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EDITORIAL

In 1956, Dr. Graham Webster carried out an excavation at Wall, when he cut a section in Chesterfield Croft on the south side of the Watling Street. After the completion of the excavation, the team of workers formed an archaeological research group, under the aegis of Birmingham University, to continue investigations. The principal members of the group were Mr. and Mrs. R. Hartley, Messrs. D. C. Lewington, F. H. Lyon and E. Ashdown-Sharp. In 1959, twenty-one years ago, the research group decided to turn itself into the Lichfield Archaeological and Historical Society. Mr. S. A. Jeavons agreed to become President and the following officers were elected: Chairman, F. H. Lyon; Secretary, Miss R. Hartley; Treasurer, P. R. Sheppard; Excursion Secretary, E. Ashdown-Sharp. In the winter, monthly meetings were held in Lichfield and excavations were continued at Wall. Mr. Sheppard led investigations into timber-framed buildings in the area and a member, Mr. C. J. Gilson, took charge of work on inland waterways. Almost immediately after the Society was formed, Mr. and Mrs. Hartley moved to South Africa, Mr. Gilson left the area and Jim Gould became Secretary. The membership at the outset was about thirty and this increased by the end of the first year to about seventy.

In the first year, it was decided, encouraged by the President, S. A. Jeavons, to publish transactions. The first volume was set up by Jim Gould on his typewriter, and duplicated; the second volume was produced by Messrs. Deanson. Volume III was the first printed volume, and in this we were greatly helped by the printer, Geoff. Clark of Bloxwich. There were some problems in the early days but the Society's transactions are now well established and recognized as the authoritative publication for the archaeology and history of South Staffordshire. The transactions circulate over a wide area and many universities and libraries, at home and abroad, are subscribers. In the academic and professional world, the reputation of a society is judged by the standard of its publications.

It was a bold step in 1959 to enter into publication with a membership of about seventy and a subscription of **75. 6d. (37 Vzp)**, but the decision has proved to have been justified. Much of the material which has appeared in the Society's transactions would not otherwise have been published or would have appeared in publications not so readily available to local students. Further, the prospect of publication encourages local research and, the discipline of having to write a report which will be accepted for publication, promotes a higher standard of work.

The Society soon began to extend its interests to a wider area and in 1962 the name was changed to the Lichfield and South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society. Another change was made in 1968, when the present title was adopted.

From its formation, many organizations and individuals have given grants towards the cost of publishing papers. The Editorial Committee acknowledges these gratefully, and the support of the general membership, as the Society reaches its twenty-first year of publication.

ELEVENTH REPORT OF EXCAVATIONS AT WALL, STAFFS.

I THE *MANSIO*: AN INTERIM NOTE

A. A. ROUND, F.S.A.

After excavations in the Roman Baths building in 1971¹ the author was asked by the Department of the Environment, who administer the site, to excavate the 'villa' to the north-east, superficially examined in 1912-14², so that it could be displayed to the public. A full report is forthcoming but the importance of recent discoveries makes their early publication desirable.*

The 'villa', which was built about A.D.125 and destroyed some forty years later, can now be recognized as a *mansio*, a resting place for travellers along the near-by Watling Street. It was preceded in the same general area by a predominantly wattle-and-daub Flavian building with plastered walls which followed a Neronian building which had been destroyed by fire. A part of the Flavian building consisted of a range of rooms running almost parallel to the north-east wall of the *mansio*, and two to three metres from it. The room nearest to the north corner of the *mansio* was floored with concrete and along its side nearest to the *mansio* was a robber-trench containing many cobbles and small lumps of sandstone, from which a stone wall appeared to have been removed. The remaining walls of the room were marked, as were those of the rest of the building, by foundation trenches for the wattle-and-daub walls, the plaster facing of which still stood to a height of a few inches in some places.

In the robber-trench were many sherds, including black-burnished ware category A in the bottom silt, and thirteen sherds of Hadrianic and Antonine Samian but nothing later. There were also many bone fragments and oyster-shells. This domestic rubbish was concentrated on the side of the trench nearest to the *mansio* two to three metres away, and appeared to have been tipped from that side, close to the back entrance.

Built into the outer wall foundation of the *mansio*, below the contemporary ground level and opposite the robber-trench, some facing the interior of the building and some the exterior, were the carved stones described below, with the exception of nos. 1 and 2 which had been removed in 1912, and no. 7 the position of which is described below. Gaps in the same wall indicated the original positions of nos. 1 and 2. All the stones examined were of the same dark, reddish-brown Keuper sandstone used in the construction of the *mansio* and the adjoining Baths³. All those found in the wall, including the inscriptions, were in an inverted position with the exception of no. 4 which had been re-used on its side to fit into the wall. Other stones used in this part of the *mansio* wall carried patches of surfaced wall-plaster indicating their previous use. It seems likely that they and the carved stones, with the probable exception of no. 7, came from the demolished stone wall already mentioned.

* The author is deeply indebted to Dr. Anne Ross for her interest and for her report (pp. 3-11).

1. *Trans.* xv for 1973/74 (1974), pp. 13-28.

2. *Trans. North Staffs. Field Club* xlvii for 1912/13 (1913), pp. 139-41.

3. *Trans. Birmingham Archeol. Soc.* lxxiv for 1956 (1958), p.28.

Below an inner wall of the *mansio* was an unusually large well or pit, 2m by 2.5m and 7.5m deep, filled with wall-plaster and clay, destruction material from the Flavian building. It appeared to have been cleaned out shortly before this filling as there was little silt and few sherds at the bottom.

Close to an outside wall of the Flavian building and predating it was a shallow pit containing evidence of burning and the lower half of a pony leg, with the bones in the articulated position.

DISCUSSION

The evidence suggests the presence of a Romano-Celtic shrine at Wall built during the Flavian period and incorporating a plastered stone wall or screen in which the carved stones were displayed. They may, of course, have originally come from an even earlier building. The complete plan of the Flavian building has not been elucidated as parts of it are under adjoining areas not available for excavation. Sacred wells and pits are frequently associated with such shrines and often contain votive offerings. If the unusually large well were one of these, its cleaning shortly before filling with the plaster debris of the Flavian shrine may well have removed the evidence.

The inversion both of the carved stones and the two inscriptions in the *mansio* foundations suggests that they were associated in the earlier shrine. While such shrines frequently show evidence of alteration and rebuilding, complete destruction as early as this is most unusual'. In this connection it is interesting to note that the 19th century church at Wall was believed to have been built over a buried temple to Minerva⁴, a goddess associated with wells and springs, and that Lomax's *Guide to Lichfield* refers to workmen finding near the church 'a figure of earthenware as big as a man, but a woman's figure in a strange dress with a man's cap like a soldier's helmet' which was broken in pieces to mend the bank of a drain⁶. If there were a temple on this site it must date from no earlier than the Hadrianic period, as the ditches of the last fort pass under the church and were open until that date⁷. It is at this time that the shrine seems to have been destroyed.

If there were some religious, military or political reason for the demolition and slighting of the shrine with its associated head-cult it could well have been replaced by a building dedicated to a specifically Roman deity on the more commanding site of the present church.

In conclusion, while a number of small finds of possible religious significance have been found in the Wall area, only those whose precise provenance is known have been included, but see 'Other finds of Celtic significance' at page 7 below.

4. M. J. T. Lewis, *Temples in Roman Britain* (1966), pp. 51-4, where 'shrine' and 'temple' are used synonymously.

5. *Journal of the British Archaeol. Assoc.* xxix (1873), p.115.

6. *VCH. Staffs.* i, p.194.

7. *Trans.* xi for 1969/70 (1971), pp.7-30.

II A PAGAN CELTIC SHRINE AT WALL, STAFFORDSHIRE

ANNE ROSS

INTRODUCTION

There is convincing evidence for the existence of a pagan Celtic shrine in the first century A.D. on the site of the Roman settlement at Wall, which was subsequently destroyed by the Romans when they built the *mansio*. Its importance is emphasized, amongst other things, by the fact that nine stone carvings, pertaining to Celtic cults, were excavated in close proximity to each other. These stones are of singular interest in their own right; other features at or in the vicinity of the site support the hypothesis that Wall was one of the sanctuaries of the Celtic tribe, the Cornovii, 'The Horned Ones', or 'Worshippers of the Horned One'. The stones were found in Cornovian territory. The Celtic name for the place was *Letocetum*, 'The Grey Wood', a fitting appellation for a shrine of people who were given to invoking their gods in sacred groves and woods.

The iconographic evidence, then, consists of these nine carved stones, five of which use the symbol of the human head, some horned, thus linking them with the strong cult of horned gods in North Britain'. Two bear fragmentary inscriptions which would seem to be the name of a Celtic deity or dedicator. In the writer's opinion, the stones were probably originally housed in a pre-Roman timber structure; the shrine would then have been destroyed when the Roman buildings were constructed.

Staffordshire has many traces of native religious activity and the discovery of this presumptive shrine site, although noteworthy, cannot be entirely unexpected.

Some twelve miles to the west of Wall, and twenty-two miles from the important Roman site of Wroxeter (*Viroconium*), where there are many traces of Celtic religious activity¹, stands the low hill, Penkridge. Its British name was *Pennocrucio*, 'chief mound'. Although not a prominent eminence it commands an impressive view of the surrounding countryside and would be, as its name suggests, an ideal site for the Celts to hold their assemblies, and religious gatherings. It can perhaps be compared with a site in County Cavan in Ireland known as *Magh Slecht*, 'The Plain of Lamentation'. Here the god *Cenn Cruaich*, 'head of the mound', (an exact parallel in Irish to the British *Pennocrucio*) was worshipped and sacrificed to with much weeping and lamentation. The stone idol was *in situ* until very recently, and the deity and his cult legends are still remembered in some areas at the widespread calendar festival of Lughnasa on the first of August in order to ensure a good harvest⁴.

THE NINE CARVED STONES FROM LETOCETUM

1. Stone decorated by two horned heads, in profile⁵, facing each other. To the right of the heads is what the writer takes to be a circular shield with arm-strap⁶.

1. A. Ross, *Pagan Celtic Britain* (1967), p.61ff.

2. Ross, *op.cit.* pp.51, 76, 325 and figs. 46 and 47.

3. E. Gwynn, *The Metrical Dindschenchas*, Royal Irish Academy, Todd Lecture Series, xi (Dublin, 1924).

4. M. MacNeill, *The Festival of Lughnasa* (OUP, 1962).

5. Ross, *op.cit.* for examples. Several others in stone have been found since 1967.

6. Ross, *op.cit.* fig. 125. A Chedworth example is illustrated in E. M. Clifford, 'Roman Altars in Gloucestershire', *Trans. Bristol Glos. Archeol. Soc.* lx (1938), pp.297-397.

2. Stone with a cross.
3. Stone with two pairs of figures on it, three seemingly holding circular shields. One wears a pigtail. The other three appear to do so.
4. Warrior equipped with a club, standing above a severed head.
5. Bust of a human head set in a niche.
6. Horned full-face human head with mouth in attitude suggestive of shouting or screaming⁷.
7. Stone carved with phallus which, when inverted, forms an elongated human head.
8. and 9. Stones carved with fragmentary inscriptions.

DISCUSSION

All these remarkable stones, with the exception of no. 7, were found within a few feet of each other in the outer foundation wall of the *mansio* built about A.D. 125; they were positioned several courses below the ground level of the building. Three of the stones were below what appears to have been the back-door threshold. An important feature of the excavation is that the recently discovered stones, with the exception of nos. 4 and 7, had been built into the wall in an upside-down position. These two, being carved lengthwise, were built in like the rest, with their longest axis horizontal. The position of the two stones, nos. 1 and 2, is known, but not their orientation. This treatment of stones that had been used for pagan purposes is also found in Christian contexts, secular and religious. In other instances they were built into a wall, carved face inwards so that it could not be seen. In so positioning the stones, their pagan powers were kept in check while they could be placated and canalized for the protection of the building. In Wales this is common practice and many old buildings and farm walls have, on demolition, been found to have a stone head or figure facing inwards in one of the walls.

THE SIGNIFICANCE FOR CELTIC RELIGION OF THE NINE CARVED STONES (figs. 1-8)

Stone 1 This most important stone was found in the excavations of 1912. It disappeared later from the Wall Museum, but fortunately a photograph remains which shows all its details clearly. Two ram-horned heads having large lentoid eyes face each other in hostile attitude. In the writer's opinion both are male. The object to the right of the heads which seems to be a circular shield suggests that these represent the horned warrior deity. The features of both are grim and menacing. This combination of motifs—horned, armed war-gods—is frequently phallic when the whole torso is depicted, indicating their connection with both virility and fertility. A cult of horned deities is well-attested by Celtic iconography, not only in Staffordshire and Derbyshire and North Britain in general, where they are particularly plentiful, but throughout the wider Celtic world. The iconography is supported by the early Celtic textual material. It may thus not be fortuitous that the ram is the symbol for Derbyshire, and adds weight to the antiquity of the near-by Abbots Bromley antler dance and the even more primitive one held annually at Clun in Salop, where the dancers not only wear antlers but animal skins as well. In the High Peak district of Derbyshire, within living memory, a well-head decorated by a tricaphalos composed of two profile heads, probably horned and bearing a striking resemblance to the Wall heads, looking in towards the central head with which they are conjoined, was kept buried together

7. Ross, *op.cit.* chap. 3.

with several other Celtic-type stone heads near a spring on the moor. These were annually unearthed and a lamb was sacrificed to them. The stones are now in Manchester Museum, but lamb sacrifice still surreptitiously continues, testifying to the deep-rooted nature of traditions suggested by the Wall stones.

Stone 2 This stone, like the previous one, was found in the excavations of 1912 and later disappeared from the Wall Museum. Unfortunately no photograph or drawing exists. It was variously described as a 'carved cross', and a 'Christian cross'. This seems likely to be a pagan symbol, one of the types used to symbolize the sun from the Bronze Age onwards.

Stone 3 This is decorated by two pairs of figures, crudely portrayed. One couple stand side by side, holding circular shields in their left hands indicating that they are warriors. As single combat between a pair of warriors was a favourite feature of Celtic warfare¹⁰, this may be the significance of one or indeed of both the couples. However, the 'pecking' of the stone round the legs of these shield-bearing warriors could be meant to represent water, and they could be deities associated with the unusually large *pre-mansio* well or pit found on the site near by. The second pair are similarly portrayed, but are at right angles to the first and are contained within a frame. The figure on the right has what may be a clumsily depicted shield, while that to the left has a clearly portrayed pigtail. Pigtails were known to have been worn by both men and women in the Celtic world, and the writer would see this couple as male. The frame surrounding this pair of figures is unusual, but could represent the well at which these figures were worshipped. Heads and wells and deities associated with wells are much in evidence in Celtic religion".

Stone 4 This much-worn, but most important stone was discovered in 1977. It has been re-used on its side to fit into the wall. It depicts a male figure with a disproportionately large head, both feet turned to the left in the manner of many of the North British gods. The left arm is raised and brandishes a circular object, probably a shield; the right hand rests on what would appear to be a club or mallet. Below the feet of the figure is a large human head, severed below the neck. The face of the warrior is too worn for much detail to be made out and the impression of ram-horns at the top of the head may perhaps be an *illusio optico*. If the circular object held in the left hand should in fact be a patera, then the symbols of patera and mallet would make it possible to equate the figure with the major Celtic god, Sucellos, 'the Good Striker'.¹² This deity is known in Britain and has his counterpart in Ireland in the form of the god In Dagdae 'the Good God',¹³ equipped with his life-giving cauldron of plenty and his great club which had the power both to convey and to deprive others of life. The severed head beneath the deity's feet would be indicative of his powers as a war-god, collecting heads as a sign of his military prowess.

8. C. Lynam, *Trans. North Staffs. Field Club (NSFC)*, xlix for 1914-1915 (1915), p.142.

9. W. F. Blay, *Letocetum* (Walsall, 1925), p.24.

10. A. Ross, *Everyday Life of the Pagan Celts* (1970).

11. A. Ross, 'Shafts, Pits, Wells—Sanctuaries of the Belgic Britons?', in *Studies in Ancient Europe*, eds. J. Coles and D. D. A. Simpson (Leicester U.P. 1968), pp.255-85.

A. Ross, 'Ritual Rubbish? The Newstead Pits' in *To Illustrate the Monuments*, ed. J. V. S. Megaw (Newton Abbot, 1977), pp.229-37. The bones of nine horses were found in one of these and a white pipeclay figurine of a horse recovered from another.

12. Ross, *op.cit.* see index.

13. Ross, *op.cit.* see index.

The great striding figure cut in the chalk hillside at Cerne Abbas, Dorset, with both feet likewise turned to the left, and brandishing his great club, emphatically phallic, would seem to be a deity of a type similar both to the Wall figure and to the Irish Dagda. The worn state of the stone makes it difficult to interpret individual features with confidence, but there would seem to be the suggestion of a navel—as in the case of the Cerne Abbas giant—and possibly a phallus.

Stone 5 The stone is decorated with a human head and neck which are set into a deep niche. This head is crude, with enormous eyes. Once again, we have in this example, one which can be paralleled time and again in Britain and the Continent. Heads in association with sacred waters are a common motif in Celtic mythology.¹⁴ The stone is more roughly carved than the others and has what appears to be a half-recess at the back. Sometimes stone heads were fashioned in the round and have been found built into field walls, houses and churches; at other times, as in this example, they were carved on a building stone. Before the Romans banned human sacrifice and head-hunting, human heads culled in battle were displayed in skull niches in the Celtic temples. Sometimes a stone head would be placed in such a position. This was most probably the concept underlying the carving of this stone.

Stone 6 A stone slab with a circular, neckless human head carved on it, the mouth suggesting that it is screaming. Again, there are many parallels for this. The head is once again horned and adds to the repertoire of horned gods in North Britain.

Stone 7 This stone differs from the others in that it is more ovoid in form. It depicts a phallus, but when inverted it becomes a perfectly good elongated Celtic head, the testes forming the eyes, the phallus the nose and the slit below, the mouth. Heads were believed by the Celts to be imbued with the power of fertility and, indeed, sometimes on the Continent the severed heads, in stone or metal, have a distinct phallus in place of the nose. This concept fits in very well with the Celtic belief in duality. Either way up this stone would be credited both with the powers of fertility and of averting evil. The phallus was a powerful charm against danger from hostile forces. This stone formed part of a roughly-built channelled hypocaust inserted into the north-east room of the *mansio* some time after its original construction. At least two of the carved stones would have been exposed during this modification and the phallic stone would then be inserted as an evil-repelling protective amulet.

