and chapels, with the last Norman structure, the choir, being demolished in the 1390s. Work here finished around 1405. In 1407 the central tower collapsed; the piers were then reinforced, and a new tower was built from 1420. The western towers were added between 1433 and 1472. The cathedral was declared complete and consecrated in 1472.

The English Reformation led to the looting of many of the cathedral’s treasures and the loss of many of the church lands. Under Elizabeth I there was a concerted effort to remove all traces of Roman Catholicism from the cathedral; there was much destruction of tombs, windows, and altars. In the English Civil War the city was besieged and fell to the forces of Cromwell in 1644, but Thomas Fairfax prevented any further damage to the cathedral.

Following the easing of religious tensions there was some work to restore the cathedral. From 1730 to 1736 the whole floor of the minster was re-laid in patterned marble, and from 1802 there was a major restoration. However, on February 2, 1829, an arson attack by a non-conformist, Jonathan Martin, inflicted heavy damage on the east arm. An accidental fire in 1840 left the nave, south west tower, and south aisle roofless and blackened shells. The cathedral slumped deeply into debt and in the 1850s services were suspended. From 1858 Augustus Duncome worked successfully to revive the cathedral.

During the twentieth century there was more concerted preservation work, especially following a 1967 survey that revealed the building, in particular the central tower, was close to collapse. £2,000,000 was raised and spent by 1972 to reinforce and strengthen the building foundations.
and roof. During the excavations that were carried out, remains of the north corner of the Roman Principia (headquarters of the Roman fort, Eboracum) were found under the south transept. This area, as well as remains of the Norman cathedral, re-opened to the public in spring 2013 as part of the new exhibition exploring the history of the building of York Minster.

On July 9, 1984, a fire believed to have been caused by a lightning strike destroyed the roof in the south transept, and around £ 2.5 million was spent on repairs. Restoration work was completed in 1988, and included new roof boss designs which had won a competition organized by BBC Television’s Blue Peter program. In 2007 renovation began on the east front, including the great east window, at an estimated cost of £ 23 million.

In 2000, the Dean and Chapter allowed the famous York Mystery Plays to be performed for the first time inside the Minster, directed by Greg Doran. Here is a link to a page of photographs about that production, held at the National Centre for Early Music.

Architecture of the Present Building

York Minster is the second largest Gothic cathedral of Northern Europe and clearly charts the development of English Gothic architecture from Early English through to the Perpendicular Period. The present building was begun in about 1230 and completed in 1472. It has a cruciform plan with an octagonal chapter house attached to the north transept, a central tower and two towers at the west front. The stone used for the building is magnesian limestone, a creamy-white colored rock that was quarried in nearby Tadcaster. The Minster is 173 yards (158 meters) long and each of its three towers are 200 feet (61 meters) high. The choir has an interior height of 102 feet (31 meters).

The north and south transepts were the first parts of the new church to be built. They have simple lancet windows, the most famous being the Five Sisters in the north transept. These are five lancets, each 52 feet (16 meters) high and glazed with grey (grisaille) glass, rather than narrative scenes or symbolic motifs that are usually seen in medieval stained glass windows. In the south transept is a famous rose window whose glass dates from about 1500 and commemorates the union of the royal houses of York and Lancaster. The roofs of the transepts are of wood, that of the south transept was burnt in the fire of 1984 and was replaced in the restoration work which was completed in 1988. New designs were used for the bosses, five of which were designed by winners of a competition organized by the BBC’s Blue Peter television program.

Work began on the chapter house and its vestibule that links it to the north transept after the transepts were completed. The style of the chapter house is that of the early Decorated Period, where geometric patterns were used in the tracery of the windows, which were wider than those of early styles. However, the work was completed before the appearance of the ogee curve, an S-shaped double curve which was extensively used at the end of this period. The windows cover almost all of the upper wall space, filling the chapter house with light. The chapter house is octagonal, as is the case in many cathedrals, but is notable in that it has no central column supporting the roof. The wooden roof, which was of an innovative design, is light enough to be able to be supported by the buttressed walls. The chapter house has many sculptured heads above the canopies, representing some of the finest Gothic sculpture in the country. There are human heads, no two alike, and some pulling faces; angels, animals, and grotesques. Unique to the transepts and chapter house is the use of Purbeck marble to adorn the piers, adding to the richness of decoration.

The nave was built between 1291 and ca. 1350 and is also in the Decorated Gothic style. It is the widest Gothic nave in England and has a wooden roof (painted so as to appear like stone) and the
aisles have vaulted stone roofs. At its west end is the great west window, known as the ‘Heart of Yorkshire’ which features flowing tracery of the later Decorated Gothic period.

The east end of the Minster was built between 1361 and 1405 in the Perpendicular Gothic style. Despite the change in style, noticeable in details such as the tracery and capitals, the eastern arm preserves the pattern of the nave. The east end contains a four bay choir; a second set of transepts, projecting only above half-height; and the Lady Chapel. The transepts are in line with the high altar and serve to throw light onto it. Behind the high altar is the great east window, the largest expanse of medieval stained glass in the world, which is currently undergoing a massive conservation project, due to be completed in 2015–1216. Below the great east window currently sits the Orb, a stainless steel dome which was opened at the end of October 2012, containing five of the conserved panels from the window, one of which is changed each month. The Orb enables visitors to see the work of renowned medieval artist, John Thornton, up close, revealing the remarkable detail in each panel.

The sparsely decorated central tower was built between 1407 and 1472 and is also in the Perpendicular style. Below this, separating the choir from the crossing and nave is the striking fifteenth century choir screen. It contains sculptures of the kings of England from William the Conqueror to Henry VI, with stone and gilded canopies set against a red background. Above the screen is the organ, which dates from 1832. The west towers, in contrast with the central tower, are heavily decorated and are topped with battlements and eight pinnacles each, again in the Perpendicular style.

**Stained Glass**

York as a whole, and particularly the minster, have a long tradition of creating beautiful stained glass. Some of the stained glass in York Minster dates back to the twelfth century. The Minster’s records show that much of the glass (white or colored) came from Germany. Upon arrival at York, it was intricately painted, fired, then glazed together with lead strips into the windows. The 76-foot (23 meters) tall great east window, created by John Thornton in the early fifteenth century, is the largest expanse of medieval stained glass in the world. Other windows in the minster include an ornate rose window and the 50-foot (15 meter) tall Five Sisters window. Because of the extended time periods during which the glass was installed, different types of glazing and painting techniques which evolved over hundreds of years are visible in the different windows. Approximately two million individual pieces of glass make up the cathedral’s 128 stained glass windows. Much of the glass was removed before and pieced back together after the First and Second World Wars, and the windows are constantly being cleaned and conserved to keep their beauty intact.

In 2008 a major conservation project of the great east window commenced, involving the removal, repainting and re-leading of each individual panel. While the window was in storage in the minster’s stonemasons’ yard, a fire broke out in some adjoining offices, due to an electrical fault, on December 30, 2009. The window’s 311 panes, stored in a neighboring room, were undamaged and were successfully moved to safety.

**Towers and bells**

The two west towers of the minster hold bells, clock chimes and a concert carillon. The northwest tower contains Great Peter (216 hundredweight or 10.8 tons) and the six clock bells (the largest weighing just over 60 hundredweight or 3 tons). The southwest tower holds 14 bells (tenor 59 hundredweight or 3 tons) hung and rung for change ringing and 22 carillon bells (tenor
23 hundredweight or 1.2 tons) which are played from a baton keyboard in the ringing chamber (all together 35 bells.)

The clock bells ring every quarter of an hour during the daytime and Great Peter strikes the hour. The change ringing bells are rung regularly on Sundays before church services and at other occasions, the ringers practice on Tuesday evenings. York Minster became the first cathedral in England to have a carillon of bells with the arrival of a further twenty-four small bells on April 4, 2008. These are added to the existing “Nelson Chime” which is chimed to announce Evensong around 5.00 pm each day, giving a carillon of 35 bells in total (three chromatic octaves). The new bells were cast at the Loughborough Bell Foundry of Taylors, Eayre & Smith, where all of the existing minster bells were cast. The new carillon is a gift to the minster. It will be the first new carillon in the British Isles for 40 years and first hand played carillon in an English cathedral. Before Evensong each evening, hymn tunes are played on a baton keyboard connected with the bells, but occasionally anything from Beethoven to the Beatles may be heard.

Shrines

When Thomas Becket was murdered and subsequently enshrined at Canterbury, York found itself without a rival major draw for pilgrims. More specifically, pilgrims spent money and would leave gifts for the support of the cathedral. Hence Walter de Gray, supported by the King, petitioned the Pope. On March 18, 1226, Pope Honorius issued a letter to the effect that the name of William (Fitzherbert), formerly Archbishop of York, was “inscribed in the catalogue of the saints of the Church Militant.” Thus there was now St. William of York (whose name is perhaps more often associated with the adjacent St. William’s College). York had its saint but it took until 1279, when William de Wickwane (William de Wykewayne) was elected archbishop, for the remains of the canonized William to be transferred to a shrine prepared for them behind the high altar. This was placed on a platform raised upon the arches of the crypt removed to this position for that purpose. On December 29 King Edward I himself, together with the bishops who were present, carried on their shoulder the chest or feretory containing the relics to their new resting-place and Anthony Beck, consecrated the same day as Bishop of Durham, paid all the expenses.

The tomb of Walter de Gray was erected in the south transept. His remains were interred on “the vigil of Pentecost, 1255,” under his effigy “in full canonicals” carved in Purbeck marble under a canopy resting on ten light pillars. It was subsequently somewhat hidden behind a screen of ironwork erected by Archbishop William Markham in the early nineteenth century.

Organ

The fire of 1829 destroyed the organ and the basis of the present organ dates from 1832, when Elliot and Hill constructed a new instrument. This organ was reconstructed in 1859 by William Hill and Sons. The case remained intact, but the organ was mechanically new, retaining the largest pipes of the former instrument.

In 1903, J. W. Walker and Sons built a new instrument in the same case. They retained several registers from the previous instrument.

Some work was undertaken in 1918 by Harrison & Harrison when the famous Tuba Mirabilis was added and the Great Chorus revised. The same firm rebuilt this Walker-Harrison instrument in 1931 when a new console and electro-pneumatic action were added together with four new stops. The smaller solo tubas were enclosed in the solo box. In 1960, J. W. Walker & Sons restored the actions, lowered wind pressures and introduced mutations and higher chorus work in the spirit of the neo-classical movement. They cleaned the organ in 1982.
The fire of 1984 affected the organ but not irreparably; the damage hastened the time for a major restoration, which was begun in 1991 and finished two years later by Principal Pipe Organs of York, under the direction of their founder, Geoffrey Coffin, who had at one time been assistant organist at the Minster.

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**The Bishop’s Palace**

Bishopthorpe Palace is a stately home and historic house at Bishopthorpe, south of York in the City of York unitary authority and ceremonial county of North Yorkshire, England. It is on the River Ouse and is the official residence of the Archbishop of York; within the local area it is sometimes simply called “the Archbishop’s Palace.”

In the thirteenth century, Archbishop Grey bought the manor house at what was then St. Andrewthorpe and gave it to the Dean and Chapter of York Minster Since then, the village became known as Bishopthorpe.

The palace is a Grade I listed building in a wooded, rural setting and includes a gatehouse, stables, a brewhouse and brewster’s cottage. It was remodeled by Thomas Atkinson between 1763 and 1769.

The present archbishop, John Sentamu, did not initially move into the palace as it was just beginning a major renovation and restoration at the time.

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**ELY CATHEDRAL**

The Cathedral Church of the Holy and Undivided Trinity of Ely

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History of the Present Building

The cathedral is built from stone quarried from Barnack in Northamptonshire (bought from Peterborough Abbey, whose lands included the quarries, for 8000 eels a year), with decorative elements carved from Purbeck Marble and local clunch. The plan of the building is cruciform (cross-shaped), with an additional transept at the western end. The total length is 537 feet (163.7 meters), and the nave at over 75 meters long (250 feet) remains one of the longest in Britain. The west tower is 66 meters high (215 feet). The unique Octagon ‘Lantern Tower’ is 23 meters (74 feet) wide and is 52 meters (170 feet) high. Internally, from the floor to the central roof boss the lantern is 43 meters (142 feet) high.

Abbot Simeon’s church

The present building was started by Abbot Simeon (1081–1094, brother of Walkelin, the then Bishop of Winchester, where Simeon had been Prior) in 1083 during the reign of William I. The design was similar to Winchester, a cruciform plan with central crossing tower, and it was likewise one of the largest buildings under construction north of the Alps at the time. Work continued under Simeon’s successor, Abbot Richard (1100–1107) and thereafter under successive bishops. The Anglo-Saxon church was demolished but some of its relics, such as the shrine of St. Etheldreda and the remains of other benefactors, were transferred to the new church in 1106. The main transepts were one of the first parts to be built and are the earliest part now surviving. By about 1140 the nave had been completed, together with the western transepts and tower up to triforium level, where the fairly plain early Romanesque style of the earlier work gave way to a more exuberant pattern richly decorated with intersecting arches and complex moldings. After a pause, work was resumed and the western transepts and tower were completed under Bishop Geoffrey Ridel (1174–1189) in similarly ornate fashion but with pointed instead of semicircular arches.

Gothic elements

Early

A Galilee porch, where liturgical processions could gather before entering the nave, was added under Bishop Eustace (1198–1215) in the Early English Gothic style, and was possibly altered later in the thirteenth century. It was originally a two-story structure but the upper story was unroofed in the course of works at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Several details of its decoration, particularly the ‘syncopated arches’ and the use of Purbeck marble shafts, reflect the influence of St. Hugh’s Choir at Lincoln Cathedral, built a few years earlier.

Under Bishop Northwold (1229–1254) the short Norman chancel was extended eastwards by the addition of a six-bay presbytery in a richly ornamented style with extensive use of Purbeck marble. St. Etheldreda’s remains were translated to a new shrine immediately east of the high altar within the new structure, and on completion of these works in 1252 the cathedral was reconsecrated in the presence of King Henry III and other dignitaries.

Later

In 1321, under the sacrist Alan of Walsingham work began on a large (100 feet long by 46 feet wide) free-standing Lady Chapel, linked to the north aisle of the chancel by a covered walkway. This new structure was built in an exuberant Decorated Gothic style. Around most of the wall surface are sedilia-like niches, flanked by pilasters of Purbeck marble and covered by sinuous ogee arches which project forward away from the wall (sometimes known as ‘nodding ogees’). Most wall surfaces are covered with richly carved vegetal and diaper patterns which were
originally brightly polychromed. Extensive sculpture including a Life and Miracles of the Virgin cycle filled the spandrels between the niches.

On the night of February 12–13, 1322, possibly as a result of the lowering of the water table by preparatory works for the Lady Chapel, the Norman central crossing tower collapsed. Work on the Lady Chapel was suspended as attention transferred to dealing with this disaster. Instead of being replaced by a new tower on the same ground plan, the crossing was enlarged to an octagon, taking out the adjoining bays of the nave, chancel, and transepts. The construction of this unique and distinctive feature was overseen by Alan of Walsingham. The extent of his influence on the design continues to be a matter of debate. The new space, unprecedentedly wide in northern Europe, was spanned by an ingenious timber structure, ceiled with wooden imitation vaulting and surmounted by a glazed lantern. Extensive records of expenditure survive, including very substantial payments in 1328 for visits by one William Hurley, who can be confidently identified with a master carpenter of that name with a senior position in the royal service.

It is unclear what damage was caused to the Norman chancel by the fall of the tower, but the three remaining bays were reconstructed under Bishop John Hotham (1316-1337) in a very ornate Decorated style with flowing tracery. Structural evidence shows that this work was a remodeling rather than a total rebuilding. New choir stalls with carved misericords and canopy work were installed beneath the octagon, in a similar position to their predecessors. Work was resumed on the Lady Chapel, and the two westernmost bays of Northwold’s presbytery were adapted by unroofing the triforia so as to enhance the lighting of Etheldreda’s shrine. Starting at about the same time the remaining lancet windows of the aisles and triforia of the presbytery were gradually replaced by broad windows with flowing tracery. At the same period extensive work took place on the monastic buildings, including the construction of the elegant chapel of Prior Crauden.

In about 1400 an octagonal lantern was added to the top of the west tower, and additional arches were inserted in the western crossing to arrest movement possibly caused or exacerbated by the extra weight. Later in the fifteenth century, or very early in the sixteenth, the north-west transept collapsed.

In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries elaborate chantry chapels were inserted in the easternmost bays of the presbytery aisles, on the north for Bishop John Alcock (1486-1500) and on the south for Bishop Nicholas West (1515–1533).

**Later History of the Building**

Following the Dissolution nearly all the stained glass and much of the sculpture in the Cathedral were destroyed; in the Lady Chapel the free-standing statues were removed and the other carved figures were decapitated. This was almost certainly at the instigation of reformist Bishop Thomas Goodrich (1534–1554) who is on record as ordering churchwardens in the diocese to suppress images. Some commentators have suggested that significant destruction occurred during the Civil War and the Commonwealth, but most of the evidence points to there having been little imagery left to destroy by then. In the 1690s a number of very fine baroque furnishings were introduced, notably a marble font, and an organ case mounted on the Romanesque pulpitu (the stone screen dividing the nave from the liturgical choir) with trumpeting angels and other embellishments. In 1699 the north-west corner of the north transept collapsed and there was extensive rebuilding, closely replicating the original medieval work — a very early example of such practice. However, the works included the insertion of a fine classical doorway in the north face. The name of Sir Christopher Wren has sometimes been associated with this latter feature. In fact it was the work of Robert Grumbold, who had worked with Wren on Trinity College
Library in Cambridge a few years earlier. Wren’s uncle Matthew Wren was Bishop from 1638 to 1667, and Sir Christopher must have been familiar with the Cathedral, but surviving documentation indicates that he was personally involved only to the extent that he was among a number of people with whom the Dean (John Lambe 1693-1708) discussed the proposed works during a visit to London.

By the middle of the eighteenth century a number of structural problems had become apparent. The architect James Essex carried out major works between 1757 and 1770, including repairs and alterations to the timber structure of the octagon, redesigning the exterior of the lantern in “gothick” style, re-roofing the entire eastern arm and righting the eastern gable which was leaning outwards. He also re-ordered the interior, removing the Romanesque pulpitum and moving the liturgical choir to the far east end, with a new “gothick” choir screen two bays east of the octagon, surmounted by the 1690s organ case. However, Essex and the overseeing Canon James Bentham were both people of strong antiquarian interests and the restoration as a whole was relatively sympathetic by the standards of the period.

The next major period of restoration began in the 1840s and much of the oversight was the responsibility of Dean George Peacock (1839–1858). In 1845 the architect George Basevi fell to his death in the west tower, but it appears that he was inspecting works in progress out of interest and had not been engaged professionally. George Gilbert Scott was responsible for various major works from 1847 but does not appear to have had any comprehensive brief to restore the entire building. This was his first cathedral commission. He returned the octagon lantern to a form which, to judge from pre-Essex depictions, seems to be genuinely close to the original. He again re-ordered the choir, moving the fourteenth-century stalls and the high altar two bays westwards, creating a carved wooden screen at the entrance to the choir from the octagon, and installing a lavishly carved and ornamented alabaster reredos. Various new furnishings replaced the baroque items from the 1690s. At the same period a great deal of stained glass by William Wailes and others was put in the windows of the octagon, the transepts and the eastern arm. A timber boarded ceiling was installed in the nave and painted with scenes from the Old and New Testaments, first by Henry Le Strange and then, after Le Strange’s death in 1862, completed by Thomas Gambier Parry, who also repainted the interior of the octagon.

A further major program of structural restoration took place between 1986 and 2000 under Deans William Patterson (1984–1990) and Michael Higgins (1991-2003), directed by successive Surveyors to the Fabric, initially Peter Miller and from 1994 Jane Kennedy. In 2000 a Processional Way was built, restoring the direct link between the north choir aisle and the Lady Chapel.
The Abbey Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, Bath, commonly known as Bath Abbey, is an Anglican parish church and a former Benedictine monastery in Bath, Somerset, England. Founded in the seventh century, Bath Abbey was reorganized in the tenth century and rebuilt in the twelfth and sixteenth centuries; major restoration work was carried out by Sir George Gilbert Scott in the 1860s. It is one of the largest examples of Perpendicular Gothic architecture in the West Country.

The church is cruciform in plan, and is able to seat 1200. An active place of worship, with hundreds of congregation members and hundreds of thousands of visitors each year, it is used for religious services, secular civic ceremonies, concerts and lectures. The choir performs in the abbey and elsewhere. There is a heritage museum in the vaults.

The abbey is particularly noted for its fan vaulting. It contains war memorials for the local population and monuments to several notable people, in the form of wall and floor plaques and commemorative stained glass. The church has two organs and a peal of ten bells. The west front includes sculptures of angels climbing to heaven on two stone ladders.