Stone 8 This stone bears a pecked inscription the beginning of which is CUINTI, which the writer would interpret as the Celtic name of the god to whom the native shrine was dedicated, or the name of a dedicator to the temple. It is followed by the letters CI, pecked very close to each other, which may form part of the second name of the god or donor.

14. For illustrations of various types of Celtic heads, see booklet by Sidney Jackson, *Celtic and other Stone Heads* (pub. S. Jackson, 1973), also Ross, *op.cit.*

Stone 9 A second stone found close by bears a very faintly incised inscription which seems to read DDBRUTI. One can only hazard a guess that this is another Celtic name, and indeed some Celtic personal names do begin with a double D.¹⁵

OTHER FINDS OF CELTIC SIGNIFICANCE FROM WALL

A shallow pit was found close by, predating the *mansio* and containing the lower half of a pony leg,¹⁶ with the bones in the articulated position. This find is of considerable interest as the Celts regularly made offerings to their deities in pits, shafts, wells or other waters. Parts of horses, the bones of which show no signs of butchering, have been found in many ritual shafts.¹⁷ This pit may represent some kind of foundation sacrifice, the rest of the animal having been disposed of elsewhere; it may also represent an offering to the horse-goddess Epona (Riannon in Wales and Macha in Ireland) for it was not uncommon to sacrifice to the deity his or her especial cult animal. This pit then serves as yet another example of Celtic religious activity on the site.

Other objects of Celtic interest from Wall are the remains of two face-pots,¹⁸ one having green glass inserted in the eye sockets. These were found in a late-first/early-second-century context.

The religious significance of the site is perhaps made even more definite by the number of turned down horns of the Celtic ox found in the area. Once again, these may represent the sacrificial killing and eating of horned beasts by the Cornovii 'Worshippers of the Horned One'. This must remain a sheer surmise, of course, but it fits in with the overall pattern of Celtic practice. Two bucket-handle mounts in the form of knob-horned bulls heads¹⁹ found in the area are also Celtic objects, the knobbed horns having some religious significance. They probably came from ritual vessels. A lead tore²⁰ and the lead figure of a slave²¹ would also seem to imply native activity.

In conclusion, the evidence supports the hypothesis that there was an important Celtic shrine at Wall at least by the first century A.D., which was later destroyed by the Romans who, however, preserved certain carved stones and re-used them for construction purposes, but took the precaution of inverting them in the belief that this would ward off their hostile powers without entirely alienating the deity or deities to whom they were dedicated.

15. Mark Hassall, Asst. Editor of *The Roman Inscriptions in Britain*, reports on the inscriptions on stones nos. 8 and 9 as follows:

The pecked inscription might be a Celtic name. A. Holder, in *Alt-keltische Sprachschatz I-III* (Leipzig, 1896-1907), gives some names which begin CVI, on the other hand it might be just a misspelling of QVINTI 'of Qvintvs', which on the whole seems more likely. The letter following looks like CI, but if a backward D could stand for D(onum), 'the gift of QVINTVS'.

The other lightly incised inscription looks like DDBRVTI. DD normally stands for DONUM DEDIT—'gave the gift', often used in religious inscriptions, but it is a phrase that usually follows the personal name.

16. Ross, *op.cit.* 65ff and figs. 28 and 29.

17. Ross, *op.cit.* p.321ff.

18. Ross, *op.cit.* figs. 76-78 and index.

19. Ross, *op.cit.* p.302ff.

20. *Trans*, viii for 1966/7 (1968), p.9. The tore is now in the City of Birmingham Museum.

21. *Trans*, viii for 1966/7 (1968), p.9; AWCcxiii (1928/9), pp.147-8.



Fig. 1 Stone no. 1



Fig. 2 Stone no. 3



Fig. 3 Stone no. 4



Fig. 4 Stone no. 5



Fig. 5 Stone no. 6



Fig. 6 Stone no. 7



Fig. 7 Stone no. 8

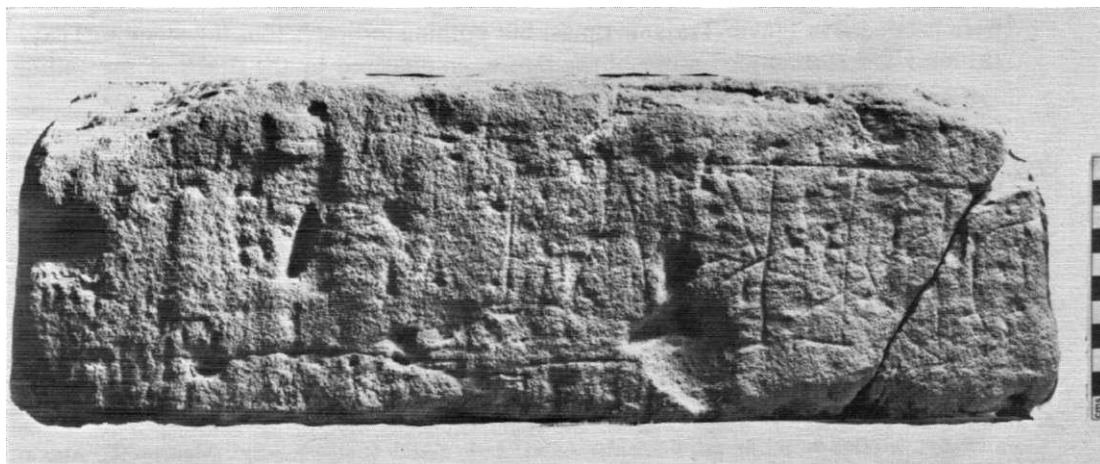


Fig. 8 Stone no. 9

III TWO INTAGLIOS FROM WALL

MARTIN HENIG, F.S.A.

The two intaglios described below and illustrated in fig. 9 were found during the excavation of the Roman Bath site, Wall, in 1972 (Nat. Grid Ref. SK 098066), under the direction of A. A. Round, when the area between the baths and the near-by *mansio* was cleared. The first was a surface find, and the second was found in a late first/early second-century context.

1. Nicolo paste (glass imitating an onyx with an upper blue layer and a lower dark one), ovoid, 13 mm x 11 mm, thickness 4.5 mm, upper surface flat. The subject is a country-man seated in a pony-trap. The same scene can be seen on a true nicolo intaglio from Cologne.¹ It is probable that, like the Cologne gem set in a third-century ring, this intaglio can be dated to the third century.²
2. Orange-red Cornelian, ovoid, 10 mm x 8 mm, thickness 3 mm, upper surface convex. The subject is Mars Gradivus, who is shown nude apart from the *subligaculum* around his waist, plumed helmet and boots. He marches purposefully towards the right, carrying a trophy in his left hand (which he supports upon his shoulder) and a spear in his right hand.

Ovid calls Mars *Gradivus* (the Marching God)³ and although this epithet is found neither in such official documents as the *Feriale Duranum* nor, indeed, on the Imperial Coinage it may have been a popular designation or nickname for *Mars Victor* or *Mars Pater*.⁴ The type is exceedingly common as a signet device, and there are examples from Chesterholm (*Vindolanda*), Gloucester, Cirencester, Caerleon, *Verulamium*, Charterhouse on Mendip and Mansewold in Dumfriesshire as well as from numerous sites abroad.⁵

The earliest occurrence of the type on a coin is in A.D. 79 (*R.I.C.* Vitellius (aes) no. 10 pi. xvi, 268) and presumably the Wall intaglio was cut after this date. Its small size and translucence are highly reminiscent of gems from the Bath workshop which were produced in Flavio-Trajanic times, but nothing indicates that the stone was cut in Britain.⁶ The statuesque nature of the figure, emphasized by the depth of the cutting,

1. F. Henkel, *Die Römischen Fingerringe der Rheinlande* (Berlin, 1913), p.60, no. 438, pi. xxii and lxxvi, 204.
2. This gem is no. App. 26 in M. Henig, *Corpus of Roman Gemstones from British Sites*, B.A.R.8, second ed. (1978).
3. *Fasti* iii, 861 ; iii, 169, 677.
4. The type is shown on coins with the legend *Mars Victor* (cf. *R.I.C.* Caracalla no. 306) and *Mars Pater* (*R.I.C.* Septimius Severus no. 46).
Feriale Duranum (*The Excavations at Dura-Europos*), Final Report v(i), C. Bradford Welles, R. O. Fink and J. Frank Gilliam, *The Parchments and Papyri* (New Haven, 1959), no. 54, col. i, 5 Sacrifice of a bull to *Mars Victor* on 3 January; col. i, 19 Sacrifice of a bull to *Mars Pater Victor* on 1 March; col. 1, 5 and 9. Sacrifices of bulls to *Mars Pater* on 3 January and 7 January; col. ii, 9 Sacrifice of a bull to *Mars Pater Ultor* on 12 May.
5. Information R. Birley, J. Rhodes, A. D. McWhirr, G. Boon, *Verulamium Museum. Proc. Camb. Antiq. Soc.* iv (1878-9), p.280, no. 5 (Charterhouse), *Arch. Journ.* II (1846), p.395 (Mansewold). Also cf. M. Maaskant-Kleibrink, *Berichten van de Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek* xix (1969), pp.268ff, (gem from a second-century cremation at Wijchen, Gelderland and *ijjarallels* there cited).
6. M. Henig in B. W. Cunliffe, *Roman Bath*, (Society of Antiquaries 1969), pp.71-88.

may be compared with that of the Diana on a plasma from Gloucester,⁷ and the Mercury on an amethyst found at Fishbourne,⁸ both of which can also be ascribed to the last quarter of the first century A.D.

The virile and victorious deity portrayed on this intaglio would have had an especial appropriateness for a soldier,⁹ and it is not unlikely that the stone belonged to a member of the Roman Army, stationed at Wall.¹⁰

7. M. Henig in *Trans. Bristol & Glos. Archaeol. Soc.* for 1974, xciii (1975), p.78.
8. M. Henig in B. W. Cunliffe, *Fishbourne II*, (Society of Antiquaries 1971), pp.83-8.
9. Note also a bronze plaque from Burgh Castle, *Proc. Suff. Inst. Arch.* xxiv (1949), p.116 and pi.III, depicting *Mars Gradivus*.
10. This gem is no. App. 71 in M. Henig, *Corpus of Roman Engraved Gemstones from British Sites*, B.A.R. 8, second ed. (1978).

Abbreviations

B.A.R. British Archaeological Reports.

R.I.C. A. Mattingly and E. A. Sydenham, *The Roman Imperial Coinage* (1923-1951).

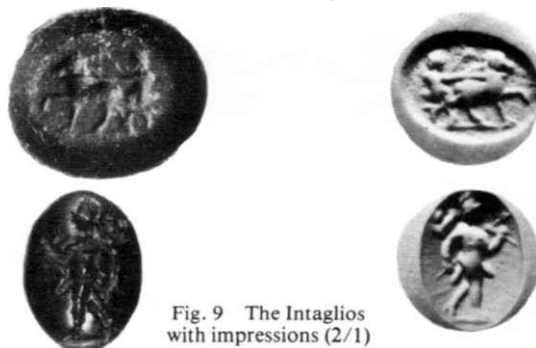


Fig. 9 The Intaglios
with impressions (2/1)
(Birmingham City Museums & Art Gallery)

IV THREE SMALL FINDS FROM WALL

A. A. ROUND, F.S.A.

The three surface finds described below were found within the area of the Roman town of Letocetum (Nat. Grid Ref. SK 101065), the first in a garden just north of the Watling Street and the other two in the course of field-walking just south of it.

ROMAN LAMP (fig. 10a)

The lamp, which is complete and undamaged except for a few surface chips, is of hard coarse grey fabric with orange-brown surface and shows traces of soot round the wick aperture. It is without ornament and falls within Wheeler's Type IIa,¹ with a raised rim round the *discus* and a longitudinal groove on the upper surface of the nozzle. The circular flange, the surface of which slopes away from the centre, is complete, closing the end of the groove, which itself widens as it approaches the wick aperture. The vestigial lugs often seen, devolved from the suspension hooks of earlier lamps, are absent. Wheeler considered the date-range of Type IIa to be from about A.D.70 to A.D.120, and the absence of lugs and the somewhat weakly indicated nozzle groove suggest that the lamp was made towards the end of this period.

1. R. E. M. Wheeler, *London in Roman Times* (London Museum, 1930), fig. 15.

BRONZE BULL'S HEAD (fig. 10b)

Bull's heads were widespread as ornamental symbols during the later Iron Age² and their use continued into the Roman period. The horns were often knobbed and the heads perforated or fitted with loops for attachment which suggest their use as bucket-handle mounts, as in an earlier find from Wall.³ The present example is more naturalistic and shows traces of only one point of attachment. The eyes are represented by slightly raised circles and the nostrils by shallow depressions, as shown in the slightly angled drawing. The back of the head is hollow, reducing the weight, and it may possibly have been suspended to wear as an amulet. It is closely paralleled by a head found in a native hut settlement at Kirkby Lonsdale, Westmorland.⁴

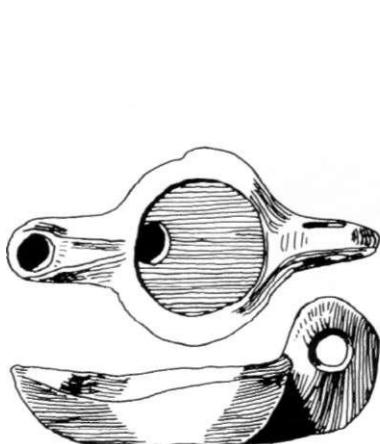


Fig. 10(a) Roman lamp (1/2)

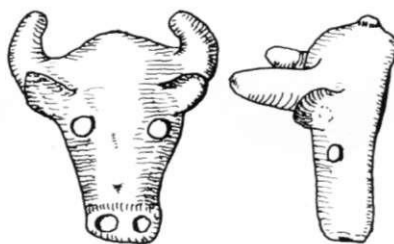


Fig. 10(b) Bull's head (1/1)

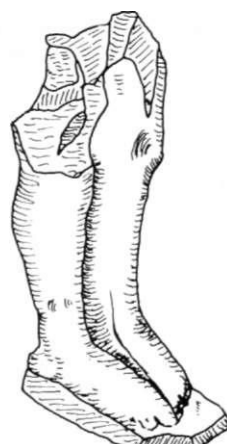


Fig. 10(c) Fragment of statuette (1/1)

STATUETTE FRAGMENT (fig. 10c)

This example of the Venus or so-called pseudo-Venus type,⁵ has only the lower part of the legs, broken off at the knees, and part of the base. The complete figure is a standing nude female holding a tress of hair in her right hand, which is above her shoulder, and with her left hand supporting a sleeveless *tunica* which hangs by her left leg. In the fragment this garment and the part of the base on which it rests have been broken away. The figure is in the white pipe-clay of the Allier district of Gaul, where the statuettes appear to have been mass-produced in the second and third centuries. It has been suggested that the distribution of these figurines denotes a Romano-Celtic clientele, and this is of particular interest in connection with the known Celtic associations of Wall.

The Society is indebted to the Department of the Environment for a grant towards the cost of publishing this Report.

2. C. F. C. Hawkes, 'Bronze-workers, Cauldrons and Bucket-animals in Iron Age and Roman Britain'. In *Aspects of Archaeology in Britain and Beyond* (1951), ed. W. F. Grimes, pp.172-99.

3. *Trans.* v. for 1963/4 (1964), p.43.

4. *Ant. J.* xv (1935), pp.79-80.

5. F. J. Jenkins, 'The Cult of the "Pseudo-Venus" in Kent', *Arch. Cant.* lxxii (1958), pp.60-76.

THE STAFFORDSHIRE MAPS OF WILLIAM FOWLER

A. D. M. PHILLIPS

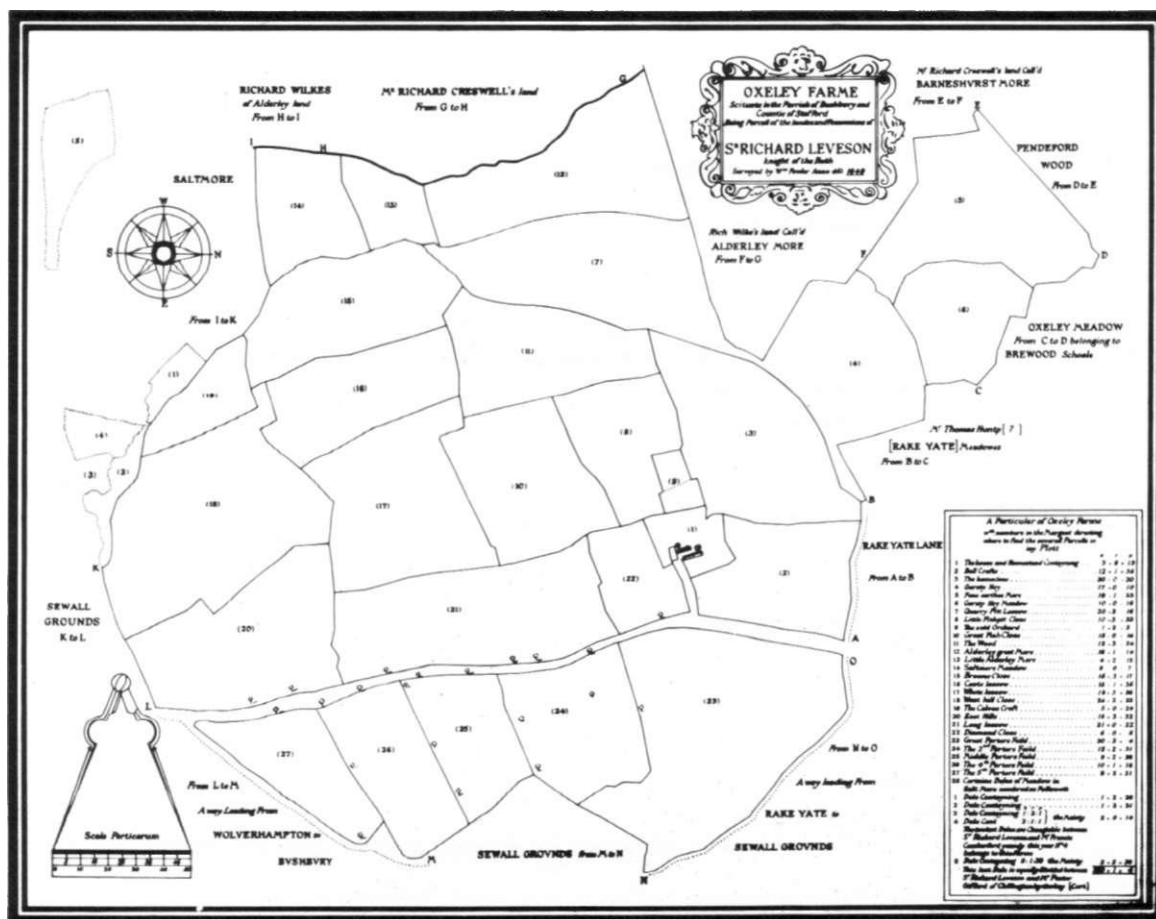
INTRODUCTION

English local cartography underwent a revolution between 1550 and 1700, resulting in a rapid multiplication of manuscript estate maps.¹ Despite the profusion of such maps in the country as a whole, few have survived for Staffordshire and the County Record Office holds but four original manuscript maps from before 1650 and only eight dated between 1650 and 1700.² Given this paucity, it is worthwhile to bring attention to the existence of a hitherto unrecorded 17th century estate map of Staffordshire. The Raymond Richards Collection of Miscellaneous Historical Material at the University of Keele contains a map entitled 'OXELEY FARME Scituate in the Parrish of Bushbury and Countie of Stafford Being Parcell of the landes and Possessions of S^r RICHARD LEVESON knight of the Bath:—Surveyd by W^m Fowler Anno dni 1649'. Drawn with ink on paper at a scale of 50 perches to 87 mm, it measures 722 by 565 mm and is reproduced as figure 1. William Fowler was one of the most prolific, yet little known, surveyors of West Midlands estates of the mid-17th century.³ The purpose of the present paper is to detail his life and to evaluate his surviving Staffordshire maps.