Early history

In 675 Osric, King of the Hwicce, granted the Abbess Berta 100 hides near Bath for the establishment of a convent. This religious house became a monastery under the patronage of the Bishop of Worcester. King Offa of Mercia successfully wrested “that most famous monastery at Bath” from the bishop in 781. William of Malmesbury tells that Offa rebuilt the monastic church, which may have occupied the site of an earlier pagan temple, to such a standard that King Eadwig was moved to describe it as being “marvelously built;” little is known about the architecture of this first building on the site. Monasticism in England had declined by that time, but Eadwig’s brother Edgar (who was crowned “King of the English” at the abbey in 973) began its revival on his accession to the throne in 959. He encouraged monks to adopt the Rule of Saint Benedict, which was introduced at Bath under Abbot Ælfheah (St. Alphege).

Norman Conquest to the Dissolution

Bath was ravaged in the power struggle between the sons of William the Conqueror following his death in 1087. The victor, William Rufus, granted the city to a royal physician, John of Tours, who became Bishop of Wells and Abbot of Bath. Shortly after his consecration John bought Bath Abbey’s grounds from the king, as well as the city of Bath itself. Whether John paid
Rufus for the city or whether he was given it as a gift by the king is unclear. The abbey had recently lost its abbot, Ælfsige, and according to Domesday Book was the owner of large estates in and near the city; it was likely the abbey’s wealth that attracted John to take over the monastery. By acquiring Bath, John also acquired the mint that was in the city. In 1090 he transferred the seat, or administration, of the bishopric to Bath Abbey, probably in an attempt to increase the revenues of his see. Bath was a rich abbey, and Wells had always been a poor diocese. By taking over the abbey, John increased his episcopal revenues. William of Malmesbury portrays the moving of the episcopal seat as motivated by a desire for the lands of the abbey, but it was part of a pattern at the time of moving cathedral seats from small villages to larger towns. When John moved his episcopal seat, he also took over the abbey of Bath as his cathedral chapter, turning his diocese into a bishopric served by monks instead of the canons at Wells who had previously served the diocese. John rebuilt the monastic church at Bath, which had been damaged during one of Robert de Mowbray’s rebellions. Permission was given to move the see of Somerset from Wells – a comparatively small settlement – to the then walled city of Bath.

When this was effected in 1090, John became the first Bishop of Bath, and St. Peter’s was raised to cathedral status. As the roles of bishop and abbot had been combined, the monastery became a priory, run by its prior. With the elevation of the abbey to cathedral status, it was felt that a larger, more up-to-date building was required. John of Tours planned a new cathedral on a grand scale, dedicated to Saint Peter and Saint Paul, but only the ambulatory was complete when he died in December 1122. He was buried in the cathedral. The most renowned scholar monk based in the abbey was Adelard of Bath; after his various travels he was back in the monastery by 1106.

The half-finished cathedral was devastated by fire in 1137, but work continued under Godfrey, the new bishop, until about 1156; the completed building was approximately 330 feet (101 meters) long. It was consecrated while Robert of Bath was bishop. The specific date is not known however it was between 1148 and 1161.

In 1197 Bishop Reginald Fitz Jocelin’s successor, Bishop Savaric FitzGeldewin, with the approval of Pope Celestine III, officially moved his seat to Glastonbury Abbey, but the monks there would not accept their new Bishop of Glastonbury and the title of Bishop of Bath and Glastonbury was abandoned in 1219. Bishop Savaric’s successor, Jocelin of Wells, again moved the bishop’s seat to Bath Abbey, with the title Bishop of Bath. Following his death the monks of Bath unsuccessfully attempted to regain authority over Wells. There were 40 monks on the roll in 1206.

Joint cathedral status was awarded by Pope Innocent IV to Bath and Wells in 1245. Roger of Salisbury was appointed the first Bishop of Bath and Wells, having been Bishop of Bath for a year previously. Later bishops preferred Wells, the canons of which had successfully petitioned various popes down the years for Wells to regain cathedral status. Bath Cathedral gradually fell into disrepair. In 1485 the priory had 22 monks. When Oliver King, Bishop of Bath and Wells 1495–1503, visited Bath in 1499 he was shocked to find this famous church in ruins. He also described lax discipline, idleness and a group of monks “all too eager to succumb to the temptations of the flesh.”

King took a year to consider what action to take, before writing to the Prior of Bath in October 1500 to explain that a large amount of the priory income would be dedicated to rebuilding the cathedral. There are several stories that, on a visit to Bath, King had a dream in which he “saw the heavenly host on high with angels ascending and descending by ladder” which is now
represented on the west front of the cathedral. However this interpretation, which first appeared in the writings of John Harington, around 100 years after it was supposed to have happened, has been challenged.

Robert and William Vertue, the king's masons were commissioned, promising to build the finest vault in England, promising “there shall be none so goodly neither in England nor France.” Their design incorporated the surviving Norman crossing wall and arches. They appointed Thomas Lynne to supervise work on site and work probably began the following spring. Bishop King planned a smaller church, covering the area of the Norman nave only. He did not live to see the result, but the restoration of the cathedral was completed just a few years before the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539.

**Reformation and subsequent decline**

Prior Holloway surrendered Bath Priory to the crown in January 1539. It was sold to Humphry Colles of Taunton. The church was stripped of lead, iron and glass and left to decay. Colles sold it to Matthew Colthurst of Wardour Castle in 1543. His son Edmund Colthurst gave the roofless remains of the building to the corporation of Bath in 1572. The corporation had difficulty finding private funds for its restoration.

In 1574, Queen Elizabeth I promoted the restoration of the church, to serve as the grand parish church of Bath. She ordered that a national fund should be set up to finance the work, and in 1583 decreed that it should become the parish church of Bath. James Montague, the Bishop of Bath and Wells from 1608–1616, paid £1,000 for a new nave roof of timber lath construction; according to the inscription on his tomb, this was prompted after seeking shelter in the roofless nave during a thunderstorm. He is buried in an alabaster tomb in the north aisle.

**Modern renaissance**

During the 1820s and 1830s buildings, including houses, shops and taverns, which were very close to or actually touching the walls of the abbey were demolished and the interior remodeled by George Phillips Manners who was the Bath City Architect. Manners erected flying buttresses to the exterior of the nave and added pinnacles to the turrets.

Major restoration work was carried out by Sir George Gilbert Scott in the 1860s, funded by the rector, Charles Kemble. The work included the installation of fan vaulting in the nave, which was not a fanciful aesthetic addition but a completion of the original design. Bishop King had arranged for the vaulting of the choir, to a design by William and Robert Vertue. There are clues in the stonework that King intended the vaulting to continue into the nave, but that this plan was abandoned, probably for reasons of cost. In addition a stone screen between the choir and nave was removed. Scott’s work was completed by his pupil Thomas Graham Jackson in the 1890s including work on the west front.

Work carried out in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries included full cleaning of the stonework and the reconstruction of the pipe organ by Klais Orgelbau of Bonn. The stonework of the west front had been subject to natural erosion therefore a process of lime-based conservation was carried out during the 1990s by Nimbus Conservation under the guidance of Professor Robert Baker who had previously worked on the west front of Wells Cathedral. Some of the damage to sculptures had been made worse by the use of Portland cement by previous work carried out in the Victorian era. A statue of St. Phillip was beyond repair and was removed and replaced with a modern statue by Laurence Tindall.
**Architecture**

The new church is not a typical example of the Perpendicular form of Gothic architecture; the low aisles and nave arcades and the very tall clerestory present the opposite balance to that which was usual in perpendicular churches. As this building was to serve as a monastic church, it was built to a cruciform plan, which had become relatively rare in parish churches of the time. The interior contains fine fan vaulting by Robert and William Vertue, who designed similar vaulting for the Henry VII chapel, at Westminster Abbey. The building has 52 windows, occupying about 80% of the wall space, giving the interior an impression of lightness, and reflecting the different attitudes towards churchmanship shown by the clergy of the time and those of the twelfth century.

The cruciform abbey is built of Bath stone, which gives the exterior its yellow color. It is an atypical example of the Perpendicular form of Gothic architecture, with low aisles and nave arcades and a tall clerestory. The walls and roofs are supported by buttresses and surmounted by battlements, pinnacles and pierced parapets, many of which were added by George Manners during his 1830s restorations.

The nave, which has five bays, is 211 feet (64 meters) long and 35 feet (11 meters) wide to the pillars and rises to 75 feet (23 meters), with the whole church being 225 feet (69 meters) long and 80 feet (24 meters) wide.

The west front, which was originally constructed in 1520, has a large arched window and detailed carvings. Above the window are carvings of angels and to either side long stone ladders with angels climbing up them. Below the window a battlemented parapet supports a statue and beneath this, on either side of the door, are statues of St. Peter and St. Paul. Restoration work in the late twentieth century involved cleaning with electronically controlled intermittent water sprays and ammonium carbonate poultices. One of the figures which had lost its head and shoulders was replaced. The sculptures on the West front have been interpreted as representing “spiritual ascent through the virtue of humility and descent through the vice of pride” and Christ as the Man of Sorrow and the Antichrist. During the 1990s a major restoration and cleaning work were carried out on the exterior stonework, returning it to the yellow color hidden under centuries of dirt.

**Windows**

The building has 52 windows, occupying about 80 percent of the wall space. The east end has a square-framed window of seven lights. It includes a depiction of the nativity made by Clayton and Bell in 1872, and was presented to the church by the Bath Literary Club.

The window of the Four Evangelists over the northwest door is a memorial to Charles Empson, who died in 1861.

In 2010 a stained glass window was uncovered in the abbey vaults. The design around the window is by William Burges.

**Tower**

The two-stage central tower is not square but oblong in plan. It has two bell openings on each side and four polygonal turret pinnacles. The tower is 161 feet (49 meters) high, and is accessed by a staircase of 212 steps.
Bells

In 1700 the old ring of six bells was replaced by a new ring of eight. All but the tenor still survive. In 1770 two lighter bells were added to create the first ring of ten bells in the diocese. The tenor was recast in 1870. The abbey’s tower is now home to a ring of ten bells, which are unusually hung so that the order of the bells from highest to lowest runs anti-clockwise around the ringing chamber. The tenor weighs 33 hundredweight (3,721 pounds or 1,688 kilograms). Bath is a noted centre of change ringing in the West Country.

Interior

The interior fan vaulting ceiling, originally installed by Robert and William Vertue, was restored by Sir George Gilbert Scott between 1864 and 1874. The fan vaulting provides structural stability by distributing the weight of the roof down ribs that transfer the force into the supporting columns via the flying buttresses.