Three original maps of Staffordshire by Fowler have survived, with the possibility of a fourth. This number represents a considerable addition to the entry on William Fowler in the recently published *Dictionary of Land Surveyors*, in which no record exists of his work in Staffordshire.⁴ All four maps depict estates located in the south of the county (fig. 2). The three original maps portray parts of the Leveson family's South Staffordshire estates. Besides the 1649 map of Oxley farm, the other maps depict Prestwood farm near Wolverhampton and the demesne of the manor of Sheriff Hales, partly in Shropshire and partly in Staffordshire. The last two were surveyed by Fowler in 1661 and are reproduced as figures 3 and 4.

The evidence of a possible fourth Staffordshire map by Fowler comes from a tracing of Hilton made by H. R. Thomas in 1930. Thomas noted that it was taken from an old survey made in 1651 by William Fowler. This tracing, showing part of the estate belonging to the Vernon family of Hilton, reveals an area of both enclosed and subdivided fields and was intended as evidence for Thomas's study of the enclosure of open field in Staffordshire.⁵ However, as the original cannot be located and as the tracing is incomplete, its value in the present study is limited. Full details of these maps are recorded in the appendix.

1. J. B. Harley, 'Estate maps', *Amateur Historian*, 1 (no. 7), 1967, p.226; E. Lynam, *British maps and map-makers* (London, 1947), p.27.
2. Pers. com., Dr. M. O'Sullivan, Staffordshire Record Office, 7 June 1979. See also Staffordshire County Record Office, *Staffordshire estate maps before 1840: a handlist* (Stafford, 1980).
3. A. D. M. Phillips, 'William Fowler, a seventeenth-century West Midlands' surveyor' (forthcoming).
4. P. Eden (ed.), *Dictionary of Land Surveyors and Local Cartographers of Great Britain and Ireland, 1550-1850* (Folkestone, 1975), i,p.105.
5. H. R. Thomas, 'The enclosure of open fields and commons in Staffordshire', *William Salt Collections for a History of Staffordshire (S.H.C.)*, vol. for 1931, (1933), pp.60-99.



WILLIAM FOWLER

Fowler's Staffordshire maps relate to the south of the county, mainly to the area to the north of Wolverhampton (fig. 2). Plot in *The Natural History of Staffordshire* notes the existence of a Fowler family at Pendeford, in Tettenhall parish, just north of Wolverhampton and close to Oxley farm, the location of the earliest surviving Staffordshire

6. Eden, *op.cit.* i,p. 105.

map by Fowler.⁷ In the visitations of Staffordshire in 1614 and 1663-4, the pedigree of the Fowler family of Pendeford is recorded. The family was established at Pendeford in 1540. In 1663 the head of the family was Walter Fowler, who had six brothers, the third of whom was a William Fowler.⁸

The likelihood that this William Fowler was the surveyor is great. The last known map by Fowler is dated 1663, and this, in conjunction with other factors, suggests that he died shortly afterwards.⁹ Probate records relating to a William Fowler who died in 1664 exist at Lichfield Joint Record Office.¹⁰ The inventory lists the goods and chattels of a William Fowler of Pendeford in the parish of Tettenhall, Staffordshire who died on 8 September 1664. It consisted of three items: his clothes and money valued at £25, his mare valued at £7; and, for present purposes the most significant, 'Bookes & Instruments belonging to survey—£5'. The inventory was signed by Walter Fowler junior and Dan. Rowley.

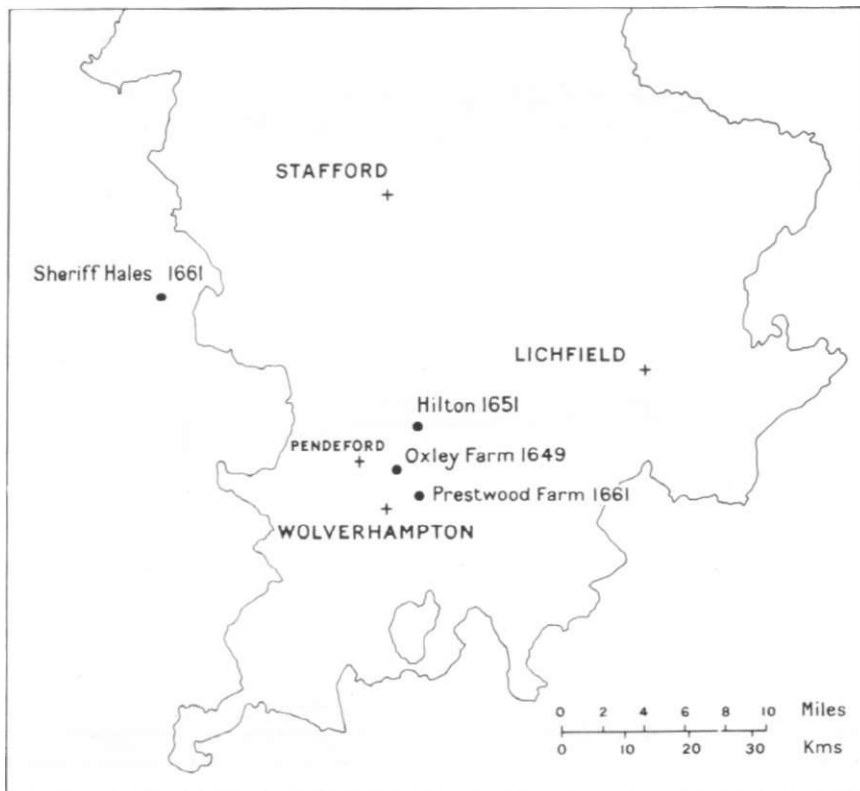


Fig. 2 Distribution of Fowler maps in Staffordshire

7. R. Plot, *The Natural History of Staffordshire* (Oxford, 1686), map.

8. H. S. Glazebrook (ed.), 'The heraldic visitations of Staffordshire . . . in 1614, 1663 and 1664', *S.H.C.*, 5(2), 1884, p.138-9; S. Shaw, *The History and Antiquities of Staffordshire* ii (1801), pp.202-3.

9. National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, PB 3065, The manor of Leighton . . . The inheritance of Sir Richard Corbett . . . William Fowler 1663.

This inventory would seem to establish Fowler's membership of the Pendeford family. He is described as coming from Pendeford and Walter Fowler junior was in 1663 the eldest son and heir of Walter Fowler." The inventory also reveals that William Fowler was a surveyor and map maker. In addition to listing Fowler's books and instruments of survey, the other signatory to the inventory, Dan. Rowley, was a surveyor and had produced maps of the same estates on which Fowler had worked, especially the Bridgwater estates in Shropshire and the Leigh estates in Warwickshire. Rowley's signatures on the inventory and on his manuscript maps are identical.¹² There would seem little doubt that this William Fowler was the surveyor and a member of the Fowler family of Pendeford.

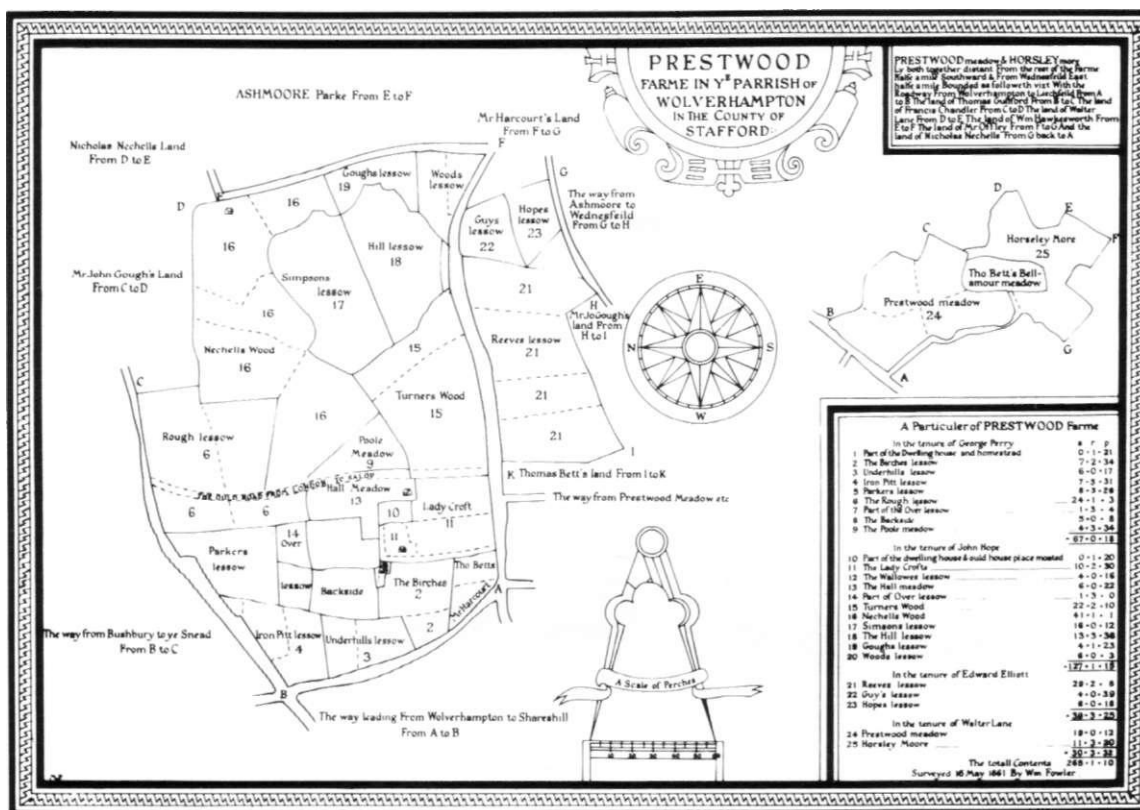


Fig. 3 Prestwood Farm, 1661

10. Lichfield Joint Record Office, Probate records relating to William Fowler, 1664.

11. Glazebrook, op.cit. p.139.

12. Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust, Maps and Plans BN 70, Mapp . . . of Lodge leasows . . . lands of . . . Lord Leigh . . . Dan. Rowley, 1663; Shropshire Record Office, 212/Box 385, A survey of . . . Kenwicke Parke . . . of the Earle of Bridgwater . . . August 1662 by Dan. Rowley; 212/Box 466, A survey . . . of Middle of the . . . Earle of Bridgwater . . . August, 1662 by Dan. Rowley; Eden, op.cit. ii, p.219.

Given this, some biographical details on William Fowler can be produced. The baptism of a William Fowler, the son of Walter, the then head of the family, and Margaret, is not recorded in the Tettenhall parish register. However, William was the seventh child of the couple. As the sixth child's baptism took place in 1606 and the tenth's in 1615, William Fowler was most probably born around 1610. He married Sarah, daughter of Edward Burton, owner of a small but long established estate at Longnor, in St. Chad, Shropshire. The Tettenhall parish registers record two sons of William and Sarah, baptised in 1643 and 1645, whilst in the bond and letters of administration to Fowler's inventory, a daughter, Alice, is noted. Sarah died in 1653 and William Fowler on 8 September 1664.¹³

It has been claimed that the surveyor at the beginning of the 17th century was of humble origins in society.¹⁴ Fowler does not fit this pattern. He was the younger son of a small landowning but well-established Staffordshire gentry family. He married into another gentry family in neighbouring Shropshire. As a younger son, he would not have inherited the estate, but as a member of such a family he would have enjoyed social connections with the families of many of the estates he surveyed. Indeed, late in the 17th century, the Pendeford Fowlers married into the Leveson family, with whose estates William Fowler's surviving Staffordshire maps mainly deal.¹⁵

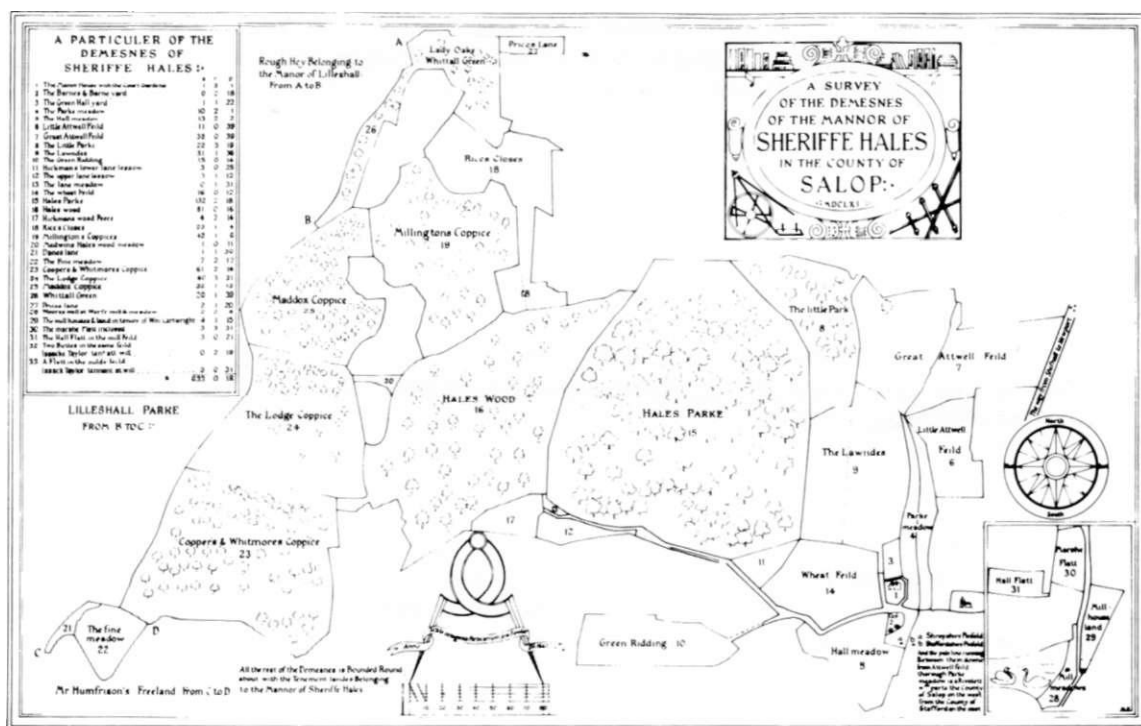


Fig. 4 Demesne lands of Sheriff Hales, 1661

13. Glazebrook, *op.cit.* p.138; P. W. L. Adams (ed.), *Tettenhall parish register, 1602-1744* (Staffordshire Parish Register Society, 1930), pp.4, 10, 35, 38, 221; G. Grazebrook and J. P. Rylands (eds.), *The Visitation of Shropshire taken in the year 1623* (1889), p.95; Shaw, *op.cit.* ii, p.203.

14. F. M. L. Thompson, *Chartered Surveyors* (1968), p.19.

15. Shaw, *op.cit.* ii pp.169, 203.

THE SURVEYS

Of Fowler's professional training nothing can be discovered, but it is possible to demonstrate a connection with at least one other surveyor. Daniel Rowley was one of the signatories of the inventory of Fowler's goods. In the bond and letters of administration in the probate records, Rowley, together with Fowler's daughter Alice, was to administer Fowler's estate. This, together with the fact that in all these documents Rowley was described as coming from Pendeford, would imply a strong personal link between the two surveyors.¹⁶ As already mentioned, Rowley in 1662 and 1663 was producing maps of parts of the Bridgwater and Leigh estates on which Fowler had worked between 1649 and 1651. Rowley's maps lack the detail and finish of Fowler's, being drawn in ink on paper and it could be argued that Rowley was either an apprentice or an assistant to Fowler.

Notebooks do not survive to show how the surveys were carried out. However, on the cartouche of the Sheriff Hales map, Fowler depicts the instruments and books that he would have most probably used in his surveys. The instruments include an alidade and tripod for plane-tabling, a cross-staff, a measuring rod and one for measuring angles. **The books** are shown on a shelf and the names of the authors recorded. They include mathematical, geometrical and astronomical works of Archimedes and Euclid and of the more recent (to Fowler) Regiomontanus, Peter Ramus, Robert Recorde, Henry Briggs and William Oughtred, and surveying manuals of Edmund Wingate and Aaron Rathbone.¹⁷ **These books** and instruments lead to the assumption that the surveys were carried out by plane-table aided by a simple form of theodolite, which as Taylor has noted became a popular method among **17th-century** estate surveyors.¹⁸

The three manuscript maps are large scale surveys of small areas at 1 cm to 10 perches or less. Precision in surveying was important, for an estate survey determined the area owned by and income due to the landlord. The accuracy of Fowler's maps cannot be tested. However, comparison with the first edition 6 inch O.S. maps shows that, although field boundaries have altered greatly, the location of farmhouses and roads would suggest that Fowler's maps were of a high order of accuracy.¹⁹

Surveys were carried out in the 17th-century because landowners became increasingly interested in defining the amount of land they owned and the manner in which it was held, an interest stimulated especially by the legal complications arising out of the Civil War. The purpose of an estate survey was to facilitate the fixing and collection of rents and to prevent their suppression or concealment: the estate map became a vital element in estate management.²⁰ However, particular reasons for each Fowler survey are difficult to find, much reliance having to be placed on circumstantial evidence. Oxley farm passed into the Leveson family in 1534. On the death of Vice-Admiral Sir Richard Leveson in 1605, it was settled on his wife, Margaret. With her death in the 1640s, it came to Sir Richard Leveson

16. Eden, *op.cit.* ii p.219; Lichfield Joint Record Office, Probate records relating to William Fowler, 1664.

17. E. G. R. Taylor, *The mathematical Practitioners of Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1954).

18. E. G. R. Taylor, 'Cartography, Survey and Navigation 1400-1750', in C. Singer *et al.* (eds.), *A History of Technology* (Oxford, 1957), iii p.540.

19. 1st ed. 6" O.S. maps, Staffordshire sheets 56 SE (1886), 56 SW (1888), 62 NE, NW (1889).

20. Thompson, *op.cit.* pp 16-26; H. C. Darby, 'The Agrarian Contribution to Surveying in England', *Geog. Jnl.* lxxxii (1933), pp.529-35.

who had inherited all the Shropshire and Staffordshire estates. It was probably the reversion of this land to the main estate that was the motivation for Fowler's survey in 1649 for Sir Richard Leveson.²¹ The remaining two manuscript maps are both dated 1661. In that year Sir Richard Leveson died and left his estates to Richard Fowler, a member of the Shropshire branch of the Fowler family. These maps seem to have been made to clarify tenurial problems on the estate produced by Leveson's death. For example, in his will, Sir Richard restricted **the** issuing of any leases on the demesne lands of the manor of Sheriff Hales, and Fowler's 1661 map portrays the land where such restrictions applied clearly and **attractively**.²²

THE CONTENTS OF THE MAPS

All three manuscripts depict fields and field boundaries. On the Oxley map, some field **boundaries are bordered by trees**. Each field is given a number which refers to a particular of the farm or demesne land incorporated in the map. There are no separate survey books. The particulars contain the number, name and acreage of the fields. In the particular of Prestwood farm, the names of the four tenants are recorded as well as the amount of land **they held**. Agricultural land use is not mentioned, the only exception being the depiction of parkland and woodland on the Sheriff Hales map by trees coloured green. The maps record roads cutting across the land, while all buildings, as was the style of the time, were shown in perspective with red roofs. On the Sheriff Hales map, the manor-house, **church** and mill **are** marked in greater detail than farmhouses, while the court garden of the manor-house and the mill-pond graced by two swans are shown. The location and ownership of land around each estate are depicted by letters on all the maps.

As the Oxley map is drawn on paper, it is possible that this was a draft for a finished map. The Prestwood and Sheriff Hales maps are on parchment and coloured, and must be regarded as completed.²³ Thus, although all three maps possess a compass rose and a divider scale, they are drawn in more detail on the 1661 maps. Each map possesses a different cartouche. That of the Oxley map is decorative, incorporating mask features. The Prestwood map has a more ornamental and scrolled cartouche, while that on the Sheriff Hales map depicts survey books and instruments. Variations on these three basic cartouches were used by Fowler on all his other manuscript estate maps.²⁴ Like much 17th-century estate cartography, Fowler's maps are attractive and colourful, revealing a high degree of skill.

CONCLUSIONS

The great value of these maps is that they provide precise detail of the mid-17th-century Staffordshire rural landscape, for which in general there is but little evidence. From them it is possible to reconstruct parts of the South Staffordshire landscape of this period through the eyes of a contemporary. Although little land use is recorded, they provide a clear picture of farm and field structure. The Prestwood and Oxley maps reveal well-established

21. G. P. Mander, *The Wolverhampton Antiquary* (Wolverhampton, 1933), pp.368-75; Shaw, *op.cit.* ii pp.184-86.

22. Staffordshire Record Office, D593/C/14/4, Will of Sir Richard Leveson; Grazebrook and Rylands, *op.cit.* pp.189-90; Shaw, *op.cit.* ii p.150.

23. F. G. Emmison, *Catalogue of Maps in the Essex Record Office 1566-1855* (Chelmsford, 1947), vii-viii.

24. Phillips, *op.cit.*

enclosed farms, while that of Sheriff Hales shows enclosed land intermingled with woodland and parkland. These maps give support to the views of Thirsk and others of South Staffordshire in the mid 17th-century as an area predominantly of enclosed, compact farms based on stock breeding and feeding.²⁵

25. J. Thirsk, 'Horn and Thorn in Staffordshire: the Economy of a Pastoral County', *N. Staffs. Jnl. Fid. Stud.* ix (1968), pp.1-16; E. M. Yates, 'Enclosure and the use of Grassland Farming in Staffordshire', *N. Staffs. Jnl. Fid. Stud.* (1974), xiv, pp.46-60 and 'Aspects of Staffordshire Farming in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries', *N. Staffs. Jnl. Fid. Stud.* xv (1975), pp.26-40.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank Dr. I. H. C. Fraser and Mr. K. T. Mason for their help. The maps were drawn by Mrs. M. Patrick of the Geography Department, University of Keele.

The University of Keele has kindly given a grant towards the cost of publishing this paper.

APPENDIX

WILLIAM FOWLER'S STAFFORDSHIRE MAPS

1. *Title* OXELEY FARME Scituate in the Parrish of Bushbury and Countie of Stafford Being Parcell of the landes and Possessions of S^r RICHARD LEVESON knight of the Bath (fig. 1).
Scale 50 perches (87 mm).
Surveyor Wm. Fowler.
Date 1649.
Size 722 x 565 mm. Ink on paper.
Description 369 acres of Oxley farm, all enclosed, and 8 acres being five doles in a meadow called Salt More to the south-west of the farm. Buildings shown in perspective, 28 fields outlined in ink with number references, roads and some trees marked. Surrounding landowners shown.
Decorative cartouche incorporating masks and faces. A particular giving field number, names and acreages. Compass rose. Orientation west top centre. Divider scale. Lined border.
Reference Raymond Richards' Collection of Miscellaneous Historical Material, University of Keele.

2. *Title* PRESTWOOD FARME IN Y^e PARRISH OF WOLVERHAMPTON IN THE COVNTY OF STAFFORD (fig. 3).
Scale 60 perches (62 mm).
Surveyor Wm. Fowler.
Date 16 May 1661.
Size 560 x 405 mm. Ink and watercolour on parchment.
Description 265 acres of Prestwood farm, all enclosed. Buildings shown in perspective, 25 fields outlined in ink and colour with names and number references, and roads marked including 'the ould road from London to Salop.' Surrounding landowners shown.
Scrolled ornamental cartouche. Two particulars, one giving field numbers, names and acreages and the holdings of the four named tenants of Prestwood farm, the other giving the location of a detached part of the farm. Compass rose. Orientation east top centre. Divider scale. Patterned border.
Reference Staffordshire Record Office, D593/H/3/405.

3. *Title* A SVRVEY OF THE DEMESNES OF THE MANNOR OF SHERIFFE
HALES IN THE COVNTY OF SALOP (fig. 4).
- Scale* 80 perches (84 mm).
- Surveyor* Wm. Fowler.
- Date* 1661.
- Size* 714 x 460 mm. Ink and watercolour on parchment.
- Description* 633 acres of Sheriff Hales demesne, all enclosed. Buildings shown in perspective, 33 fields outlined in ink and colour with names and number references, and roads marked. Manor-house and church at Sheriff Hales and mill on the Worf stream shown, with two swans on mill-pond. Park-land and woodland marked by green trees. County boundary between Shropshire and Staffordshire shown by a stream.
- Detailed cartouche showing surveying instruments and books. A particular giving field numbers, names and acreages. Compass rose. Orientation north top centre. Divider scale. Lined border.
- Reference* Staffordshire Record Office, D593/H/4/100.
-
4. *Title* Map of Hilton, Staffordshire.
- Scale* Not given.
- Surveyor* William Fowler.
- Date* 1651.
- Size* Not given.
- Description* This is a tracing taken by H. R. Thomas in 1939 from an old survey of Hilton made in 1651 by William Fowler. Acreage surveyed not given. Area of enclosed and subdivided fields. Field boundaries and some strips shown. Name, acreage and value of enclosed fields given, but only names of subdivided fields.
- Cartouche, compass rose, orientation, particular, border not given. A poor copy.
- Reference* No reference to original which cannot be located. Tracing in William Salt Library, Stafford, SR209/248/30.

JOHN ALCOCK (1715-1806), VICAR CHORAL AND ORGANIST AT LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL: A FRUSTRATED REFORMER

PETER MARR

During the 18th century, there were at Lichfield many talented and colourful personalities. Not least amongst them was John Alcock, lay vicar and organist of the cathedral, a man whose perversity in personal relationships and talent for upsetting the *status quo* have left a tale well-worth relating, a host of facts for the historian of church music and a few moral cautions on the way.

Alcock was born on 11 April 1715 in Crane Court, St. Peter's Hill, London,¹ and in the shadow of St. Paul's Cathedral. Baptized at St. Benet's, Paul's Wharf, he was the third of eight children of Daniel and Mary Alcock, a family of whose background little is known save that Daniel Alcock's connections with that part of the City went back a couple of generations.² John Alcock entered the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral in 1722³ and was put under Charles King, Almoner and Master of the Boys. King, a former pupil of John Blow and Jeremiah Clarke, was in his younger years an able mentor and, after seven years under him, the young Alcock had acquitted himself sufficiently well to become amanuensis to the talented young organist, John Stanley, by then almost blind after a childhood accident. In due course, Alcock was apprenticed to him.⁴

Exactly how precocious Alcock himself was remains a mystery. Many years later, he claimed that during his pupilage he had composed a considerable quantity of music,⁵ but an examination of it (or as much as has survived) suggests that, unless he was a youth of rare talent, the bulk of it was subsequently extensively revised. Alcock deputized for Stanley at St. Andrew's, Holborn, (and, from 1734, at the Temple Church, which post Stanley held in plurality) but, after the statutory seven years, then searched for a position himself. Unsuccessful attempts in the City⁶ were followed by his marriage on 20 May 1737 at AH Hallows', London Wall, to Margaret Beaumont of Brompton, Kent,⁷ and by his appointment as organist of St. Andrew's, Plymouth, soon after. Here, the Rev. Zachariah Mudge, a conscientious pastor, friend of Dr. Samuel Johnson and no mean scholar, was rector. Up to this time, Alcock had composed plenty of music but only a few separate songs had appeared in print; indeed, the first of these was written when he was 13 and published in 1730 by the pirate-printer, Daniel Wright, junior. Whilst he was at Plymouth, Alcock published his *Six Suite's of Lessons* (1741) for harpsichord but, the next year, moved to Reading where, at a newly-built organ at St. Laurence's Church, he presided for seven years.

1. London, Guildhall Library MS.5721/2 (unfoliated), General Register of St. Benet and St. Peter's, Paul's Wharf; see also 'Eugenius', 'A Biographical Sketch of Dr. Alcock' in *Monthly Mirror*, iv (1797), p.137.

2. His grandfather was from the parish of St. Gregory, near St. Paul's.

3. St. Paul's Cathedral MS.38 F 24; see also K. I. Garrett, 'A List of some of St. Paul's Cathedral Choristers before 1873' in *Guildhall Studies in London History*, i (1974), p.82.

4. Probably in 1730, but no indentures survive; see also Alcock's memoir of Stanley in *European Magazine*, x(1786), p.80.

5. John Alcock, *Six and Twenty Select Anthems* (1771), preface.

6. At St. Antholin's, Budge Row, in February 1736 and St. Giles', Cripplegate, in the following May.

7. Guildhall Library, MS.5088.

During his stay there, the highly successful collection, *Twelve English Songs* (1743), enhanced his reputation and he followed it by a selection of metrical psalm texts, *Fifty Select Portions* (1748) and a book of metrical psalm-tunes, *Psalmody* (1749). Revision of his six fine *concerti grossi* for strings with flutes, oboes and bassoons, written nearly twenty years previously, occupied his last months in the town but publication was delayed until the end of 1750, by which time he had taken the last step on his career ladder, his appointment as vicar choral and organist of Lichfield Cathedral.

The previous organist, George Lamb, had been organist for many years but commanded little respect from the other vicars; eventually he became an alcoholic.⁸ Alcock's appointment, it seems, was planned before Lamb's death for it was finalized within three days of Lamb's burial;⁹ with high hopes for the future, the Alcock family arrived in the city towards the end of January 1750. There is no doubt that musical standards were far from satisfactory when Alcock arrived to work at the cathedral. Performances needed to be improved and this the 35-year-old organist had every intention of doing. Once installed as a Vicar Choral,¹⁰ and subsequently organist (at a miserly £4 per annum extra),¹¹ with the additional post of Master of the Boys (another £10), he had, in theory, some control over the situation but his intentions were frustrated by the unruly choristers and gross absences by the self-interested vicars. The publication of fifty new chants¹² with a none-too-complimentary preface about standards of psalm-chanting, was among the first results of his early years at the cathedral but, by 1753, friction between him and the other vicars had grown sufficiently for it to be mentioned in the cathedral records.¹³ Soon, the incessant absence of singers and the clash of personality between Alcock and the subchanter, John White, led to a breakdown of relationships between Alcock and most of those with whom he worked. It came about as follows:

In each volume of the collection of chants just mentioned, Alcock had included proposals to publish in quarterly instalments an historical anthology of scores of cathedral music in an attempt to correct the inaccuracies that had accumulated by copyists working from part-books,¹⁴ a project whose need had been pointed out by William Croft many years before. Since his teens, Alcock had been a collector of manuscripts and a ceaseless copyist; indeed, by this time, his own library seems to have been quite extensive. However, Maurice Greene, organist of St. Paul's, had formulated a similar scheme on rather more attractive financial terms and, in due course, his accumulated material (including some of Alcock's) passed to William Boyce and was later published as Boyce's *Cathedral Music* (1760-78).¹⁵ Meanwhile, Alcock had been forced to withdraw his scheme but not before the first service, "By Way of Specimen", was already in the press. This was not an old service but his own *Morning and Evening Service*, originally composed in the 1730s and now finally

8. John Piper, *The Life of Miss Fanny Brown* (Birmingham, 1760), p.255.

9. As testified by Alcock's deed of appointment, Lichfield Joint Record Office, (L.J.R.O.), Dean and Chapter, D 6; he submitted a testimonial prepared in 1746 when he applied unsuccessfully for a post at Salisbury Cathedral.

10. L.J.R.O., Chapter Acts viii, ff, 6v-7, 22 January 1750.

11. Ibid, x, entry dated 23 February 1750.

12. *Divine Harmony* (Michael Broome, Birmingham, 1752), published in October 1752.

13. L.J.R.O., MS.BB.1.1, pleading for more harmony between organist and choir.

14. The proposals appeared in the London and Birmingham press; copies were also inserted in *Divine Harmony*.

15. See H. D. Johnstone, 'The Genesis of Boyce's 'Cathedral Music' ' in *Music and Letters*, Ivi (1975), pp.26-1.

appearing in print in November 1753.¹⁶ It was the only service-setting that appeared separately in print during the century and the Dedication contained in it, a letter to Dean Addenbrooke, attacks in the most vitriolic terms the musical arrangements at the cathedral:

... no *Choir* in the Kingdom is so much neglected by the Members thereof as this; one of them attending no more than five Weeks in a Year, another five Months, some seven, and few of them so often as they might do; sometimes only one Priest-Vicar at *Church*, and at other Times, but one Lay-Vicar, both on *Sundays* as well as the Week-Days, tho' there are Eleven of them, which has occasion'd some People of the Town to write upon the *Church Doors*, *My House shall be called the House of Prayer, but ye have made it a Den of Thieves* . . .

There was, it must be admitted, an attempt to improve the attendances of recalcitrant vicars later that year, but the irascible organist's round of copying and composition did not change; suffering from the same recurring problems and living with his own intolerances, his worst enemy was himself. Publication of *The Pious Soul's Heavenly Exercise* (1756), a set of ornately harmonized psalm-tunes,¹⁷ was not entirely boycotted by the other vicars but, by 1758, it seems that relationships with them had become so strained that something had to give way. Alcock ceased being Master of the Boys in August 1758¹⁸ and was succeeded by a fellow singer, Francis Bird; together they ran the boys' choir until Bird took complete charge. But, by and large, as Alcock observes, the vicars 'hanged together',¹⁹ becoming so exasperated with the ways of their young organist that they petitioned the Dean and Chapter against him, saying that:

Whereas frequent Complaints have been made to the Dean and Chapter, by the Subchanter and Vicars, of Mr. John Alcock, Organist and Vicar Choral of the said Church; whose Behaviour in Time of Divine Service has given great and just Offence, not only to us, but to those too who attend Divine Service in this Church, as well Strangers as Neighbours; and whereas those complaints have not hitherto been attended with the desir'd Reformation; so far from that, the said John Alcock is become more and more scandalous and indecent in his Behaviour, to the great Grief and Disturbance of the Congregation; We therefore the Subchanter and Vicars-Choral whose Names are here unto Subscrib'd, make it our unanimous Request and Petition, that the said John Alcock may be regularly and formally admonished in Chapter, and the said Admonition be registered (in terrorem) to the Intent He may not hereafter offend in a manner so audacious and irreverent. That if the Subchanter shall think it his Duty to entreat him (as heretofore) to play Slower or Faster, as Occasion may require, He may not show his Contempt or Indignation by playing the Chants, Services, or Anthems so fast that the Choir cannot sometimes articulate half the words; or else so slow that their Breath will not serve to hold out the long, loitering, dragging Notes. That He may not hereafter mock, and mimic with his Voice any of the Vicars, as He frequently has done, in the Responses, and even in the Confession. That He may not show his Splenetic Tricks upon the Organ to expose or confound the Performers, or burlesque their manner of Singing. That He may not play Full where He ought not; or so Loud (in the Verses especially) that the softer Voices cannot be heard at all; no Voices distinctly. That He may have some Regard to the Sacredness of the Place, and the Solemnity of the Worship; that we may perform all things decently and in Order, and may attend on the Service of God without Distraction.²⁰

Curiously, nothing came of this for a while. But in 1760, Alcock was formally admonished and told to behave himself in future.²¹ But he was no fool; his resignation from the post of Master of the Boys caused little more than temporary inconvenience and his trump card was yet to be played. By resigning his post as organist,²² with the consequent loss of only £4 a

16. *Arts's Birmingham Gazette* for 12 November 1753 confirms the publication date.