Scott’s work in the 1870s included the installation of large gas chandeliers made by the Coventry metalworker Francis Skidmore. They were converted to electricity in 1979. Other new features included a new pulpit and seating. A marble altarpiece from General George Wade in the sanctuary was removed and replaced with a decorative reredos.

In the 1920s Thomas Graham Jackson redesigned the Norman Chapel into a War Memorial Chapel, now Gethsemane Chapel, and added a cloister. New quire screens were installed in 2004, partly to improve the acoustics, topped with 12 carved angels playing musical instruments.

Monuments

Within the abbey are 617 wall memorials and 847 floor stones. They include those dedicated to Beau Nash, Admiral Arthur Phillip (first Governor of the colony of New South Wales, which became part of Australia after federation in 1901), James Montague (Bishop of Bath and Wells), Lady Waller (wife of William Waller, a Roundhead military leader in the English Civil War), Elizabeth Grieve (wife of James Grieve, physician to Elizabeth, Empress of Russia), Sir William Baker, John Sibthorp, Richard Hussey Bickerton, William Hoare, Richard Bickerton, and US Senator William Bingham. Many of the monuments in the churchyard were carved between 1770 and 1860 by Reeves of Bath. War memorials include those commemorating the First Anglo-Afghan War (1841–1842), the First World War (1914–1918), and the Second World War (1939–1945). The most recent memorial was installed in 1958 to commemorate Isaac Pitman, the developer of Pitman shorthand, who died in 1897.

Main organ

The first mention of an organ in the abbey dates to 1634, but nothing is known of that instrument. The first properly recorded organ in Bath Abbey was built by Abraham Jordan in 1708. It was modified in 1718 and 1739 by Jordan’s son. The specification recorded in 1800 was one of twenty stops spread over three manuals. The compasses of the manuals were extended, one and a half octaves of pedals were added and the instrument renovated in 1802 by John Holland; further repairs were effected by Flight & Robson in 1826. This instrument was removed first to the Bishop’s Palace at Wells in 1836, then to St. Mary’s Church, Yatton, where it was subsequently rebuilt and extensively modified.

The abbey’s next organ was built in 1836 by John Smith of Bristol, to a specification of thirty stops over three manuals and pedals. This instrument was rebuilt on a new gallery in the North Transept by William Hill & Son of London in 1868, to a specification of forty stops spread over four manuals and pedals, although the Solo department, which would have brought the total to
well over forty, was not completed. It was mostly removed to the Church of St. Peter & St. Paul, Cromer in 1896, the remainder being kept for incorporation in the new abbey organ.

A new organ was supplied to the abbey in 1895 by Norman and Beard of Norwich. It had 52 stops spread over four manuals and pedals, and stood divided on two steel beams in the North and South crossing arches, with the console standing on the floor next to the north-west pier of the crossing. New cases were to be provided to designs by Brian Oliver of Bath, but were never executed. Norman & Beard re-erected it in a new case designed by Sir Thomas Jackson in the North Transept in 1914, with the addition of two stops to the Pedal. It was again rebuilt by them in 1930, and then by Hill, Norman and Beard in 1948, which brought the number of stops to 58. In 1972 this was increased to a total of 65 speaking stops. The Positive division, with its separate case behind the console, was installed at the same time. Problems caused by the tonal scheme’s lack of coherence – the 1895 pipework contrasting sharply with that of 1972 – and with reliability, caused by the wide variety of different types of key actions, all difficult to access, led to the decision to have the instrument rebuilt yet again.

The organ was totally reconstructed in 1997 by Klais Orgelbau of Bonn, retaining the existing instrument as far as was possible and restoring it largely to its 1895 condition, although the Positive division was kept. The instrument as it now stands has 63 speaking stops over four manuals and pedals and is built largely on the Werkprinzip principle of organ layout: the case is only one department deep, except for parts of the Pedal sited at the back rather than the sides of the case. New 75 percent tin front pipes were made and the case completed with back, side walls and roof. Pierced paneling executed by Derek Riley of Lyndale Woodcarving in Saxmundham, Suffolk, was provided to allow sound egress from the bottom of the case. The old console has been retained but thoroughly rebuilt with modern accessories and all-new manuals. Twenty-two of the organ’s 83 ranks contain some pipework from the 1868 instrument. Four ranks are made up entirely of 1868 pipework, and 21 contain 1895 pipework. Only two ranks are entirely of 1895. Forty-eight ranks contain some new pipework, 34 of which are entirely new. Old wind pressures have been used wherever possible. The old wind reservoirs have also been restored rather than replaced. The instrument has tracker key action on the manuals, with electrically assisted tracker action to the pedals. The stop action is electric throughout.

**Continuo organ**

A four-stop continuo organ was built for the abbey in 1999 by Northampton-based organ builder Kenneth Tickell. The instrument, contained in a case of dark oak, is portable, and can be tuned to three pitches: A=440 Hz (modern concert pitch), A=415 Hz and A=486 Hz. A lever pedal can reduce the stops sounding to only the 8’ stop and, when released, returns the organ to the registration in use before it was depressed.

**Choir**

The abbey has sections for boys, girls and men. As well as singing at the abbey, they also tour to cathedrals in the UK and Europe. The choir has broadcast Choral Evensong on BBC Radio 3, and has made several recordings. It performed at the Three Tenors concert for the opening of the Thermae Bath Spa. The abbey is also used as a venue for visiting choirs and, from its inception in 1947, the City of Bath Bach Choir.

**Heritage Vaults Museum**

The Bath Abbey Heritage Vaults Museum is located in the restored eighteenth-century cellars, and features artifacts and exhibits about the abbey’s history. Displays include the different buildings on the site and their uses, the abbey’s impact on the community, the construction,
architecture and sculptures of the buildings, artifacts and sculptures, and the role of the abbey in present times. The museum opened in 1994, but is currently closed for redevelopment.

--http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bath_Abbey

WESTMINSTER ABBEY
The Collegiate Church of St. Peter at Westminster

Westminster Abbey, formally titled the Collegiate Church of St. Peter at Westminster, is a large, mainly Gothic church in the City of Westminster, London, located just to the west of the Palace of Westminster. It is one of the most notable religious buildings in the United Kingdom and has been the traditional place of coronation and burial site for English and, later, British monarchs. The abbey is a Royal Peculiar and between 1540 and 1556 had the status of a cathedral; the building is no longer an abbey nor cathedral however, having instead the status since 1560 of a “Royal Peculiar” – a church responsible directly to the Sovereign.

According to a tradition first reported by Sulcard in about 1080, a church was founded at the site (then known as Thorn Ey [Thorn Island]) in the seventh century, at the time of Mellitus (d. 624), a Bishop of London. Construction of the present church began in 1245, on the orders of Henry III.

Since 1066, when Harold Godwinson and William the Conqueror were crowned, the coronations of English and British monarchs have been held here. Since 1100, there have been at least 16 royal weddings at the abbey. Two were of reigning monarchs (Henry I and Richard II), although before 1919 there had been none for some 500 years.

History

The first reports of the abbey are based on a late tradition claiming that a young fisherman called Aldrich on the River Thames saw a vision of Saint Peter near the site. This seems to be quoted to justify the gifts of salmon from Thames fishermen that the Abbey received in later years. In the present era, the Fishmongers’ Company still gives a salmon every year. The proven origins are
that in the 960s or early 970s, Saint Dunstan, assisted by King Edgar, installed a community of Benedictine monks here.

1042: Edward the Confessor starts rebuilding St. Peter’s Abbey

Between 1042 and 1052 King Edward the Confessor began rebuilding St Peter’s Abbey to provide himself with a royal burial church. It was the first church in England built in the Norman Romanesque style. It was not completed until around 1090 but was consecrated on December 28, 1065, only a week before Edward's death on January 5, 1066. A week later he was buried in the church, and nine years later his wife Edith was buried alongside him. His successor, Harold II, was probably crowned in the abbey, although the first documented coronation is that of William the Conqueror later the same year.

The only extant depiction of Edward’s abbey, together with the adjacent Palace of Westminster, is in the Bayeux Tapestry. Some of the lower parts of the monastic dormitory, an extension of the South Transept, survive in the Norman Undercroft of the Great School, including a door said to come from the previous Saxon abbey. Increased endowments supported a community increased from a dozen monks in Dunstan’s original foundation, up to a maximum about eighty monks, although there was also a large community of lay brothers who supported the monastery’s extensive property and activities.

Construction of the present church

Construction of the present church was begun in 1245 by Henry III who selected the site for his burial.

The abbot and monks, in proximity to the royal Palace of Westminster, the seat of government from the later twelfth century, became a powerful force in the centuries after the Norman Conquest. The abbot often was employed on royal service and in due course took his place in the House of Lords as of right. Released from the burdens of spiritual leadership, which passed to the reformed Cluniac movement after the mid-tenth century, and occupied with the administration of great landed properties, some of which lay far from Westminster, “the Benedictines achieved a remarkable degree of identification with the secular life of their times, and particularly with upper-class life,” Barbara Harvey concludes, to the extent that her depiction of daily life provides a wider view of the concerns of the English gentry in the High and Late Middle Ages.

The proximity of the Palace of Westminster did not extend to providing monks or abbots with high royal connections; in social origin the Benedictines of Westminster were as modest as most of the order. The abbot remained Lord of the Manor of Westminster as a town of two to three thousand persons grew around it: as a consumer and employer on a grand scale the monastery helped fuel the town economy, and relations with the town remained unusually cordial, but no enfranchising charter was issued during the Middle Ages. The Abbey built shops and dwellings on the west side, encroaching upon the sanctuary.

The abbey became the coronation site of Norman kings. None were buried there until Henry III, intensely devoted to the cult of the Confessor, rebuilt the abbey in Anglo-French Gothic style as a shrine to venerate King Edward the Confessor and as a suitably regal setting for Henry's own tomb, under the highest Gothic nave in England. The Confessor’s shrine subsequently played a great part in his canonization. The work continued between 1245 and 1517 and was largely finished by the architect Henry Yevele in the reign of Richard II. Henry III also commissioned unique Cosmati pavement in front of the high altar (the pavement has recently undergone a
major cleaning and conservation program and was re-dedicated by the dean at a service on May 21, 2010).

Henry VII added a Perpendicular style chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1503 (known as the Henry VII Chapel). Much of the stone came from Caen, in France (Caen stone), the Isle of Portland (Portland stone) and the Loire Valley region of France (tuffeau limestone).