17. Also subtitled *Divine Harmony* and *A Choice Collection of ... Psalm Tunes*.

18. L.J.R.O., box 18.8/2, a letter from the Precentor to the Chapter Clerk.

19. *Fanny Brown*, 256.

20. L.J.R.O., MS.P 6, dated 1758.

21. L.J.R.O., Chapter Acts viii, f.41a".

22. Although there is no direct evidence for this and the salary books are incomplete, subsequent events indicate that he must have resigned.

year, he could still have a house and income as Vicar Choral, and this for life. Until another vicar died, the Dean and Chapter had to find another organist from amongst the vicars. This they did in the person of Thomas Edmonds who played until Thomas Wood died in October 1764,²³ and William Brown of Worcester was then appointed Vicar Choral and organist. That the Dean and Chapter found themselves in this dilemma on Alcock's resignation is indicated by their making Brown sign a special £500 bond that he would not resign his place as organist without that of Vicar.²⁴



Fig. 1

Portrait, unsigned, dated 1768. (*In the possession of Royal College of Music, London: reproduced by kind permission*)
(*Photograph by National Portrait Gallery*)

In spite of this breakdown of relationships, Alcock had gained his B.Mus. degree at **Oxford** in 1755 with a setting (and performance) of Addison's words, 'Attend, harmonious saint'.²⁵ Meanwhile, at Lichfield, instead of seeking the company of his fellows, he chose to

23. Edmonds was given a gratuity for playing during the interregnum as well as being paid the organist's salary.

24. L.J.R.O., Chapter Acts viii, f 50 and box 3.2/1.

25. The music is in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS.Mus.Sch.C 149; its performance is mentioned in *Aris's Gazette* for 9 June 1755.

remain aloof and eventually alienated himself from them, as we have seen from the tenor of the petition. But this, and his eventual resignation as organist, was not the end of the story by any means. For some years he had been working on a story for the amusement (and moral instruction) of his children; by the time the disagreements had come to a head, he had expanded it to include a series of accounts of various cathedrals, their music and historical associations, together with a hundred-page section on Lichfield itself. This work he entitled *The Life of Miss Fanny Brown*; it has been mentioned frequently in accounts of Alcock's life but only recently has it been possible to identify the author as Alcock, who wrote it under the pseudonym, John Piper.²⁶

Alcock's prose is turgid at the best of times and the four-hundred page novel, with expansive footnotes, is difficult to summarize. Fanny, an orphan from Lancashire and the youngest daughter of an unbeneficed clergyman, is apprenticed to a milliner, Mrs. Lawn, in Paternoster Row. She falls in love with Andrew Shoot, wealthy son of Captain Shoot, who consents to their marriage. Fanny's three brothers, John, Henry and Thomas, come to visit her in London and to attend the wedding; during their journey, John and Henry's experiences and the letters of the Oxford-bred Thomas tell us of musical and other happenings in London and the south-west of England. Accounts of parochial music and of various cathedrals provide a great deal of information and, in some cases, misinformation. The descriptions move round to a city that clearly may be recognized as Lichfield and Alcock's bitter experiences are related through letters from Thomas to his mother. Few names are mentioned but we can infer that Alcock's nickname was 'Mr. Study-Page',²⁷ that he was falsely accused of the most outrageous behaviour in church,²⁸ and that the rest of the vicars lived a life of irresponsible insobriety. This long digression is set in the middle of Fanny's preparations for her wedding, shortly before which she is waylaid by a bawd (Mrs. Mar-Maid) and conveniently rescued by her brothers. Her advantageous marriage to Andrew finally takes place in St. Paul's Cathedral and, with the death of Captain Shoot, it devolves upon them to run the family estate in Devonshire. This they do with exemplary kindness to their tenants. After 18 years of marriage, Andrew dies and later, Fanny too ('within these last few Months'), leaving their family well provided for.

The results of the publication of *Fanny Brown* were awaited by its author with characteristic stoicism:

(/ it does no Good, it can do no Harm . . . (and) amongst the Prejudic'd, Ignorant, and Malicious, their Censure will give me no Concern in the least [p.xix].

Alcock's stubbornness over political matters is also reflected in the novel;²⁹ although he states that the other vicars voted differently from himself (if we may read his comments in *Fanny Brown* aright), an examination of the voting lists for elections held at Lichfield while he was organist there are revealing. They show that Francis Bird, who succeeded Alcock as Master of the Boys, and Henry Wood, another fellow vicar, were, like Alcock, Tory supporters;³⁰ the rest of the vicars were Whigs as were so many other

26. See Peter Marr, 'John Alcock and Fanny Brown' in *Musical Times*, cxviii (1977) pp. 118-120.

27. *Fanny Brown*, pp.242-3.

28. Ibid. p.244, in words similar to the 1758 petition.

29. Ibid. p.101.

30. Staffs. Record Office, D.661/19/4/1(1747), D.593/F/3/12/3/1(1753/5), and D.593/F/3/12/3/2(1761); also Birmingham Public Library, MS.379751(1755).

inhabitants of the Close. The Tory gentry in the surrounding parts of southern Staffordshire did not succumb to the intrigues of the electoral corruption mounted by the combined families of Gower and Anson and which controlled the political fortunes of the city virtually until the Reform Bill of 1832.³¹ But it was a common political colour that must have determined Alcock's appointment as organist to the Earl of Donegall about 1760. The composition of a wedding ode and the arrangement of a couple of anthems seem to have been the only musical outcome and the connection fades later in the decade about the time the family seat, Fisherwick Hall, was rebuilt.

By then, as an organist, Alcock had extended his activities to Sutton Coldfield (where he was organist from 1761 to 1786) and Tamworth at whose organ he presided from 1766 until 1790. Both of these churches installed new organs on his appointment to **them and this fact**, together with the extra income, provided the incentive to make the **weekly** journey to one or both places. Little has survived to document Alcock's work at Sutton except a long letter to the Rev. R. Bisse Riland complaining about discrepancies **in his salary and** detailing his own misfortunes and unfair treatment from all and sundry.³² At Tamworth, the Commissioners, who were trustees for the organ and responsible for the appointment (and dismissal) of the organist,³³ seem to have suffered him gladly and, in turn, entertained him each week to Sunday dinner.³⁴

Here at Tamworth his duties were, on occasion, performed by two of his sons and perhaps it is a **convenient** moment to look briefly at the younger members of his large family. By Margaret Alcock, John had twelve children although there is detailed evidence of only eleven. Three were born at Plymouth: Anna-Maria (born and died in 1738), John (baptized **28 January 1740**) and Jinny (born 1741);³⁵ five were born at Reading: Peggy (1742 and dying the following year), Daniel (i) (1743-4), **Mary** (born 1745), Sarah (born 1747) and Daniel (ii) (born and died in 1749).³⁶ His time at Lichfield saw the birth of three more: Margaret (born 1751), Theresa (born 1753) and William (baptized on 6 December 1756).³⁷ **One of the girls remained at Lichfield and later kept a boarding school in the Close and two of the others went to London, one marrying H. Cooper, an attorney, of Castle Street, Holborn.**

The younger John Alcock became a chorister at Lichfield Cathedral soon after the family's arrival but in December 1755³⁸ he was dismissed by Thomas Smalbroke, the Precentor, partly, it would seem, because he deputized for his father when he was absent teaching or when it was his turn as vicar to read the lessons and take part in services in choir.³⁹ At the tender age of 17, he was appointed organist of Newark-on-Trent

31. See Ann J. Kettle, 'The Struggle for the Lichfield Interest, 1747-68' in *Staffordshire Historical Collections*, 4th ser., vi (1970), pp.115-35.

32. Now lost, but transcribed in W. K. Riland Bedford, *Three Hundred Years of a Family Living* (Birmingham, 1889), pp.48-52; the original is dated October 1784.

33. Tamworth Parish Church, Organ Commissioners' Minute Book.

34. According to Alcock's letter; see note 32.

35. West Devon Record Office, Plymouth, Register of St. Andrew's Church, P 1442 A/3/B/12, pp.314 and 302.

36. Berkshire Record Office, Reading, Register of St. Laurence's Church, DP 97/1/4.

37. L.J.R.O., Cathedral Register transcript; 'Eugenius' (note 1 above), a generally reliable account, mentions twelve children.

38. L.J.R.O., box 18.8/2, Chapter Clerk's Receipt Book.

39. 'Eugenius', (note 1), also Alcock's acid comments in the 1771 preface (note 5).

and was soon married. By 1768 when he left, he had obtained the Oxford B.Mus. degree and, about 1773 moved to Walsall where, at St. Matthew's, his father had opened the new organ.⁴⁰ Apparently widowed, he married again but died shortly afterwards in 1791.⁴¹ His music reflects a later generation than that of his father and, by and large, is of little interest. Inheriting a literary bent, he published in 1779 a motley collection of anecdotes entitled *The Entertaining and Instructive Companion*.⁴²

The Alcock's youngest son, William, deputized for his father at Sutton Coldfield and finally became organist of Newcastle-under-Lyme where he stayed until the early 1800s. Nothing is heard of him for a few years although he may have moved to Derby, the home of his second wife, for like his brother, he married twice. By the 1830s he had gone to Liverpool, dying in 1833, 'the last son of the celebrated Dr. Alcock of Lichfield'.⁴³

John Alcock's doctorate was gained at Oxford in 1766, almost certainly through the good offices of William Hayes whom he had known for many years. In the summer of 1766 we have the unusual situation of the two John Alcocks setting off from Lichfield for Oxford degrees in music, the father for his D.Mus., the son for his B.Mus.⁴⁴ The music of the elder Alcock's exercise has not survived but it was probably a setting of *An Ode in Praise of Church-Musick*, with words by Dr. John Merrick.⁴⁵

The irascibility of Alcock, as pertinently noticed by John Bumpus,⁴⁶ had not waned by the late 1760s- and neither had his energies been sapped. Nevertheless, perhaps feeling the onset of middle age, he assembled his cathedral anthems (a collection dating back to his apprenticeship days) and published a selection of them under the title, *Six and Twenty Select Anthems* (1771). It is a revealing musical biography but perhaps better known for its preface, informative as to the contents of the volume and full of bitter comments on his lot, particularly during his time as organist of the cathedral. The volume was designed originally as *Twenty Select Anthems*, and at first advertised as such, but miscalculations over its length, disputes with the engraver and a few revisions caused him to recast the last few items, finally including some chants, a setting of the Burial Service and some newly-composed anthems. Among omitted material was a setting of the *Miserere*, a fine piece which he published separately about the same time.

Meanwhile, Alcock had been busy in another area of musical composition, orchestrally-accompanied anthems designed for special occasions rather than for regular use in cathedral services. Among these lengthy compositions, *We Will Rejoice*,* an adaptation of *Laudate Dominum* (1754) was performed at the meeting of the Three Choirs at Worcester

40. *Gentleman's Magazine*, 70(i) (1800), pp. 124-5.

41. St. Matthew's, Walsall, register states 27 March; later printed sources rely on *Gentleman's Magazine* 51(i) (1791), p.383, which has 30 March.

42. The only copy known to me is in the University Library, Urbana, Ill., U.S.A.; the work was published by J. Smart of Wolverhampton.

43. *Staffordshire Advertiser*, 28 December 1833.

44. Bodleian Library, Oxford, Records of the University of Oxford, Register of Congregation (1758-69), BLL*26, p.248.

45. A word-sheet is contained in Royal College of Music Library, XXI.A.6.(8.); Dr. John Merrick, the father of the poet, James Merrick, had been known to Alcock in the 1740s.

46. *A History of English Cathedral Music 1549-1889* (1908), i, p.257.

47. Lichfield Cathedral Library, MS.Mus.5.

in 1773. But, with one exception. Alcock's days as a composer were as good as over. His collection of *Ten Voluntaries for Organ or Harpsichord* was published in 1774 but most of these bear the stamp of former years; his songs, anthems e.g. those in *Six New Anthems* (c. 1790)) and metrical psalm-tunes written between the late 1770s and his death reflect industry rather than inventiveness. It was the annual competitions of the Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club in London that gave him the impetus to turn away from church music towards convivial pieces, with the chance and hope of winning one of the four annual prizes of a gold medal worth £10. Thus he submitted a catch, a canon and a couple of glees each year from 1769 until 1782, and continued to enter canons until 1786. He was successful in winning a medal for glees in 1770 and 1774 and for canons in 1772 and 1778. Acquiring a moderate reputation for such music, he published by subscription a selection in *Harmonia Festi* (1791), although omitting some of his settings of risqué texts. The bulk of his convivial music remains in manuscript in the collection of the Catch Club but, as with his songs, a number of his compositions appeared in the popular anthologies of the day. It is in *Harmonia Festi* that we find his own epitaph to himself, in the form of a catch: Here lies Old John, honest, most thought, tho' others oft cry'd sad on' yet a good bargain he ne'er bought or ever sold a bad one.

Although his wife died the next year,⁴⁸ the gout-ridden widower lived another fifteen years after the publication of this all-too-true likeness.

Perhaps his most important work during the 1790s was in assisting Samuel Arnold in the preparation of his collection, *Cathedral Music* (1790); in addition, visits to London during the winter (made excusable by the closure of Lichfield Cathedral during its restoration) allowed him to press his own compositions upon old friends. But, at Lichfield, the cathedral authorities found him an increasing embarrassment, not least because of his gout which, by this time, was considerably more severe. Nevertheless, he kept an active interest in the treasures of English church music and was annotating his copy of Byrd and Tallis' *Condones Sacrae* as late as 1801.⁴⁹ His library had been built up over a period of seventy years and consisted not only of his own transcriptions of cathedral music, with which his name is so often linked, but also much Italian vocal music of the 17th century and a few gems such as the 'Sambroke Manuscript'.⁵⁰ Nor should it be forgotten that Alcock published an edition of Byrd's *Diliges Dominum* in 1770—a pioneering venture for those years but one that, nevertheless, reflects the growing antiquarian interest during the century.

John Alcock died on Sunday evening, 23 February 1806.⁵¹ Aged nearly 91 and with few friends of his own generation, his memory and his music soon passed into oblivion. What of his extensive collection of books and manuscripts? Its immediate fate is unknown, but not so long after his death, the library passed into the possession of the Rev. John Parker, a London rector, Lichfield Prebendary and ardent antiquarian. It is through the catalogue of the sale of Parker's library that the extent of Alcock's collection becomes clearer,⁵² and his standing as a musical antiquary thus clarified.

48. L.J.R.O., Cathedral Register transcript.

49. His copy is now British Library, MS.Add. 23624.

50. Now New York Public Library, MS.Drexel 4302.

51. L.J.R.O., Cathedral Register transcript; also *Aris's Gazette*, 3 March 1806.

52. *A Catalogue of the Select and Entire Library*. . . *Of the Rev. John Parker*. . . *Sold by Mr. White* (1813).

Alcock's frustrations were, of course, to a great extent self-generated. But his attempts to improve musical matters at Lichfield Cathedral cannot go unnoticed, neither can his thwarted plan to publish cathedral music. That he lent some of this material to Greene, organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, indicates that he did not bear him malice. Even after the commercial failure of Boyce's *Cathedral Music*, he was only too eager to help Arnold in a similar undertaking, a project that he must have realised would be unlikely to be successful. But Alcock possessed much tenacity of purpose (*Fanny Brown* alone shows that) and, had he been born a century later, he would have made his influence felt to much greater effect. Although he probably would not have had it otherwise, his strongly held convictions cost him his happiness; we know him to have been a man of asthenic build and, significantly, born under the sign of Aries." The resulting approach to reform brought its own reward. _____

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53. Further details of Alcock's musical works will be found in the 6th edition of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (forthcoming); see also, Peter Marr, "The Life and Works of John Alcock (1715-1806)", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 1978, Reading University.

There are two portraits of Alcock, one an oil painting depicting him in his doctorate robes in 1768 (fig. I). This portrait, in the possession of the Royal College of Music, London, is at present awaiting restoration; at the National Portrait Gallery there is a reference negative of it taken in 1932. It was reproduced on the cover of the *Musical Times* of February 1977.

'Eugenius' (see note 1 above) included a print by W. Newman, engraved from a portrait by R. Cooper. Now lost, the original was owned by H. Cooper who apparently was Alcock's son-in-law and a London attorney.

JOSEPH POTTER : CATHEDRAL ARCHITECT AT LICHFIELD 1794-1842¹

R. B. LOCKETT

In 1842 the Chapter Act Book records that Joseph Potter was asked to resign as cathedral architect after 55 years. Members of the Chapter were then asked to make enquiries after an architect of sound judgement and experience in ecclesiastical architecture, and this turned out to be Sydney Smirke.² I have not found any evidence to support the idea, sometimes stated, that Joseph Potter junior succeeded his father either in 1842 or earlier, although he may of course have acted as his assistant.¹ Professor Colvin has briefly described Potter senior's connection with the cathedral:

Early in his career he was employed by James Wyatt to supervise the latter's alterations . . . (1788-1793) . . . he became the established Cathedral architect, carrying out further repairs after Wyatt's employment had ceased, including the repair of the south-west spire (1794), the restoration of the vaults of the north transept (1795-7) and of the west front (1820-2).⁴

In a recent article, Dr. J. M. Frew has detailed James Wyatt's work on the cathedral under two distinct contracts, that for the choir (1787) and that for the nave (1788) and stresses that Wyatt's work came to an end in 1793.⁵ Thereafter payments with respect to repairs and improvements were made to Potter alone⁶ Wyatt's work was reviewed by the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1795.⁷

Wyatt's relationship with the Chapter was that of a consultant rather than of a cathedral architect in the modern sense. His work was related to two specific contracts. As I hope to show here, Potter's relationship with the Chapter was quite different and parallels the

1. This paper is based upon records deposited by the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield Cathedral in the Lichfield Joint Record Office (L.J.R.O. D.30). I am very grateful to the Dean and Chapter for permission to study, publish and illustrate this material here. I am also greatly indebted to Miss Jane Isaac, the Assistant Archivist, for piloting me through the large amount of documentation involved. Mr. B. Benedikz, of the Birmingham University Library, has drawn my attention to relevant material in the Cathedral Library and Mr. F. B. Stitt, the County Archivist, to material in the William Salt Library, Stafford.