1500s and 1600s: dissolution and restoration

In 1535, the abbey’s annual income of £2400–2800 (£1,280,000 to £1,490,000 as of 2015), during the assessment attendant on the Dissolution of the Monasteries rendered it second in wealth only to Glastonbury Abbey.

1540–1550: 10 years as a cathedral

Henry VIII assumed direct royal control in 1539 and granted the abbey the status of a cathedral by charter in 1540, simultaneously issuing letters patent establishing the Diocese of Westminster. By granting the abbey cathedral status Henry VIII gained an excuse to spare it from the destruction or dissolution which he inflicted on most English abbeys during this period.

After 1550: difficult times

Westminster diocese was dissolved in 1550, but the abbey was recognized (in 1552, retroactively to 1550) as a second cathedral of the Diocese of London until 1556. The already-old expression “robbing Peter to pay Paul” may have been given a new lease of life when money meant for the abbey, which is dedicated to Saint Peter, was diverted to the treasury of St. Paul’s Cathedral.

The Abbey was restored to the Benedictines under the Catholic Mary I of England, but they were again ejected under Elizabeth I in 1559. In 1560, Elizabeth re-established Westminster as a “Royal Peculiar” – a church responsible directly to the Sovereign, rather than to a diocesan bishop – and made it the Collegiate Church of St. Peter (that is, a church with an attached chapter of canons, headed by a dean.) The last of Mary’s abbots was made the first dean.

It suffered damage during the turbulent 1640s, when it was attacked by Puritan iconoclasts, but was again protected by its close ties to the state during the Commonwealth period. Oliver Cromwell was given an elaborate funeral there in 1658, only to be disinterred in January, 1661, and posthumously hanged from a gibbet at Tyburn.

1722–1745: western towers constructed

The Abbey’s two western towers were built between 1722 and 1745 by Nicholas Hawksmoor, constructed from Portland stone to an early example of a Gothic Revival design. Purbeck marble was used for the walls and the floors of Westminster Abbey, even though the various tombstones are made of different types of marble. Further rebuilding and restoration occurred in the nineteenth century under Sir George Gilbert Scott.

A narthex (a portico or entrance hall) for the west front was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens in the mid-twentieth century but was not built. Images of the Abbey prior to the construction of the towers are scarce, though the Abbey’s official website states that the building was without towers following Yevele’s renovation, with just the lower segments beneath the roof level of the Nave completed.

Until the nineteenth century, Westminster was the third seat of learning in England, after Oxford and Cambridge. It was here that the first third of the King James Bible Old Testament and the last half of the New Testament were translated. The New English Bible was also put together
here in the twentieth century. Westminster suffered minor damage during the Blitz on November 15, 1940.

In the 1990s two icons by the Russian icon painter Sergei Fyodorov were hung in the Abbey. On September 6, 1997 the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, was held at the Abbey. On September 17, 2010 Pope Benedict XVI became the first pope to set foot in the Abbey.

Coronations

As indicated above, since the coronations in 1066 of both King Harold and William the Conqueror, coronations of English and British monarchs were held in the Abbey. Henry III was unable to be crowned in London when he first came to the throne because the French prince Louis had taken control of the city, and so the king was crowned in Gloucester Cathedral. This coronation was deemed by the Pope to be improper, and a further coronation was held in the Abbey on May 17, 1220. The Archbishop of Canterbury is the traditional cleric in the coronation ceremony.

King Edward’s Chair (or St. Edward’s Chair), the throne on which English and British sovereigns have been seated at the moment of coronation, is housed within the Abbey and has been used at every coronation since 1308. From 1301 to 1996 (except for a short time in 1950 when it was temporarily stolen by Scottish nationalists), the chair also housed the Stone of Scone upon which the kings of Scots are crowned. Although the Stone is now kept in Scotland, in Edinburgh Castle, at future coronations it is intended that the Stone will be returned to St. Edward’s Chair for use during the coronation ceremony.

Dean and Chapter

Westminster Abbey is a collegiate church governed by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, as established by Royal charter of Queen Elizabeth I in 1560, which created it as the Collegiate Church of St Peter Westminster and a Royal Peculiar under the personal jurisdiction of the Sovereign. The members of the Chapter are the Dean and four canons residentiary, assisted by the Receiver General and Chapter Clerk. One of the canons is also Rector of St Margaret’s Church, Westminster, and often holds also the post of Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons.

In addition to the Dean and canons, there are at present two full-time minor canons, one is precentor, and the other is sacrist. The office of Priest Vicar was created in the 1970s for those who assist the minor canons. Together with the clergy and Receiver General and Chapter Clerk, various lay officers constitute the college, including the Organist and Master of the Choristers, the Registrar, the Auditor, the Legal Secretary, the Surveyor of the Fabric, the Head Master of the Choir School, the Keeper of the Muniments and the Clerk of the Works, as well as 12 lay vicars, 10 choristers and the High Steward and High Bailiff.

The 40 Queen's Scholars who are pupils at Westminster School (the School has its own Governing Body) are also members of the collegiate body.

The two minor canons as well as the organist and Master of the Choristers are most directly concerned with liturgical and ceremonial matters.

Burials and Memorials

Henry III rebuilt the abbey in honor of a royal saint, Edward the Confessor, whose relics were placed in a shrine in the sanctuary. Henry III himself was interred nearby, as were many of the Plantagenet kings of England, their wives and other relatives. Until the death of George II of Great Britain in 1760, most kings and queens were buried in the abbey, some notable exceptions
being Edward IV, Henry VIII, and Charles I, who are buried in St. George’s Chapel at Windsor Castle. Other exceptions include Richard III and Lady Jane Grey. Most monarchs and royals who died after 1760 are buried either in St. George’s Chapel or at Frogmore to the east of Windsor Castle.

From the Middle Ages, aristocrats were buried inside chapels, while monks and other people associated with the abbey were buried in the cloisters and other areas. One of these was Geoffrey Chaucer, who was buried here as he had apartments in the abbey where he was employed as master of the King’s Works. Other poets, writers and musicians were buried or memorialized around Chaucer in what became known as Poets’ Corner. Abbey musicians such as Henry Purcell were also buried in their place of work.

Subsequently, it became one of Britain’s most significant honors to be buried or commemorated in the abbey. The practice of burying national figures in the Abbey began under Oliver Cromwell with the burial of Admiral Robert Blake in 1657. The practice spread to include generals, admirals, politicians, doctors and scientists such as Isaac Newton, buried on April 4, 1727, and Charles Darwin, buried April 26, 1882. Another was William Wilberforce who led the movement to abolish slavery in the United Kingdom and the Plantations, buried on August 3, 1833. Wilberforce was buried in the north transept, close to his friend, the former Prime Minister, William Pitt.

During the early twentieth century it became increasingly common to bury cremated remains rather than coffins in the abbey. In 1905 the actor Sir Henry Irving was cremated and his ashes buried in Westminster Abbey, thereby becoming the first person ever to be cremated prior to interment at the abbey. Since 1936, no individual has been buried in a coffin in Westminster Abbey or its cloisters. The only exceptions to this rule are members of the Percy Family who have a family vault, The Northumberland Vault, in St. Nicholas’s chapel, within the Abbey.

In the floor, just inside the great west door, in the centre of the nave, is the tomb of the Unknown Warrior, an unidentified British soldier killed on a European battlefield during the First World War. He was buried in the abbey on November 11, 1920. This grave is the only one in the abbey on which it is forbidden to walk.

In 1998, 10 vacant statue niches at the West Gate were filled with representative twentieth century martyrs.

**Schools**

Westminster School and Westminster Abbey Choir School are also in the precincts of the Abbey. It was natural for the learned and literate monks to be entrusted with education, and Benedictine monks were required by the Pope to maintain a charity school in 1179.

**Organ**

The organ was built by Harrison & Harrison in 1937, then with four manuals and 84 speaking stops, and was used for the first time at the coronation of King George VI. Some pipework from the previous Hill organ of 1848 was revoiced and incorporated in the new scheme. The two organ cases, designed in the late nineteenth century by John Loughborough Pearson, were re-instated and colored in 1959.

In 1982 and 1987, Harrison and Harrison enlarged the organ under the direction of the then Abbey Organist Simon Preston to include an additional Lower Choir Organ and a Bombarde Organ: the current instrument now has five manuals and 109 speaking stops. In 2006, the console of the organ was refurbished by Harrison and Harrison, and space was prepared for two
additional 16 ft stops on the Lower Choir Organ and the Bombarde Organ. One part of the instrument, the Celestial Organ, is currently not connected or playable.

**Bells**

The bells at the Abbey were overhauled in 1971. The ring is now made up of ten bells, hung for change ringing, cast in 1971, by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, tuned to the notes: F#, E, D, C#, B, A, G, F#, E and D. The Tenor bell in D (588.5 Hz) has a weight of 30 hundredweight, 1 quarter, 15 pounds (3403 pounds or 1544 kilograms).

In addition there are two service bells, cast by Robert Mot, in 1585 and 1598 respectively, a Sanctus bell cast in 1738 by Richard Phelps and Thomas Lester and two unused bells—one cast about 1320, by the successor to R de Wymbish, and a second cast in 1742, by Thomas Lester. The two service bells and the 1320 bell, along with a fourth small silver “dish bell,” kept in the refectory, have been noted as being of historical importance by the Church Buildings Council of the Church of England.

**Chapter House**

The chapter house was built concurrently with the east parts of the abbey under Henry III, between about 1245 and 1253. It was restored by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1872. The entrance is approached from the east cloister walk and includes a double doorway with a large tympanum above.

Inner and outer vestibules lead to the octagonal chapter house, which is of exceptional architectural purity. It is built in a Geometrical Gothic style with an octagonal crypt below. A pier of eight shafts carries the vaulted ceiling. To the sides are blind arcading, remains of 14th-century paintings and numerous stone benches above which are innovatory large 4-light quatre-foiled windows. These are virtually contemporary with the Sainte-Chapelle, Paris.

The chapter house has an original mid-thirteenth-century tiled pavement. A door within the vestibule dates from around 1050 and is believed to be the oldest in England. The exterior includes flying buttresses added in the fourteenth century and a leaded tent-lantern roof on an iron frame designed by Scott. The Chapter house was originally used in the thirteenth century by Benedictine monks for daily meetings. It later became a meeting place of the King’s Great Council and the Commons, predecessors of Parliament.

The Pyx Chamber formed the undercroft of the monks’ dormitory. It dates to the late eleventh century and was used as a monastic and royal treasury. The outer walls and circular piers are of eleventh-century date, several of the capitals were enriched in the twelfth century and the stone altar added in the thirteenth century. The term pyx refers to the boxwood chest in which coins were held and presented to a jury during the Trial of the Pyx, in which newly minted coins were presented to ensure they conformed to the required standards.

The chapter house and Pyx Chamber at Westminster Abbey are in the guardianship of English Heritage, but under the care and management of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. English Heritage have funded a major program of work on the chapter house, comprising repairs to the roof, gutters, stonework on the elevations and flying buttresses as well as repairs to the lead light.

--http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Westminster_Abbey
Winchester Cathedral is a Church of England cathedral in Winchester, Hampshire, England. It is one of the largest cathedrals in England, with the longest nave and greatest overall length of any Gothic cathedral in Europe. Dedicated to the Holy Trinity, Saint Peter, Saint Paul, and Saint Swithun, it is the seat of the Bishop of Winchester and center of the Diocese of Winchester. The cathedral is a Grade I listed building.

Pre-Norman Cathedral

The cathedral was founded in 642 on a site immediately to the north of the present one. This building became known as the Old Minster. It became part of a monastic settlement in 971. Saint Swithun was buried near the Old Minster and then in it, before being moved to the new Norman cathedral. So-called mortuary chests said to contain the remains of Saxon kings such as King Eadwig of England, first buried in the Old Minster, and his wife Ælfgifu, are also housed in the present cathedral. The Old Minster was demolished in 1093, immediately after the consecration of its successor.

Architectural History

In 1079, Bishop Walkelin began work on a completely new cathedral. Much of the limestone used to build the structure was brought across from the Isle of Wight from quarries around Binstead. Nearby Quarr Abbey draws its name from these workings, as do many local places such as Stonelands and Stonepitts. The remains of the Roman trackway used to transport the blocks are still evident across the fairways of the Ryde Golf Club, where the stone was hauled from the quarries to the hythe at the mouth of Binstead Creek, and thence by barge across the Solent and up to Winchester.

The building was consecrated in 1093. On April 8 of that year, according to the Winchester Annals, “in the presence of almost all the bishops and abbots of England, the monks came with the highest exultation and glory from the old minster to the new one: on the Feast of St. Swithun they went in procession from the new minster to the old one and brought thence St. Swithun’s
shrine and placed it with honor in the new buildings; and on the following day Bishop Walkelin’s men first began to pull down the old minster.”

A substantial amount of the fabric of Walkelin’s building, including the crypt, transepts and the basic structure of the nave, survives. The original crossing tower, however, collapsed in 1107, an accident blamed by the cathedral’s medieval chroniclers on the fact that the dissolute William Rufus had been buried beneath it in 1100. Its replacement, which survives today, is still in the Norman style, with round-headed windows. It is a squat, square structure, 50 feet (15 meters) wide, but rising only 35 feet (11 meters) above the ridge of the transept roof. The Tower is 45.7 meters (150 feet) tall.

**Gothic**

Following the accession of Godfrey de Lucy in 1189 a retrochoir was added in the Early English style. The next major phase of rebuilding was not until the mid-fourteenth century, under bishops Edington and Wykeham. Under William of Wykeham (1367–1404) the Romanesque nave was transformed, re-cased in Caen stone and remodelled in the Perpendicular style, with its internal elevation divided into two, rather than the previous three, stories. The wooden ceilings were replaced with stone vaults. Wykeham’s successor, Henry of Beaufort (1405–1447), carried out fewer alterations, adding only a chantry on the south side of the retrochoir, although work on the nave may have continued through his episcopacy. His successor, William of Waynflete (1447–1528) added the side screens of the presbytery, which he also gave a wooden vault. With its progressive extensions, the east end is now about 110 feet (34 m) beyond that of Walkelin’s building.

**Later Alterations**

After King Henry VIII seized control of the Catholic Church in England and declared himself head of the Church of England, the Benedictine foundation, the Priory of Saint Swithun, was dissolved. The priory surrendered to the king in 1539. The next year a new chapter was formed, and the last prior, William Basyng, was appointed dean. The monastic buildings, including the cloister and chapter house were later demolished, mostly during the 1560–1580 bishopric of the Protestant Robert Horne.

The Norman choir screen, having fallen into a state of decay, was replaced in 1637–1640 by a new one, designed by Inigo Jones. It was in a classical style, with brass figures of James I and Charles I in niches. It was removed in 1820, by which time its style was felt inappropriate in an otherwise medieval building. The central bay, with its archway, is now in the University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at Cambridge; it was replaced by a Gothic screen by Edward Garbett, its design based on the west doorway of the nave. This stone structure was itself removed in the 1870s to make way for a wooden one designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott, who modeled it on the canopies of the choir stalls.

Restoration work was carried out by T.G. Jackson in 1905–1912. Waterlogged foundations on the south and east walls were reinforced by diver William Walker, packing the foundations with more than 25,000 bags of concrete, 115,000 concrete blocks, and 900,000 bricks. Walker worked six hours a day from 1906 to 1912 in total darkness at depths up to 6 meters (20 feet), and is credited with saving the cathedral from total collapse. For this he was awarded the MVO.
Funerals, Coronations, Weddings

Important events which took place at Winchester Cathedral include:

- Funeral of King Harthacanute (1042)
- Funeral of King William II of England (1100)
- Coronation of Henry the Young King and his queen, Marguerite (1172)
- Second coronation of Richard I of England (1194)
- Marriage of King Henry IV of England and Joanna of Navarre (1403)
- Marriage of Queen Mary I of England and King Philip II of Spain (1554)

Memorials and Artworks

In the south transept there is a “Fishermen’s Chapel,” which is the burial place of Izaak Walton. Walton, who died in 1683, was the author of *The Compleat Angler* and a friend of John Donne. In the choir is the bell from HMS *Iron Duke*, which was the flagship of Admiral John Jellicoe at the Battle of Jutland in 1916.

A statue of Joan of Arc was erected when she was made canon as a saint by the Pope in 1923. She looks at the Chancery Chapel of Cardinal Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester who condemned her to death at the stake in Rouen in 1431.

The crypt, which frequently floods, houses a statue by Antony Gormley, called “Sound II,” installed in 1986, and a modern shrine to Saint Swithun. The mysterious statue contemplates the water held in cupped hands. Gormley spoke of the connection of memories to basic elements of the physical world, “Is it possible to do this and make something fresh, like dew or frost – something that just is, as if its form had always been like this.” There is also a bust of William Walker, the deep-sea diver who worked underwater in the crypt between 1906 and 1911 underpinning the nave and shoring up the walls.

A series of nine icons were installed between 1992 and 1996 in the retroquire screen which for a short time protected the relics of St. Swithun destroyed by Henry VIII in 1538. These icons, influenced by the Russian Orthodox tradition, were created by Sergei Fyodorov and dedicated in 1997. They include the local religious figures St. Swithun and St. Birinus. Beneath the retroquire Icons, is the Holy Hole once used by pilgrims to crawl beneath and lie close to the healing shrine of St. Swithun.

The sculptor Alan Durst was responsible for the carving on one of the memorials in the church.

Stained Glass

The cathedral’s huge mediaeval stained glass West Window was deliberately smashed by Cromwell’s forces following the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642. After the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the broken glass was gathered up and assembled randomly, in a manner something like pique assiette mosaic work. There was no attempt to reconstruct the original pictures. Out of necessity, the cathedral pre-empted collage art by hundreds of years.

The Epiphany Chapel has a series of Pre-Raphaelite stained glass windows designed by Sir Edward Coley Burne-Jones and made in William Morris’s workshop. The foliage decoration above and below each pictorial panel is unmistakably William Morris and at least one of the figures bears a striking resemblance to Morris’s wife Jane, who frequently posed for Dante Gabriel Rossetti and other members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

Bells
The cathedral possesses the only diatonic ring of 14 church bells in the world, with a tenor (heaviest bell) weighing 1.81 tonnes (4,000 pounds).

**Literary and Musical Connections**

Nowadays the cathedral draws many tourists as a result of its association with Jane Austen, who died in Winchester on July 18, 1817. Her funeral was held in the cathedral and she was buried in the north aisle. The inscription on her tombstone makes no mention of her novels, but a later brass tablet describes her as “known to many by her writings.”

In 2005, the building was used as a film set for *The Da Vinci Code*, with the north transept used as the Vatican. Following this, the cathedral hosted discussions and displays to debunk the book.

Winchester Cathedral is possibly the only cathedral to have had popular songs written about it. “Winchester Cathedral” was a UK top ten hit and a US number one song for The New Vaudeville Band in 1966. The cathedral was also the subject of the Crosby, Stills & Nash song, “Cathedral” from their 1977 album *CSN*. Liverpool-based band Clinic released an album titled *Winchester Cathedral* in 2004.

In 1992, the British rosarian David Austin introduced a white sport of his rose cultivar ‘Mary Rose’ (1983) as ‘Winchester Cathedral.’

**Burials**

- Saint Birinus – his relics were eventually translated here
- Walkelin, first Norman Bishop of Winchester (1070–1098)
- Henry of Blois (or Henry of Winchester), Abbot of Glastonbury Abbey (1126–1129) and Bishop of Winchester (1129–1171)
- Richard of Ilchester, Bishop of Winchester (1173–1188) and medieval English statesman
- Godfrey de Luci, Bishop of Winchester (1189–1204)
- Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester (1205–1238) and Chief Justiciar of England (1213–c.1215)
- Izaak Walton, author of *The Compleat Angler* (9 August 1593 – 15 December 1683)
- John Ecton, Queen Anne’s Bounty official, legal compiler and author died at Turnham Green, Middlesex, on August 20, 1730. His will, bearing date July 7, 1730, was proved at London, September 8, 1730 by his widow, Dorothea Ecton, noting that he desired to be buried in Winchester Cathedral.
- Jane Austen (1817)
Displaced in Mortuary Chests

- Cynegils, King of Wessex (611–643)
- Cenwalh, King of Wessex (643–672)
- Egbert of Wessex, King of Wessex (802–839)
- Ethelwulf, King of Wessex (839–856)
- Eadred, King of England (946–955)
- Eadwig, King of England and later Wessex (955–959)
- Cnut or Canute, King of England (1016–1035) and also of Denmark and Norway
- Emma of Normandy, wife of Cnut and also Ethelred II of England
- William II ‘Rufus,’ King of England (1087–1100) – not in the traditional tomb associated with him, which may in fact be that of Henry of Blois, brother of King Stephen of England

Also buried in the Cathedral

- Harthacnut, King of England (1040–1042) and also of Denmark – buried in wall of the choir screen?
- Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury (d. 1072)

One of the mortuary chests also refers to a king ‘Edmund,’ of which nothing else is known. It is possible that this could be Edmund Ironside, King of England (1016), but he is buried at Glastonbury Abbey by most accounts, including the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

Choirs and Organs

The earliest recorded organ at Winchester Cathedral was in the tenth century; it had 400 pipes and could be heard throughout the city. The earliest known organist of Winchester Cathedral is John Dyer in 1402.