Unless otherwise stated, references are to L.J.R.O. D.30, 8/1 or, if plans or drawings, to D.30, 13/4. The Chapter Act Books are referenced as *C.A.B.* etc. The classification of some pre-1800 material (e.g. Cox, MS. 0.35) is retained as in J. C. Cox, *Catalogue of the Muniments* . . . 1892.

2. *C.A.B.* X, f.84.

3. John Britton in his *The Cathedral Church of Lichfield* (1820) acknowledges the assistance of 'Mr. Potter junior' (amongst others) in his Preface. This suggests that the two beautifully drawn elevations in the William Salt Collection (*Staffs. Views*, VI, f. 107 and 108) signed, like the Britton pi. IX for which they were made, 'Joseph Potter', should be attributed to Joseph Potter junior rather than to Joseph Potter senior. However, since the father was the cathedral architect, I think Britton's readers would assume rightly that pi.IX was after his drawing rather than his son's. This would also apply to the drawing of the South Transept signed 'J. Potter' (fig. 3b). This is not identical in style with the drawing of the same elevation as existing, (fig. 3a), which is not signed, but which was evidently made at the same time. The younger Potter no doubt made drawings of the cathedral for his father's use. John Hewitt (*Handbook of Lichfield Cathedral*, 4th ed. 1892, p.20) mentions that the 'younger Potter was employed for several days in making drawings of the figures at Wells' in connection with the restoration of the west front statuary in Roman cement in 1820-22. Hewitt also says (op.cit. p.47t) that Joseph Potter junior inherited all his father's drawings and plans.

4. Howard Colvin, *A Bibliographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840*, 2nd ed. (1978), p.654.

5. John M. Frew, 'Cathedral Improvement: James Wyatt at Lichfield Cathedral, 1787-92', *Trans.* xix for 1977/8 (1979), pp.33-40. Dr. Frew discusses Potter's work as Wyatt's assistant and I have therefore reduced the discussion of Potter's pre-1800 activities here.

6. Ibid.p.34.

7. *Gentleman's Magazine*, (G.M.), LXV, 1795, pp.998-9.

familiar situation of an architect with a continuing responsibility for the fabric who undertakes repairs of varying importance from time to time as considered necessary. In fact the creation of the office of cathedral architect as we know it, might fairly be associated at Lichfield with Joseph Potter. It is possible to watch him growing into the job between 1788, if not 1787, and 1794. He begins as one of Wyatt's two principal local agents as documented through the accounts 'dealing with masons and carpenters, visiting quarries, ordering stone and communicating Wyatt's plans to the Chapter.'⁸ In 1792 the extent of his activities was recognized by the award of a substantial honorarium of £50 'for his great attention in carrying on the works for the Repair and Improvement of the Cathedral.'⁹ In 1793 he was paid £143 'for a gothic arch, beading, chamfered fillet, mitred gothic moulded necking, and masons' work to the screens at the stone quarry.'¹⁰ This is no doubt a charge for materials and labour but it is not impossible that he was already responsible for some design work not provided by Wyatt's office. In 1794 the Chapter appears to have dealt with Potter direct over the restoration of the south-west spire; he was authorized 'to repair and secure the south spires.'¹¹

Included in the 1795-7 works on the north transept was the attempt to secure the buttresses by inserting a chain-bar into them across the north window.¹² In 1796 the vestry or sacristy off the south choir aisle was appropriated to the use of a consistory court (fig. 2a). In the following year Potter was instructed to fit it up 'according to the Plan given in.'¹³ Since 1791 the court had been held in the Chapterhouse although Wyatt had provided plans **and** an estimate for a new consistory court some time before that.¹⁴ The details given in the estimate cannot be made to fit either the Chapterhouse or the south vestry sites so that the 'Plan given in' may have been Potter's own.¹⁵

8. Frew, *op.cit.* p.35. There is a bill for £100 of September 1789 receipted by Potter (Cox, MS.0.35.) which recognizes that he has had to buy 'several materials for the necessary repairs of the cathedral' and that the monthly sum of £125 had, after the payment of the workmen, proved inadequate.

9. Frew, *op.cit.* p.34.

10. Cox, MS.0.37.

11. *C.A.B.*, VIII, f.123. This source is frequently cited by D. Johnson and A. Kettle who have provided the best history of the cathedral including the vicissitudes of the fabric (*V.C.H. Staffs.* III, 1970). Potter's repairs to the south-west spire may be reflected in the £200 paid to him in 1794 (Cox, 0.40).

12. *C.A.B.* IX, f.5.

13. *Ibid.* f. 7v & 14. See *V.C.H.* *op.cit.* p. 188 and n. 17.

14. Frew, *op.cit.* p.38, n.58.

15. References to the Consistory Court are confusing since there were two, the Bishop's and the Dean's. Browne Willis (*A Survey of the Cathedrals* . . . Vol. 1, 1727) shows them as sited in the aisles of the north and south transepts respectively. The former was disturbed by Wyatt's restoration of 1787-91 and had to be rehoused in the Chapterhouse. An estimate and a plan with four elevations (Cox, MSS. 0.35 & 0.36) by Wyatt for a Court in the North Transept might date from 1787-1791 or 1791-1796. There is a second plan with elevations illustrating this idea in the William Salt Library, Stafford (M.1064). Potter's fitting up of a Court in the vestry off the south choir aisle is noticed in 1800 (*G.M.* LXX, p.17) and appears in a plan of 1813 (Charles Wild, *An Illustration of the Architecture of Lichfield Cathedral*—fig. 2a. Britton (*op.cit.*) confusingly reverts to the old title of vestry in his plan of 1820—fig. 2b. An appeal for funds and a memorandum prove that Wyatt had this idea first (Cox, 0.36). The North Transept site is abandoned by the memorandum and the suggestion is made to open out both the transept aisles so that 'a fine effect will be produced by widening those parts of the Cathedral, and it will likewise afford very eligible places for the erecting of monuments.' There are plans in the William Salt Library for both the north and south transepts 'opened out'.

In 1797 some mason's work was done on the great spire.¹⁶ Two years later the Chapter was evidently concerned to improve the amenities of the Chapterhouse and the Library above and the architect is instructed 'to remove the ladder house and to open such of the windows on the west side of the approach to the Chapterhouse as may be necessary to give light to such approach.'¹⁷ He was also to improve the access to the Library.

After all this activity by Joseph Potter, it comes as something of a surprise to meet James Wyatt's name once again in the *C.A.B.* In 1801 Wyatt was asked to value the old buildings on the site of Newton's Buildings the contract for which was given to Potter.¹⁸ In 1804 Wyatt offered to design 'proper windows' for the newly-acquired Herckenrode glass.¹⁹ The offer was accepted but I do not know of any evidence that Wyatt made any designs or indeed did any other work for the cathedral before his death in 1813.

Before 1794, the date from which Joseph Potter is clearly acting as the cathedral architect, he is active as Wyatt's agent. The documents show him primarily as a financial agent although he was no doubt something more accurately described as the clerk-of-works. **The financial side of Wyatt's Lichfield works is complicated by an excess of accounts in the L.J.R.O., many of which are undated and most of which hardly indicate the work done.**²⁰ **Moneys** are paid to three principals: Wyatt; Mrs. Catherine Barker; Joseph Potter. Large sums are paid over to them in regular instalments on account of both the choir and the nave contracts. Further sums are paid during the same period to various specialist workmen.²¹ The bills do not distinguish labour from materials or materials from architect's fee. A bill of 1792 is the exception. This totals expenditure at £6879 17s. 10d. and breaks the total down into £3393 (nave contract), £2335 (choir contract), £1057 extraordinaries (both contracts), £30 (great scaffold), £12 (small scaffold), £52 architect's fee.²²

Payments on account were made by instalments and from the beginning in 1787 Wyatt arranged with John Fletcher for £100 a month to be paid to Mrs. Barker.²³ The first mention of Joseph Potter that I have seen is a payment of £200 in May 1788.²⁴ The £100 instalments were evidently related to the choir contract and a rough account of monthly payments from August 1787 to October 1790 shows a second series of £125 instalments related to the nave contract and paid to Mrs. Barker from January 1789.²⁵ Payments to Potter, such as that noted above, are extraordinary to this system.

16. Canon Madan gave £1 for ale for all the stonemasons working at the great spire—Cox, MS. 0.40.

17. *C.A.B.* IX, f.25. This presumably refers to medieval windows in the Chapterhouse vestibule at clerestory or ground level which were previously blocked.

18. Frew, op.cit. p.34, n.11.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Cox, MSS. 0.29-0.40, e.g. 0.35.

21. e.g. Samuel Green (organ) and Mr. Stringer (Ed. C. E. Stringer) for painting the wainscot of the new altar.

22. The account (Cox, MS. 0.38) is undated but a date can be supplied from the Fabric Accounts (*ibid.* 0.40).

23. Cox, MS. 0.40. Mrs. Catherine Barker was probably the widow of John Barker, banker, draper and industrialist, treasurer of the Lichfield Turnpike Trust and friend of Matthew Boulton—information from Jim Gould, via the Editor.

When Barker died c. 1783, his widow appears to have been pressed for funds. The history of Wyatt's restoration work at the cathedral, however, shows that by 1787 she was still in possession of a banking business. A few of the payments to Catherine Barker are to her and John B. Scott.

24. Cox, MS. 0.35.

25. *Ibid.*

After the 1787-1793 period, i.e. when Potter is clearly operating independently, annual payments to him can be followed through the fabric accounts.²⁶ However, it is still not possible to distinguish costs relating to labour as against materials or commission. Nor is it clear what proportion of the fabric expenditure should be related to the cathedral itself since expenditure on other buildings belonging to the Dean and Chapter might be concerned.²⁷ It is in fact only with the succeeding era of Sydney Smirke (1842-57) that a reasonably complete breakdown of the figures can occasionally be achieved. In 1843, for instance, expenditure on the fabric totalled £1199 and we know that £451 of this was for wages and £59 for the architect's commission.²⁸ In 1846 the figures are £1850, £600 and £63 respectively.²⁹ On this occasion it is recorded that £1033 out of £1850 was related to the cathedral church itself.³⁰ For the pre-Potter period one must be content with an annual fabric figure and amounts paid direct to the architect. From 1800 to 1842 expenditure from the fabric account totalled approximately £41,000 of which approximately £14,000 was paid directly to the architect (annual average £327).

The size of these figures is perhaps surprising and indicates a level of expenditure on the cathedral fabric much higher than that generally presumed for the pre-Victorian period. I think it is a reasonable assumption that the greater part of the annual average of £930 for fabric expenditure between 1800 and 1842 can be appropriated to the cathedral and that Joseph Potter's structural works were extensive. The situation is of course complicated by the major structural activities of George Gilbert Scott and John Oldrid Scott between 1857 and the early years of this century. From 1834 until 1842 it is possible to clarify the picture by means of a succession of surviving architect's reports which describe what works were 'necessary' and what was 'done'.³¹ Expenditure during these documented years in fact falls below the overall annual average figure given above and considerably below certain peaks of activity shown on a fabric expenditure graph (1806-10, 1815-16, 1819-23), see fig. 1.

The high figures for the years 1806-1810 are presumably related to the expensive operation of fitting the Herckenrode glass into the Lady Chapel windows. This had been acquired in the Netherlands by Sir Brooke Boothby in 1801 and sold to the Dean and Chapter at cost.³² All the recorded payments with respect to the glass are to stained glass makers or fitters, e.g. to Messrs. Iager (1804-6) and Betton (1806).³³ Although James Wyatt's offer to design proper windows, i.e. window tracery, was accepted in 1804,³⁴ there are no recorded payments to him for this work, and no proof that work was carried out to match the two 'new' and six 'repaired' Lady Chapel windows of 1787. However, it is

26. From 1800 these are in L.J.R.O. D.30, 8/5.

27. e.g. in 1835 Potter was paid £420 of which £220 was for the verger's new house—*ibid.*

28. *Ibid.* £92 was spent on stone and cartage and £55 to a London stonecarver.

29. *Ibid.* In this year stone and cartage amounted to £193 while £74 was paid to G. P. White the London carver. The plumber's bill was for £49. Smirke's commission of 5% was paid on a total of £928 18s. 6d. to which £16 19s. 6d. was added for travelling expenses and postage. Wyatt's commission was also usually 5% (A. Dale, *James Wyatt* 1956, p.59).

30. L.J.R.O. D.30, 2/2. This draft account book for 1846-1852 is restricted to expenditure on the cathedral fabric.

31. *Ibid.* 8/1.

32. *V.C.H.* *op.cit.* p.188.

33. *C.A.B.* IX, fs. 67, 77, 81v.

34. *Ibid.* f.67v.

possible that part of Bernasconi's two large accounts (1806 and 1807) are for work on these windows and the 1807 bill of £271 is made up of two amounts, £124 and £147, the former of which was for windows.³⁵ The latter amount is also puzzling since it is too large to refer to minor repairs and too late in date to refer to Wyatt's altar reredos at the east end or his organ screen at the crossing. The glazed tracery inserted to fill the gap between the organ screen and the crossing arch was put up by Potter in 1801.³⁶

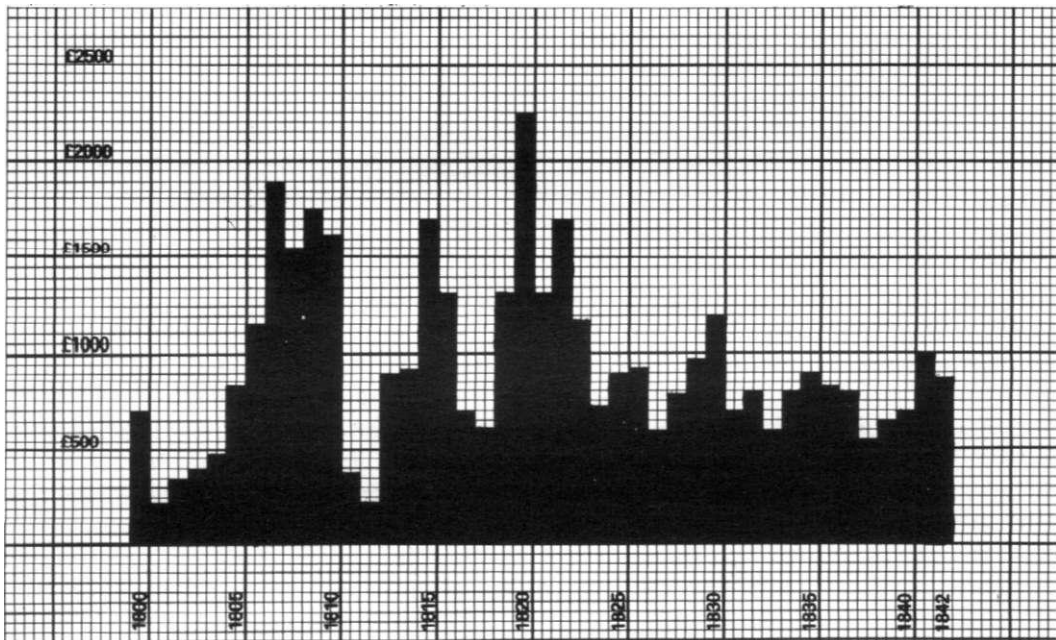


Fig. 1 FABRIC ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE 1800-1842

Yn Potter was YhsVTOcted 'that the wrath awd south dooAS. be. te^aired externally to the stone work and particularly as to the defective columns'.³⁷ This presumably refers to the **north** and south transept portals rather than to the three entrances at the west front. Wyatt's **1788** contract for the nave might be taken to imply work on any or all or none of the portals.³⁸ The peak years of **1815** and **1816** certainly relate to activity by Potter in territory already covered by Wyatt, on this occasion the choir. Wyatt's restoration and rearrangement of the east end had been designed to improve the accommodation but he had not managed to solve the problem that beset all arrangers of the Lichfield furnishings, that of compensating for the relatively narrow centre choir aisle. Dean Woodhouse persuaded the other members of the Chapter in **1813** to ease the problem by recessing the stalls in the first three bays,³⁹ an alteration that can be seen by comparing the ground plans of the cathedral published by John Britton in **1820** (fig. 2b) and Charles Wild in **1813**

35. L.J.R.O. D.30, 8/5.

36. *V.C.H.* op.cit. p. 188.

37. *C.A.B.* IX, f.143. Hewitt, op.cit. pp.77-9, describes the Roman cement work removed from the North Transept in 1881.

38. Frew, op.cit. p.38 gives the text of the contract.

39. *C.A.B.* IX, f. 170.

(fig. 2a).⁴⁰ The Woodhouse plan made room for more pews in front of the stalls in the first and third bays and for the choristers in the second bay. This siting of the choristers was to survive the Victorian restoration.

The 1819-1823 peak is explained by major work to the stained glass windows and to the external sculpture.⁴¹ There are large payments to Hall and Betton for glass between 1818 and 1822. In the former year, for instance, Hall is promised 200 guineas when he had finished all his designs for the south window.⁴² Sir John Betton was paid £229 in 1819 for work on this same window—the South Transept window.⁴³ The glazing of the major transept windows thus compensated for the loss of the Reynolds-Eginton east window for which John Anderson of Dublin offered 120 guineas in 1806.⁴⁴ Betton continued to earn large sums for glass at Lichfield in 1821 (£264) and 1822 (£80).⁴⁵ By this time the restoration of sculpture was under way with Mr. Harris 'modeller for figures' receiving £63 in 1820 and £39 in 1821.⁴⁶ He did not carry out this repeopling of the cathedral facades single-handed, a Mr. Armstrong was paid £80 in 1822 and the very large sum of £120 ten years later.⁴⁷ **Although** photographs as well as drawings and prints survive, the replacement of sculpture on the transept facades is not often mentioned. The replenishing of the west front stock was, however, notorious even in its own day and is also recorded by photographs taken prior to the extensive Scott restoration of 1877-84. This was the first thing to catch A. W. Pugin's

40. Op.cit. According to Joseph Potter junior, the three western bays were, with the exception of Wyatt's organ screen, just as the 17th-century restoration (attributed by Potter to Wren) had left them, i.e. with 17th-century stalls in front of blocked up arcades. 'In the early part of that year (1814), the architect of the fabric, the late Mr. Potter, was instructed by the Dean and Chapter to cause the entire removal of the old stall-work, and unmask the three arches (then concealed), this being the space on either side of the Choir occupied by the stalls in question. The arches being much dilapidated and past restoration, Dean Woodhouse decided to have them made to correspond to the Decorated bays in an Easterly direction. This work was executed, as also the canopy of the new stalls in Roman cement. I cannot myself think that Dean Woodhouse exhibited any degree of bad taste in adopting the existing Decorated arches as his model for the new ones; and as regards the canopies of the new stalls, they were exact resemblances of the old reredos; and surely no modern architect will presume to find fault with them. I must here observe that the choice of material was not confided to the architect employed to carry out the work, but was chosen by the Dean and Chapter, the state of the fabric fund, out of which the whole of the expenses were defrayed, being insufficient to meet the outlay of a more costly material.'—*Staffs. Advertiser*, 5 Dec. 1861, quoted by Hewitt, op.cit. pp.47-9.

41. *G.M.* LXXXVIII, 1818 (2), p.511: 'At present, considerable alterations are going on . . .' Britton, op.cit. p.54 describes Dean Woodhouse's new north window and reports the south window as in progress.

42. *C.A.B.* IX, f.226. John James Hall, Esq. (Britton, op.cit. p.54).

43. *L.J.R.O.* D.30, 8/5.

44. *Ibid.* 13/4: 'In conformity to what passed between us this forenoon permit me to advise that I have resolved to accept the painted window and glory we looked at for the price of 120 guineas understanding that the Dean and Chapter are to take them down and deliver them to Mr. Eginton who at my expense will order a proper person to receive and pack them up as soon as you advise him that the whole are ready to be delivered. I will thank you for a line addressed to me at No. 5 Dawson Street, Dublin . . .' This window had already suffered the indignity of being attributed to different authors by the *Gentleman's Magazine*, to Benjamin West in 1795 (*LXV.* p.520) and to Sir Joshua Reynolds in 1796 (*LXVI.* p.193). Francis Eginton, who made the window, died in March 1805 so that Mr. Anderson of Dublin must have been dealing with William Raphael Eginton who took on the glass business.

45. *L.J.R.O.* D.30, 8/5.

46. *Ibid.* Hewitt, op.cit. p.20, identifies Mr. Harris as Joseph Harris of Bath.

47. *L.J.R.O.* D.30, 8/5.

censorious eye in 1834.⁴⁸ Pugin's letter happened to be published by Benjamin Ferrey in 1861 just before Gilbert Scott's new Lichfield choir was revealed to the public. Scott evidently fed the *Staffordshire Advertiser* with information and, since the latter quoted Pugin's attack on Wyatt and Potter, one might suspect him of drawing Ferrey's publication to notice. It **was** to this private criticism of thirty years past that Joseph Potter junior felt obliged to reply.

On the rare occasions when the records detail expenditure on stone, the sums involved are much smaller than those on glass or Roman cement. The £91 spent on stone in 1819 is unusually large and is in fact made up of several small amounts.⁴⁹ In 1823 Mr. Penny was paid £5 for 'dangerous work at three steeples.'⁵⁰ The next evidence for structural work dates from 1828 when drawings as well as written evidence records Potter's interest in the South Transept. One of the drawings (fig. 3a) shows the west elevation as today and as left by James Wyatt. The other (fig. 3b) proposes three alterations which were evidently **never executed**.⁵¹ The most striking proposal was that to raise the height of the buttress **in the centre to equal that of** the south-west and south-east corner buttresses. By this **the** west buttress would have risen some way above the level of the parapet. A less obvious alteration proposed was that to extend the large perpendicular windows at the expense of a section of blank wall below sill level. A third alteration would have heightened the gable over the south **facade**. However, all these proposals had an aesthetic rather than a structural purpose and it is not therefore surprising that Joseph Potter's ideas were never **carried** out. The same fate awaited a proposal that Potter made for the restoration of the monument between the two buttresses to the east of the south transept portal. A drawing of **this** as restored, signed and dated 1838, survives (fig. 4a) with Joseph Johnson's estimate (£89) for **the work**.⁵² Charles Gresley, who was Chapter Clerk for the whole of the post-Potter Victorian period has written on the back of the drawing, 'happily not executed,' and, of course, the monument survives to this day in its unrestored state. Joseph Potter interpreted the geometric cusps as the remains of tracery on the analogy of a geometric traceried window. John Oldrid Scott restored the monuments along the south side of the Lady Chapel in 1879 with foiled cusps alone, i.e. on the analogy of tomb monuments of c. 1300 as in Westminster Abbey!

48. 'On proceeding to the Cathedral, which from its distant appearance promised great things, what was my horror and astonishment on perceiving the west front to have been restored with brown cement, cracked in every direction, with heads worked with the trowel, devoid of all expression of feeling, crockets as bad, and a mixture of all styles. My surprise, however, ceased on the vergers informing me that the whole church was improved and beautified about thirty years ago by the late Mr. Wyatt . . . The man, I am sorry to say, who executes the repairs of the building was a pupil of the wretch himself, and has imbibed all the vicious propensities of his accursed tutor, without one spark of even practical ability to atone for his misdeeds. The repairs of the Cathedral are conducted in a most puerile manner. What think you of replacing finials and crockets upon the pinnacles, &c? while flying buttresses themselves threaten to fall daily'.—Benjamin Ferrey, *Recollections of A. W. N. Pugin and his father Augustus Pugin*. (1861), pp.85/6. Reprinted 1977 with Introduction by Clive Wainwright.

49. L.J.R.O. D.30, 8/5. £36 and £15 to Mr. Stubbs and £25 to Mr. Brown for stone from Tixall.

50. C.A.B. X, f.236.

51. L.J.R.O. D.30, 13/4.

52. Ibid. 8/1.

Joseph Potter was more successful with the 'Doorway leading into the Belfry in the South Front' (fig. 4b).⁵³ This was apparently replaced by J. O. Scott c. 1880 with a plain opening in the wall.⁵⁴ At first glance this was a simple substitution, style apart. However on closer inspection **there are** a number of puzzling features. Potter's designs shows a single applied-shaft rising above the apex **of** his Perpendicular hood moulding. This could only have been 'correct' if the doorway was where Britton shows it c. 1820 in his plate IV, i.e. one bay **of** blind tracery to the east **of** Scott's doorway where the tracery is two-light with a single shaft between two clusters **of** triple shafts. Britton's plan, however, has the doorway occupying only half this bay, in which case there would have been no single shaft aligned over the centre **of** the doorway.⁵⁵ Potter's drawing **of** the plinth into which the doorway is cut implies that the doorway was positioned as today.

Thus far the attribution of specific structural works to Joseph Potter has had to be **hesitant and uncertain**. For the last years of his career however, the survival of no less than eight reports allows for much greater certainty. The reports are of two kinds, *Repairs that appear most wanted/requisite/necessary* and *Sundry works done/Repairs now in hand*. The former are most useful for establishing Potter's approach to cathedral restoration and **the** latter for defining the pre-Scott appearance of the fabric. With the second of these questions principally in mind, I shall describe the reports topographically leaving the chronology **to** be deduced from the dates given in brackets.⁵⁶

Beginning at the east end, with the Lady Chapel, it must be said that little activity is documented and this is confined to the plinths and upper weatherings of the buttresses (1841). I have already touched upon the question as **to** whether Wyatt's offer to design new tracery for the Herckenrode glass in 1804 was taken up or not. If it was, Potter no doubt supervised the work and the payments for it may be hidden in those sums paid to the cementers.

In the choir Potter did do a significant amount of structural restoration. Besides fitting out a new Consistory Court off the south aisle, Potter also recased the south-east turret (1834)⁵⁷ and renewed the stonework of the south-west turret (1840). In the choir proper, besides recessing the Prebendal stalls c. 1813, he inserted a flue into the north-east stair turret (1814)⁵⁸ and, on the south side, repaired the battlements (1839) and the parapets (1840) and replaced at least two clerestory windows (1834 and 1835) one of which adjoined the Lady Chapel. He repaired four aisle windows in stone or cement (1841) and these were situated on both sides like the repaired buttress plinths (1841).

Structural work carried out on the north transept in the 1790s and on the north and south portals in 1811 has already been mentioned. If one was to follow the evidence provided

53. Ibid.

54. The specifications upon which John Thompson of Peterborough successfully tendered were drawn up in 1877, i.e. before the death of Sir Gilbert Scott in the Spring of 1878.

55. Britton, *op.cit.* pi.IV and p.36.

56. L.J.R.O. D.30, 8/1:— Report on the Repairs that appear most to be wanted, Sept. 26th 1834; Abstract of Sundry Works Done, Sept. 1835; Report of Sundry Works Done, Sept. 1836; Report on those Repairs most requisite to be done, Sept. 1837; ditto Sept. 28th 1838; Abstract of Sundry Work Done, Sept. 1839—Sept. 1840; Report of Repairs now in hand and Repairs Proposed, Sept. 5th 1840; Report of Repairs Necessary, Dec. 9th 1841.

57. This is a large and elaborate buttress which housed a staircase turret as can be seen in Browne Willis's 'Groundplot' of 1727 (*op.cit.*). No staircase is shewn on 19th-century plans and it is now blocked off.

58. *C.A.B.* IX, f.175.

by antiquarian sources, one might be led astray into believing that Potter also restored vertical shafts to the corner buttresses of the north transept. Charles Wild in 1813 shows these buttresses as plain (fig. 2a) whereas John Britton in 1820 gives them applied-shafts at least *on plan* (fig. 2b). Britton of course omits these shafts in his elevation from the west and thus agrees with other drawings and prints from the relevant period such as a water-colour of 1842 by A. E. Everitt.⁵⁹ Potter himself implies that the north transept buttresses were not altered in his time.⁶⁰ One might suppose from Hewitt and Bickersteth that this embellishment was due to John Oldrid Scott since they tell us that Scott renewed the buttresses 'on the old design.'⁶¹ The written evidence does I think prove that Scott was merely following the path taken by Sidney Smirke in 1847/8. Smirke wrote in 1850:

The octagonal buttresses that have been recently restored at the North Transept have now an unsatisfactory appearance, chiefly from the want of any horizontal bands or annulets to the angle shafts which there can be no doubt originally existed, although the workmen assure me that they could find no traces of any.

In 1834, Potter had two new windows made for the west side of this north transept and repaired the stonework of the surrounding walls.⁶² Which windows were these? Since Potter recommends in 1841, only seven years later, that the two windows at the lower level were in such a bad state that they needed to be replaced, it seems probable that the 1834 repairs were to the Perpendicular clerestory windows. A similar ambiguity exists for the two new windows which the architect gave to the west side of the south transept in 1836. Were these two of the clerestory windows which he had proposed to alter in 1828 or were they one of the two pairs of lancets below? Potter also made at least two new windows for the east side of the same transept (1838).⁶³ Yet another new window is mentioned in 1840 but on this occasion there is no clue as to its precise location.

After the works to the Chapterhouse and Library of c. 1800, Potter's activity in this part of the cathedral was apparently slight. In 1835 he recast and relaid the leads and in 1835 and 1839 made repairs to the parapets.

The three great spires which have the power to convert even the unsympathetic are the glory of Lichfield Cathedral. George Fox records in 1641:

As I was walking along with several Friends, I lifted up my head, and I saw three steeple-house spires, and they struck at my life. I asked them what place that was? and they said, Lichfield. Immediately the word of the Lord came to me, that I must go thither."

These spires presented splendid targets to Civil War gunners and the elements in all ages and have, in consequence, required repairs on several occasions.⁶⁴ Following work to the south-west spire in 1794 and to the great spire in 1823, Potter had to return to the latter in 1835 and 1838.⁶⁵ On these later occasions he replaced at least three of the four parapets

59. William Salt Library, Stafford, *Staffs. Views*, VI, (21).

60. See Potter's final report of Dec. 1841 quoted on p.43.

61. Hewitt, *op.cit.* p.11. This 4th edition was edited by Dean Bickersteth.

62. These windows were authorized in 1835 (*C.A.B.* X, f.276) and were presumably those ordered to be completed in 1838 (*ibid.* f.331).

63. The Scott restoration of (?) 1877/8 made further alterations to the east windows of the South Transept aisle and no doubt removed the evidence of Potter's earlier work.

64. *A Journal or Historical Account of George Fox*, 2 vols. 6th ed. (Leeds, 1836), p. 151. This incident is quoted with slightly different wording in M. A. Hopkins, *Dr. Johnson's Lichfield* (1956), p.7.

65. The great spire was shot down in 1646.

66. *C.A.B.*, X, f.331.

and carried out a general repointing. A bill of 1842 relates to the partial rebuilding of the south-west spire and this was later said to have included the top 41 feet!⁶⁷

This attention to the spires may have done a little to counteract the impression that my quotations may have given that Potter's works were primarily devoted to the decorative edges of the cathedral fabric. The reports do seem to concentrate upon turrets, parapets, buttresses, plinths and window tracery and Potter's last report to the Chapter indicated that, however much structural restoration had been achieved during his tenure of office, there remained a very large amount still to do. At a first glance at least, the Fabric Accounts for the years 1800-42 show an expenditure of £240 on stonework as against £648 for cement work and £1615 for stained glass.⁶⁸ Storer in 1817 stresses the interest of Dean Woodhouse in replacing the lost glazing in other parts of the cathedral than the Lady Chapel which had recently provided a new home for the Herckenrode glass.⁶⁹ Nonetheless the figures that I have quoted may be misleading since I have not identified all the payees; indeed there is a total of some £1500 still to be allocated.⁷⁰ The £240 for stonework, it should also be said, is additional to separately itemized payments such as the £262 paid to Joseph Johnson **for his** work on the south-west spire.⁷¹ The consistently high level of expenditure shown in the Fabric Accounts, even if it proves to have favoured the embellishment rather than the fundamental structure of the cathedral, nevertheless indicates the Chapter's acceptance of the responsibility for maintenance. This ought to be said before quoting from Potter's final report which implies that the cathedral was in a dire state. It should also be pointed out that much of the work that he then urged upon the Chapter was authorized during the time of his immediate successor Sydney Smirke.

In December 1841, shortly before his requested resignation and almost immediate death,⁷² Joseph Potter made a lengthy report of the 'requisite' rather than the 'in hand' variety, according to which 'the cathedral was in decay in several parts'. He included most of the windows, buttresses and turrets. He then said of the choir aisle windows that 'the greater part of the windows are past repairing', and, of the south nave aisle, that 'the whole face of this part of the building is in a rapid state of decay'. Even omitting, as here, those works which were allowed in the following annual campaign, the list of recommended repairs is formidable. In the choir, Potter advised that the aisle windows should be restored in stone or cement on both the north and south sides. In the north transept the north-facing

67. L.J.R.O. D.30, 8/5 records a payment of £262 to Joseph Johnson for rebuilding the north-west spire.

68. The stone was supplied by Messrs. Stubbs and Brown and L. P. Wolferson, Esq. The latter was presumably the owner of a quarry. The figure for stonework includes some payments to Joseph Davis the head mason. The cement workers include Bernasconi and the modellers Harris and Armstrong. The very large sums for stained glass were paid to Messrs. Hall, Betton, Jager, Ashmole and Eginton. Mr. Worthington, who did plumbing work at the cathedral throughout the whole period, is also described as a glazier and he presumably worked on the old as distinct from the new windows. Payments to Worthington from 1800-42 total £385 (approximately).

These financial records are in L.J.R.O. D.30, 8/5 (Fabric Accounts), 8/1, and 2/2 (Rough Accounts).

69. J. Storer, *History and Antiquities of the Cathedral Churches*, Vol. 3, (Lichfield and Coventry, 1817), mentions besides the Herckenrode glass, the 'German' glass lately fitted into the east windows of the north and south aisles, the North Transept window given by Dean Woodhouse, but not, unlike Britton writing three years later, the stained glass in the South Transept window.

70. The unallocated payments are to Messrs. W. Middleton (£141), C. Acton (£571) and Westmore (£278).

71. Johnson was also paid £364 in 1841 for the installation of central heating flues.

72. G.M. NS.XVIII, p.566: 'Aug. 18th at Lichfield, Joseph Potter esq., architect, in his 87th year, having held the office of surveyor of the public buildings of Staffs, forty-five years.'

buttresses were much decayed and the lower windows on the west side were in a very bad state. The same was true of the three-light window on the east side. The upper three-light window in the south transept was much decayed although the mullions had **already been restored**. The great tower needed new stone mullions and restoration to the shafts of its angle turrets and to its buttress pinnacles. Potter pointed his accusing finger also at the windows (columns, bases, sills) and flying buttresses to the north nave aisle. Returning to the south nave aisle, he specified an almost total restoration of the wall including windows, buttresses and hood mouldings. The north-west tower required new belfry **windows on the north and east sides and repairs** to its parapet on the south side. The south-west tower needed a new belfry window on its east side and one new window (lower) in the spire.

By reading a series of reports from the cathedral architect, whether it be Joseph Potter or Sydney Smirke, one can sense how a mountain of necessary works grows from year to year as only a part of each annual list of recommendations is authorized. I have tried **to stress** that the amount spent on the fabric by the Chapter at Lichfield was high but I have not stressed the fact that Lichfield was never a rich cathedral in terms of its endowments.⁷³ Joseph Potter was allowed much greater resources for the maintenance of Lichfield Cathedral during the 1830s and 1840s than were his counterparts Thomas Rickman and **Harvey** Eginton at Worcester.⁷⁴ Quite a high proportion of Potter's 'requisite' and 'necessary' works appear soon after in the works 'done'. Potter only proposes a more radical approach to cathedral maintenance towards the end of his astonishingly long career and his career came to an end at about the moment that the fashion for 'thorough' **restoration was gathering momentum**.

It may have been fortuitous that Potter's successor at Lichfield happened to adopt a relatively conservative approach to restoration. It was due to Sydney Smirke that a change from 'maintenance' to 'restoration' did not really occur until George Gilbert Scott became the Chapter's architect in 1857.⁷⁵ Scott's practice as a cathedral restorer has received criticism as hostile as that which he accorded to James Wyatt and, by implication, to Joseph Potter senior in 1861. A continuous programme of annual maintenance characterises the era of Potter and Smirke and distinguishes it from those more sweeping campaigns of **comprehensive restoration** associated at Lichfield with Wyatt and Scott. But, as Joseph Potter junior was at pains to point out, the changing temper of Chapter personnel could be an equally relevant factor.⁷⁶

The Society is indebted to the Trustees of Lichfield Conduit Lands for a grant towards the cost of publication of this paper.

73. Lichfield was the poorest of the secular cathedrals. See H. Jenkins, *Lichfield Cathedral in the Fourteenth Century*, Unpub. B.Litt. Thesis, Oxford 1956, p.67 & *passim*.

74. Rickman's association with Worcester Cathedral was relatively brief. Eginton, who lived in Worcester, was probably concerned with the cathedral for rather longer.