The current organ, the work of master organ builder Henry Willis, was first displayed in the Great Exhibition of 1851, where it was the largest pipe organ. Winchester Cathedral organist Samuel Sebastian Wesley recommended its purchase to the dean and chapter; it was reduced in size and installed in 1854. It was modified in 1897 and 1905, and completely rebuilt by Harrison & Harrison in 1937 and again in 1986–1988. Organists at Winchester have included Christopher Gibbons whose patronage aided the revival of church music after the Interregnum, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, the composer of sacred music, and Martin Neary, who arranged the music for the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, at Westminster Abbey.

There is a choir of twenty-two boy choristers, all boarders at the local Pilgrims’ School, and twelve lay clerks. There are also twenty girl choristers who all attend local schools. They sing with the boy choristers for major concerts and services, as well as at Easter and Christmas.

--http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winchester_Cathedral
Old St. Paul’s Cathedral was the medieval cathedral of the City of London that, until 1666, stood on the site of the present St. Paul’s Cathedral. Built from 1087 to 1314 and dedicated to Saint Paul, the cathedral was the fourth church on the site at Ludgate Hill.

Work on the cathedral began during the reign of William the Conqueror after a fire in 1087 that destroyed much of the city. Work took more than 200 years, and construction was delayed by another fire in 1135. The church was consecrated in 1240 and enlarged again in 1256 and the early fourteenth century. At its completion in the middle of the 14th century, the cathedral was one of the longest churches in the world and had one of the tallest spires and some of the finest stained glass.

The presence of the shrine of Saint Erkenwald made the cathedral a pilgrimage site during the Medieval period. In addition to serving as the seat of the Diocese of London, the building developed a reputation as a hub of the City of London, with the nave aisle, “Paul’s walk,” known as a center for business and the London grapevine. After the Reformation, the open-air pulpit in the churchyard, St. Paul’s Cross, became the stage for radical evangelical preaching and Protestant bookselling.

The cathedral was already severely in decline by the seventeenth century. Restoration work by Inigo Jones in the 1620s was halted by the English Civil War. Sir Christopher Wren was attempting another restoration in 1666 when the cathedral was destroyed in the Great Fire of London. After demolition of the old structure, the present, domed cathedral was erected on the site, with an English Baroque design by Wren.

**Construction**

The cathedral was the fourth church on the site at Ludgate Hill dedicated to St. Paul. A devastating fire in 1087, detailed in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, destroyed much of the city and the cathedral. King William I donated the stone from the destroyed Palatine Tower on the River...
Fleet towards the construction of a new, Romanesque Norman cathedral, sometimes said to be his last act before his death.

Bishop Maurice oversaw early preparations, although it was primarily under his successor, Richard de Beaumis, that construction work fully commenced. Beaumis was assisted by King Henry I, who gave the bishop stone and commanded that all material brought up the River Fleet for the cathedral should be free from toll. To fund the cathedral, Henry gave Beamis rights to all fish caught within the cathedral neighborhood and tithes on venison taken in the County of Essex. Beaumis also gave a site for the original foundation of St. Paul’s School.

After Henry I’s death, a civil war known as “The Anarchy” broke out. Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester, was appointed to administer the affairs of St. Paul’s. Almost immediately, he had to deal with the aftermath of a fire at London Bridge in 1135. It spread over much of the city, damaging the cathedral and delaying its construction.

During this period, the style of the building transitioned from heavy Romanesque into Early English Gothic. Although the base Norman columns were left alone, lancet pointed arches were placed over them in the triforium and some heavy columns were substituted with clustered pillars. The steeple was erected in 1221 and the cathedral was rededicated by Bishop Roger Niger in 1240.

New work (1255–1314)

After a succession of storms, in 1255 Bishop Fulk Basset appealed for funds to repair the damaged roof. The roof was once more rebuilt in wood, which was ultimately to doom the building. At this time, the east end of the cathedral church was lengthened, enclosing the parish church of St. Faith, which was now brought within the cathedral. The eastward addition was always referred to as “The New Work.”

After complaints from the dispossessed parishioners of St. Faith’s, the east end of the west crypt was allotted to them as their parish church. The congregation were also allowed to keep a detached tower with a peal of bells east of the church which had historically been used to peal the summons to the Cheapside Folkmote. The parish later moved to the Jesus chapel during the reign of Edward VI and was merged with St. Augustine Watling Street after the 1666 fire.

This “New Work” was completed in 1314, although the additions had been consecrated in 1300. Excavations in 1878 by Francis Penrose showed it was 586 feet (179 meters) long (excluding the porch later added by Inigo Jones) and 100 feet (30 meers) wide (290 feet (88 meters) across the transepts and crossing). By way of comparison, the current cathedral is 574 feet (175 meters) in length including the portico, and 246 feet (75 meters) across the transepts, and Winchester Cathedral, the longest remaining medieval church, is 556 feet (169 meters) long and 231 feet (70 meters) across the transepts.

The cathedral had one of Europe’s tallest church spires, the height of which is traditionally given as 489 feet (149 meters), surpassing all but Lincoln Cathedral. The King’s Surveyor, Christopher Wren (1632–1723), judged that an overestimate and gave 460 feet (140 meters). William Benham noted that the cathedral probably “resembled in general outline that of Salisbury, but it was a hundred feet longer, and the spire was sixty or eighty feet higher. The tower was open internally as far as the base of the spire, and was probably more beautiful both inside and out than that of any other English cathedral.”

According to the architectural historian John Harvey, the octagonal chapter house, built about 1332 by William Ramsey, was the earliest example of Perpendicular Gothic. This is confirmed
by Alec Clifton-Taylor, who notes that the chapter house and St. Stephen’s chapel at Westminster Abbey predate the early Perpendicular work at Gloucester Cathedral by several years. The foundations of the chapter house were recently made visible in the redeveloped south churchyard of the new cathedral.

**Interior**

The finished cathedral of the Middle Ages was renowned for the beauty of its interior. Canon William Benham wrote in 1902: “It had not a rival in England, perhaps one might say in Europe.”

The nave’s immense length was particularly notable, with a Norman triforium and vaulted ceiling. The length earned it the nickname “Paul’s walk.” The cathedral’s stained glass was reputed to be the best in the country, and the east-end rose window was particularly exquisite. The poet Geoffrey Chaucer uses the windows as a metaphor in “The Miller’s Tale” from *The Canterbury Tales*, in the knowledge that other Londoners would understand the comparison:

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His rode was red, his eyen grey as goose,
With Paule’s windows carven on his shoes
In hosen red he went full fetisly.
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From the cathedral’s construction until its destruction at the Reformation, the shrine of Erkenwald was a popular site for pilgrimage. Under Bishop Maurice, reports of miracles attributed to the shrine increased, with the shrine attracting thousands of pilgrims to the cathedral. The alliterative Middle English poem *St. Erkenwald* (sometimes attributed to the “Pearl Poet,” fourteenth century) begins with a description of the construction of the cathedral, referring to the building as the “New Werke.”

The shrine was adorned with gold, silver and precious stones. In 1339, three London goldsmiths were employed for a whole year to rebuild the shrine to a higher standard. William Dugdale records that the shrine was pyramidal in shape with an altar table placed in front for offerings.

Monarchs and other dignitaries were often in attendance at the cathedral, and the court occasionally held session there. The building was also the scene of several incidents of mediaeval intrigue. In 1191, whilst King Richard I was in Palestine, his brother John summoned a council of bishops to St. Paul’s to denounce William de Longchamp, Bishop of Ely — to whom Richard had entrusted the affairs of government — for treason.

Later that year, William Fitz Osbern gave a fiery speech against the oppression of the poor at Paul’s Cross and incited a riot which saw the cathedral invaded, halted only by an appeal for calm by Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury. Osbern barricaded himself in nearby St. Mary-le-Bow and was later executed, after which Paul’s Cross was silent for many years.

Arthur, Prince of Wales, son of Henry VII, married Catharine of Aragon in St. Paul’s on November 14, 1501. Chroniclers are profuse in their descriptions of the decorations of the cathedral and city on that occasion. Arthur died five months later, at the age of 15, and the marriage was later to prove contentious during the subsequent reign of his brother, Henry VIII.

Several kings of the Middle Ages lay in state in St. Paul’s before their funerals at Westminster Abbey, including Richard II, Henry VI, and Henry VII. In the case of Richard II, the display of his body in such a public place was to counter rumors that he was not deceased. The walls were lined with the tombs of mediaeval bishops and nobility. In addition to the shrine of Erkenwald, two Anglo-Saxon kings were buried inside: Sebbi, King of the East Saxons, and Ethelred the Unready.
A number of figures such as John of Gaunt, first Duke of Lancaster, and John Beauchamp, third Baron Beauchamp de Somerset had particularly large monuments constructed within the cathedral, and the building later contained the tombs of the Crown minister Nicholas Bacon, the poet, courtier and soldier Sir Philip Sidney, and of the poet and clergyman John Donne, who was dean of the cathedral between 1621 until his death in 1631. Donne’s monument survived the 1666 fire, and is on display in the present building.

Paul’s Walk

The first historical reference to the nave, “Paul’s walk”, being used as a marketplace and general meeting area is recorded during the 1381–1404 tenure of Bishop Braybrooke. The bishop issued an open letter decrying the use of the building for selling “wares, as if it were a public market” and “others ... by the instigation of the Devil [using] stones and arrows to bring down the birds, jackdaws and pigeons which nestle in the walls and crevices of the building. Others play at ball . . . breaking the beautiful and costly painted windows to the amazement of spectators.” His decree goes on to threaten perpetrators with excommunication.

By the fifteenth century, the cathedral had become the center of the London grapevine. “News mongers,” as they were called, gathered there to pass on the latest news and gossip. Those who visited the cathedral to keep up with the news were known as “Paul’s walkers”.

According to Francis Osborne (1593–1656):

It was the fashion of those times ... for the principal gentry, lords, courtiers, and men of all professions not merely mechanic, to meet in Paul’s Church by eleven and walk in the middle aisle till twelve, and after dinner from three to six, during which times some discoursed on business, others of news. Now in regard of the universal there happened little that did not first or last arrive here . . . . And those news-mongers, as they called them, did not only take the boldness to weigh the public but most intrinsic actions of the state, which some courtier or other did betray to this society.

St. Paul’s became the place to go to hear the latest news of current affairs, war, religion, parliament and the court. In his play Englishmen for my Money, William Haughton (d. 1605) described Paul’s walk as a kind of “open house” filled with a “great store of company that do nothing but go up and down, and go up and down, and make a grumbling together.”

Infested with beggars and thieves, Paul’s walk was also a place to pick up gossip, topical jokes, and even prostitutes. In his Microcosmographie (1628), a series of satirical portraits of contemporary England, John Earle (1601–1665), described Paul’s walk thus:

Is the land’s epitome, or you may call it the lesser isle of Great Britain. It is more than this, the whole world’s map, which you may here discern in its perfectest motion, justling and turning. It is a heap of stones and men, with a vast confusion of languages; and were the steeple not sanctified, nothing liker Babel. The noise in it is like that of bees, a strange humming or buzz mixed of walking tongues and feet: it is a kind of still roar or loud whisper ... It is the great exchange of all discourse, and no business whatsoever but is here stirring and a-foot ... It is the general mint of all famous lies, which are here like the legends of popery, first coined and stamped in the church.
Decline (Sixteenth Century)

By the 16th century the building was deteriorating. Under Henry VIII and Edward VI, the Dissolution of the Monasteries and Chantries Acts led to the destruction of interior ornamentation and the cloisters, charnels, crypts, chapels, shrines, chantries, and other buildings in the churchyard.

Many of these former religious sites in St. Paul’s Churchyard, having been seized by the crown, were sold as shops and rental properties, especially to printers and booksellers, such as Thomas Adams, who were often evangelical Protestants. Buildings that were razed often supplied ready-dressed building material for construction projects, such as the Lord Protector’s city palace, Somerset House.

Crowds were drawn to the northeast corner of the Churchyard, St. Paul’s Cross, where open-air preaching took place. It was there in the Cross Yard in 1549 that radical Protestant preachers incited a mob to destroy many of the cathedral’s interior decorations. In 1554, in an attempt to end inappropriate practices taking place in the nave, the Lord Mayor decreed that church should return to its original purpose as a religious building, issuing a writ stating that the selling of horses, beer and “other gross wares” was “to the great dishonor and displeasure of Almighty God, and the great grief also and offence of all good and well-disposed persons.”

Fire (1561)

On June 4, 1561, the spire caught fire and crashed through the nave roof. According to a news sheet published days after the fire, the cause was a lightning strike. In 1753, David Henry, a writer for *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, revived a rumor in his *Historical description of St. Paul’s Cathedral*, writing that a plumber had “confessed on his death bed” that he had “left a pan of coals and other fuel in the tower when he went to dinner.” However, the number of contemporary eyewitnesses to the storm and a subsequent investigation appears to contradict this.

Whatever the cause, the subsequent conflagration was hot enough to melt the cathedral’s bells and the lead covering the wooden spire “poured down like lava upon the roof,” destroying it. This event was taken by both Protestants and Catholics as a sign of God’s displeasure at the other faction’s actions. Queen Elizabeth contributed towards the cost of repairs and the Bishop of London Edmund Grindal gave £ 1200, although the spire was never rebuilt. The repair work on the nave roof was sub-standard, and only fifty years after the rebuilding was in a dangerous condition.

Restoration work (1621-1666)

Concerned at the decaying state of the building, King James I appointed England’s first classical architect, Inigo Jones, to restore the building. The poet Henry Farley records the king comparing himself to the building at the commencement of the work in 1621: “I have had more sweeping, brushing and cleaning than in forty years before. My workmen looke like him they call Muldsacke after sweeping of a chimney.”

In addition to cleaning and rebuilding parts of the Gothic structure, Jones added a classical-style portico to the cathedral’s west front in the 1630s, which William Benham notes was “altogether incongruous with the old building . . . . It was no doubt fortunate that Inigo Jones confined his work at St. Paul’s to some very poor additions to the transepts, and to a portico, very magnificent in its way, at the west end.”
Work stopped during the English Civil War, and there was much defacement and mistreatment of the building by Parliamentarian forces during which old documents and charters were dispersed and destroyed, and the nave used as a stable for cavalry horses. Much of the detailed information historians have of the cathedral is taken from William Dugdale’s 1658 History of St Pauls Cathedral, written hastily during The Protectorate for fear that “one of the most eminent Structures of that kinde in the Christian World” might be destroyed.”

Indeed, a persistent rumor of the time suggested that Cromwell had considered giving the building to London’s returning Jewish community to become a synagogue. Dugdale embarked on his project due to discovering hampers full of decaying fourteenth and fifteenth century documents from the Cathedral’s early archives. In his book’s dedicatory epistle, he wrote:

... so great was your foresight of what we have since by wofull experience seen and felt, and specially in the Church, (through the Presbyterian contagion, which then began violently to breake out) that you often and earnestly incited me to a speedy view of what Monuments I could, especially in the principall Churches of this Realme; to the end, that by Inke and paper, the Shadows of them, with their Inscriptions might be preserved for posteritie, forasmuch as the things themselves were so neer unto ruine.

Dugdale’s book is also the source for many of the surviving engravings of the building, created by Bohemian etcher Wenceslaus Hollar. In July, 2010, an original sketch for Hollar’s engravings was rediscovered when it was submitted to Sotheby’s auction house.

**The Great Fire (1666)**

After the Restoration of King Charles II, Sir Christopher Wren, the Surveyor to the King’s Works, was appointed to restore the cathedral in a style matching Inigo Jones’ classical additions of 1630. Wren instead recommended that the building be completely demolished, decrying the “carelessness and want of accuracy in its builders,” calling his new design “The Gothic rectified to a better manner of architecture.”

Both the clergy and citizens of the city opposed such a move. In response, Wren proposed to restore the body of the gothic building, but replace the existing tower with a dome. He wrote in his 1666 Of the Surveyor’s Design for repairing the old ruinous structure of St Paul’s:

It must be concluded that the Tower from Top to Bottom and the adjacent parts are such a heap of deformities that no Judicious Architect will think it corrigible by any Expense that can be laid out upon new dressing it.

Wren, whose uncle Matthew Wren was Bishop of Ely, admired the central lantern of Ely Cathedral and proposed that his dome design could be constructed over the top of the existing gothic tower, before the old structure was removed from within. This, he reasoned, would prevent the need for extensive scaffolding and would not upset Londoners (“Unbelievers”) by demolishing a familiar landmark without being able to see its “hopeful Successor rise in its stead.”

The matter was still under discussion when the restoration work on St. Paul’s finally began in the 1660s but soon after being sheathed in wooden scaffolding, the building was completely gutted in the Great Fire of London of 1666. The fire, aided by the scaffolding, destroyed the roof and much of the stonework along with masses of stocks and personal belongings that had been placed there for safety. Samuel Pepys recalls the building in flames in his diary:
Up by five o’clock, and blessed be God! find all well, and by water to Paul’s Wharf. Walked thence and saw all the town burned, and a miserable sight of Paul’s Church, with all the roof fallen, and the body of the choir fallen into St. Faith’s; Paul’s School also, Ludgate, and Fleet Street.

John Evelyn’s account paints a similar picture of destruction:

September 3rd – I went and saw the whole south part of the City burning from Cheapeside to the Thames, and ... was now taking hold of St. Paule’s Church, to which the scaffolds contributed exceedingly.

September 7th – I went this morning on foote from White-hall as far as London Bridge, thro’ the late Fleete-streete, Ludgate Hill, by St. Paules ... At my returne I was infinitely concern’d to find that goodly Church St. Paules now a sad ruine, and that beautiful portico ... now rent in pieces, flakes of vast stone split asunder, and nothing now remaining intire but the inscription in the architrave, shewing by whom it was built, which had not one letter of it defac’d. It was astonishing to see what immense stones the heate had in a manner calcin’d, so that all the ornaments, columns, freezes, capitals, and projectures of massie Portland-stone flew off, even to the very rooфе, where a sheet of lead covering a great space (no less than six akers by measure) was totally mealted; the ruines of the vaulted rooфе falling broke into St. Faith’s, which being fill’d with the magazines of bookes belonging to the Stationers, and carried thither for safety, they were all consum’d, burning for a weeke following. It is also observable that the lead over the altar at the East end was untouch’d, and among the divers monuments, the body of one Bishop remain’d intire. Thus lay in ashes that most venerable Church, one of the most antient pieces of early piety in the Christian world.

Aftermath

Temporary repairs were made to the building. While it might have been salvageable, albeit with almost complete reconstruction, a decision was taken to build a new cathedral in a modern style instead, a step which had been contemplated even before the fire. Wren declared that it was impossible to restore the old building.

The following April, the Dean William Sancroft wrote to him that he had been right in his judgment: “Our work at the west end,” he wrote, “has fallen about our ears.” Two pillars had collapsed, and the rest was so unsafe that men were afraid to go near, even to pull it down. He added, “You are so absolutely necessary to us that we can do nothing, resolve on nothing without you.”

Following this declaration by the Dean, demolition of the remains of the old cathedral began in 1668. Demolition of the Old Cathedral proved unexpectedly difficult as the stonework had been bonded together by molten lead. Wren initially used the then-new technique of using gunpowder to bring down the surviving stone walls. Like many experimental techniques, the use of gunpowder was not easy to control; several workers were killed and nearby residents complained about noise and damage. Eventually, Wren resorted to using a battering ram instead. Building work on the new cathedral began in June, 1675.

Wren’s first proposal, the “Greek cross” design, was considered too radical by members of a committee commissioned to rebuild the church. Members of the clergy decried the design as being too dissimilar from churches that already existed in England at the time to suggest any continuity within the Church of England. Wren’s approved “Warrant design” sought to reconcile
the Gothic with his “better manner of architecture,” featuring a portico influenced by Inigo Jones’ addition to the old cathedral. However, Wren received permission from the king to make “ornamental changes” to the submitted design, and over the course of the construction made significant alterations, including the addition of the famous dome.

The topping out of the new cathedral took place in October 1708 and the cathedral was declared officially complete by Parliament in 1710. The consensus on the finished building was mixed; James Wright (1643–1713) wrote “Without, within, below, above the eye/ Is filled with unrestrained delight.” Meanwhile, others were less approving, noting its similarity to St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome: “There was an air of Popery about the gilded capitals, the heavy arches . . . . They were unfamiliar, un-English.”

--http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_St_Paul's_Cathedral

Plan of the Present St. Paul’s Cathedral