75. I hope to discuss the contrasting attitudes towards restoration of Sydney Smirke and the Scotts on another occasion. At Worcester, A. E. Perkins, who took over as cathedral architect in 1844, introduced 'restoration' rather than 'maintenance' somewhat earlier than at Lichfield, for which see my 'The Victorian Restoration of Worcester Cathedral', in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Worcester Cathedral*, ed. G. Popper, (British Archaeological Association, 1978), pp. 161-185.

76. See my 'Sydney Smirke, George Gilbert Scott and the Rearrangement of Lichfield Cathedral', *Bulletin of the Institute for the Study of Worship and Religious Architecture*, (University of Birmingham, 1980), p.3.

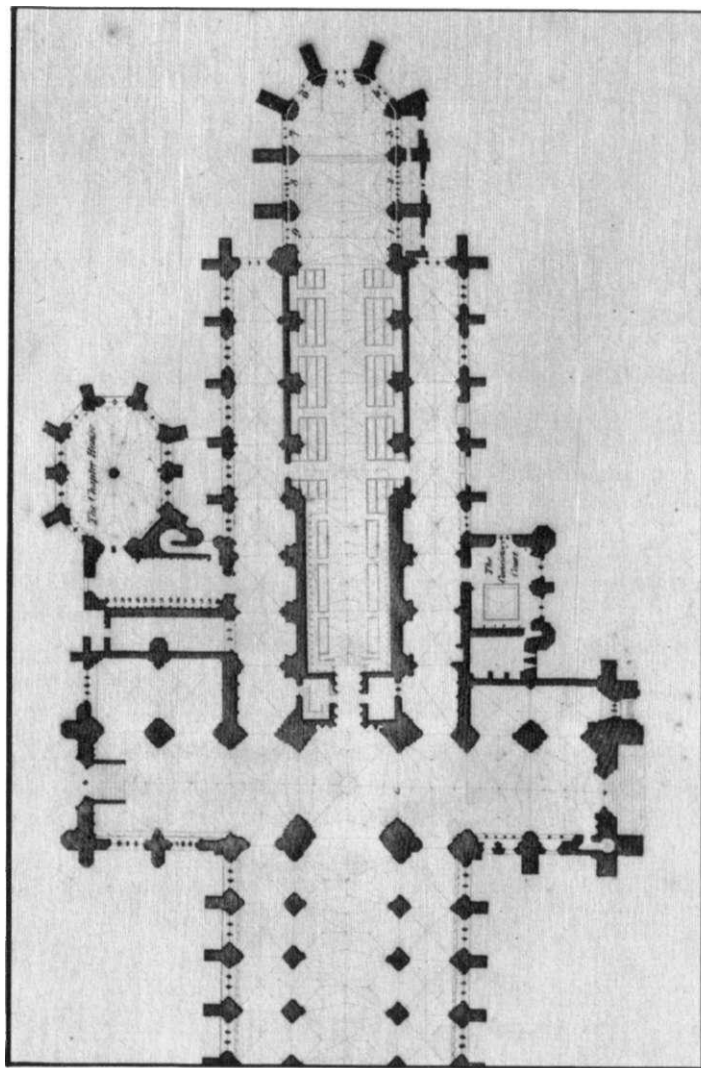


Fig. 2(a); Lichfield Cathedral, plan by Charles Wild, 1813.

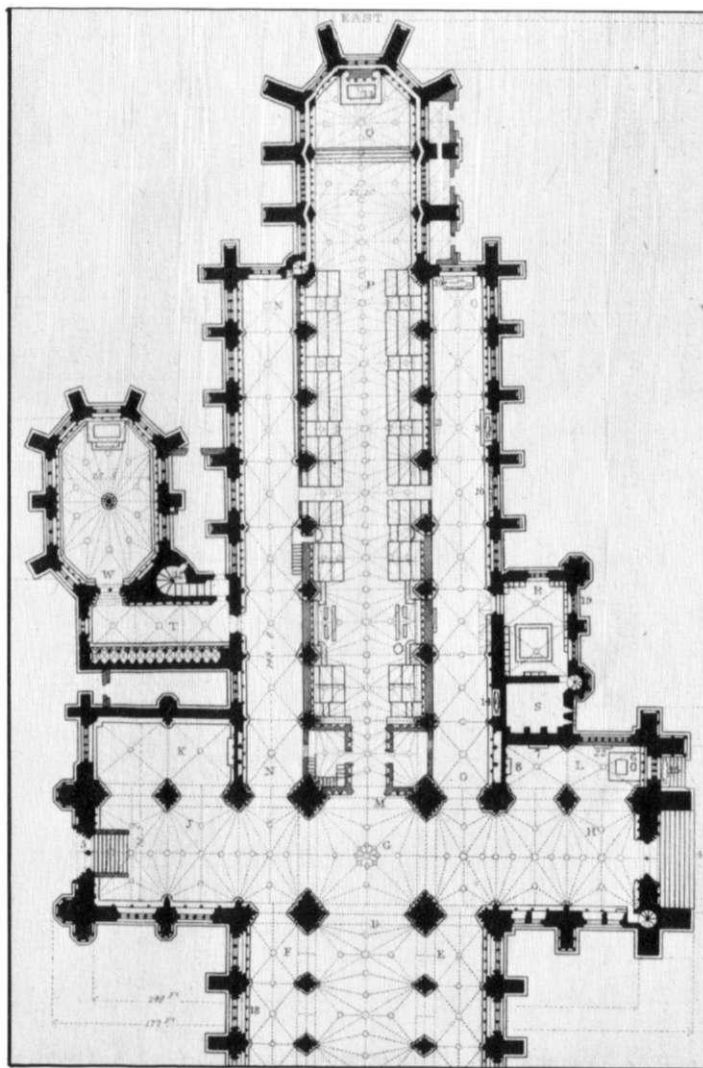


Fig. 2(b) Lichfield Cathedral, plan by F. Mackenzie, 1819 (Britton, 1820).

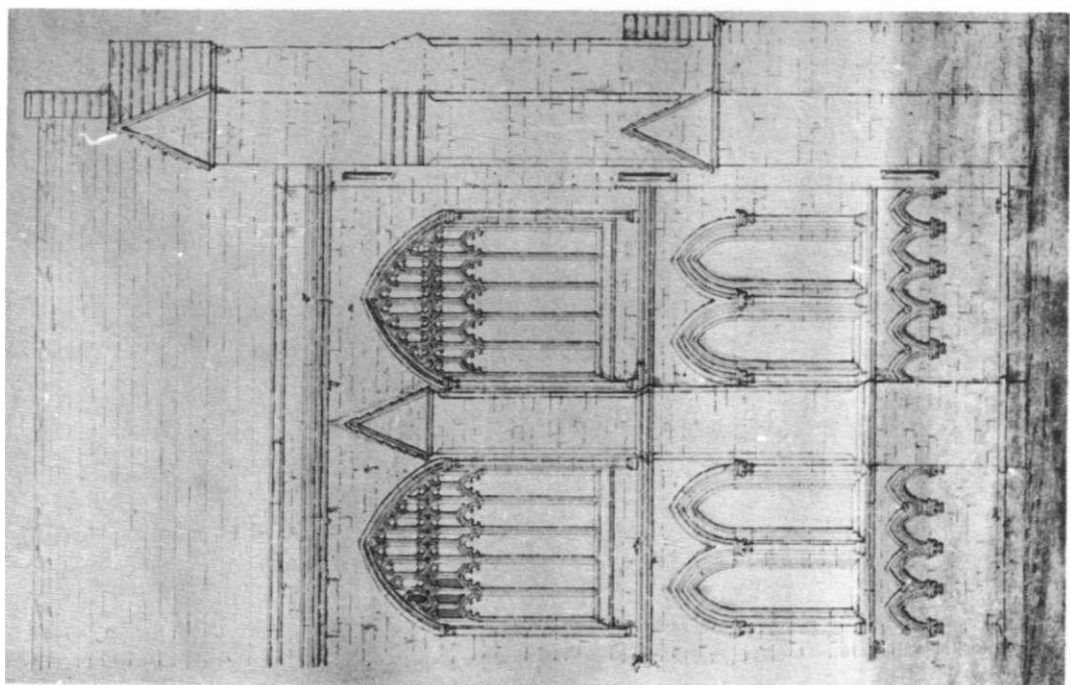


Fig. 3(a)

South Transept, West Façade; drawing by Joseph Potter, sen., 1828.
(L.J.R.O.)

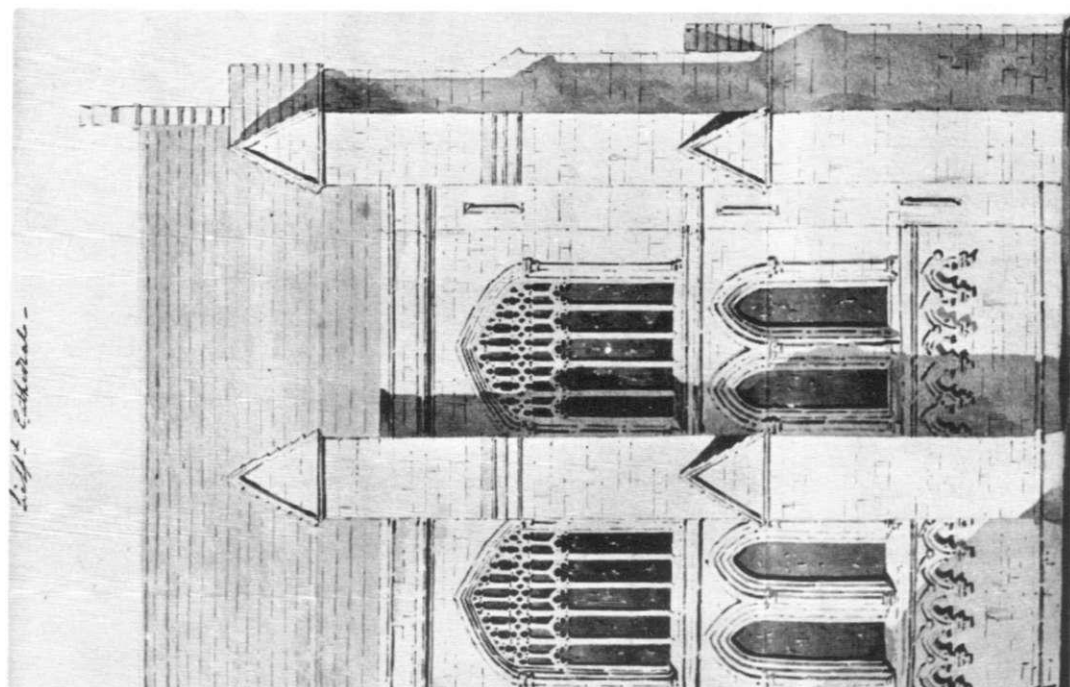


Fig. 3(b)

South Transept, West Façade; as proposed by Joseph Potter, sen., 1828.
(L.J.R.O.)

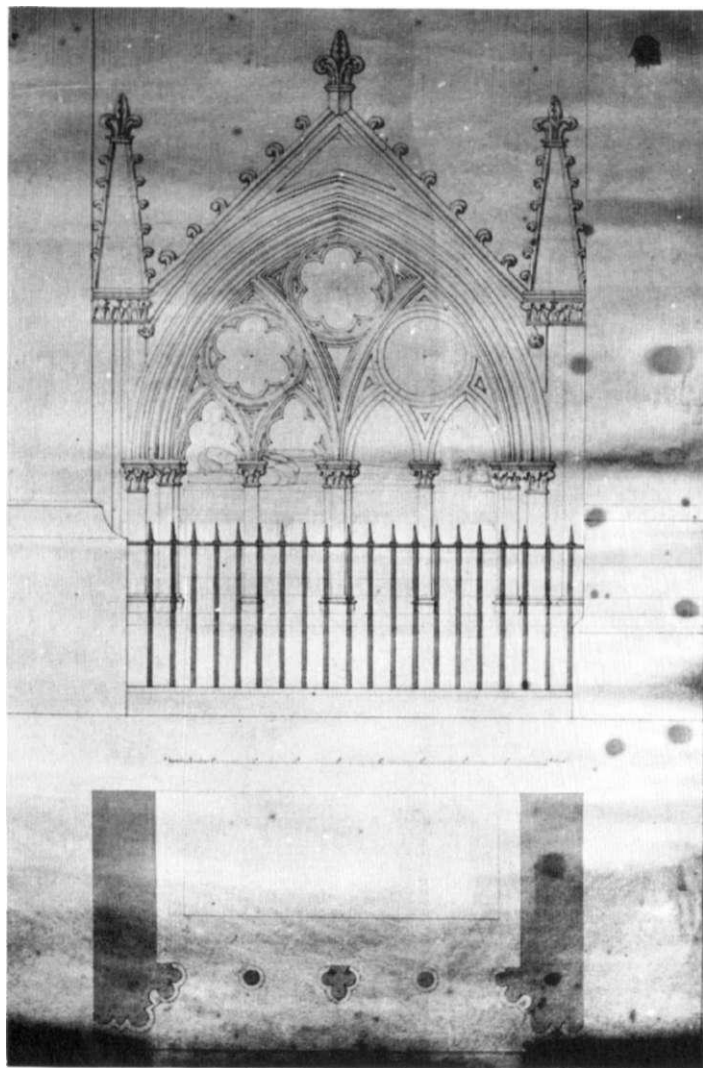


Fig. 4(a) Monument adjoining South Transept Portal; proposed restoration by Joseph Potter, sen., 1838. (L.J.R.O.)

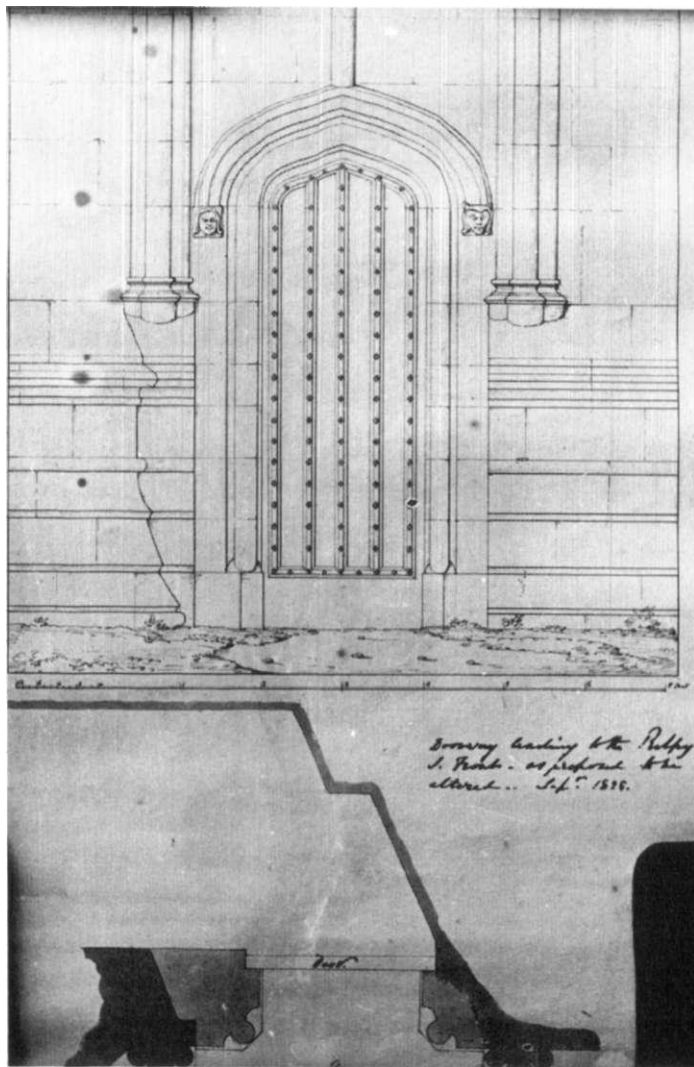


Fig. 4(b) South Doorway to South-West Tower, as proposed by Joseph Potter, sen., 1828. (L.J.R.O.)

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PROGRAMME 1979-80

1979

- 21 April Bangley Park blast-furnace site : Pillaton Hall and St. Modwena
Chapel : Penkridge Church : Blackladies : Brewood Church : Moseley Old Hall. Leaders: M. M. Hallett and J. W. Whiston.
- 9 July Archaeological sites of Sutton Park — Mike Hodder, **B.A.**
- 5 Oct. (L) Annual General Meeting.
History and archaeology of gardens — Jim Gould, **F.S.A.**
- 26 Oct. (T) Excavations at Beckford, Worcs. — Jan Wills, **B.A.**
- 2 Nov. (L) The 19th-century restoration of Lichfield Cathedral — R. B. Lockett, **M.A.**
- 23 Nov. (T) Civic Evening.
The Buildings of Ludlow — David Lloyd, **M.A., M.Ed.**
- 7 Dec. (L) Archaeology in Romania — Nubar Hampartumian, **M.A.**
- 14 Dec. (T) Excavations at Stafford Castle — Charles Hill, **B.A.**

1980

- 4 Jan. (L) The Victorian telegraph system and Society — Dr. Francis Celoria.
- 25 Jan. (T) The Archaeology of Droitwich — John Sawle, **B.A.**
- 1 Feb. (L) Staffordshire historians — Michael Greenslade, **J.P., M.A., F.S.A.**
- 22 Feb. (T) Archaeology in the Trent Valley — Hazel Wheeler, **B.A.**
- 7 March (L) Church Archaeology in Britain 1970-80 — R. K. Morris, **B.A., B.Phil.**
- 21 March (T) The Romano-British site at Coleshill — John Magilton, **M.A.**
(L) Lichfield Library (T) Tamworth Castle.

EXCAVATIONS

- WALL Excavations continued on the Roman 'villa' site under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Ball, on behalf of the Department of the Environment.

NOTES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In Volume XX, the paper 'The Historical Development of the Landscape in the parishes of Alrewas, Fisherwick and Whittington : A retrogressive analysis', by Christopher Smith, was published with help of grants kindly made by the Council for British Archaeology and the Trustees of the Marc Fitch Fund.

CUMULATIVE LIST OF CONTENTS OF *TRANSACTIONS*

We published on the inside covers of volume X, a list of the contents of the *Transactions* volumes 1 to X.

A list of the contents of volume XI to XX is now available at £1.20, including postage, from Mrs. Diana Wilkes, 503 Sutton Road, Walsall, West Midlands WS5 3AX. Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to the Society.

A few copies of a separately printed list of the contents of volumes 1 to X are available, at 30p including postage.