



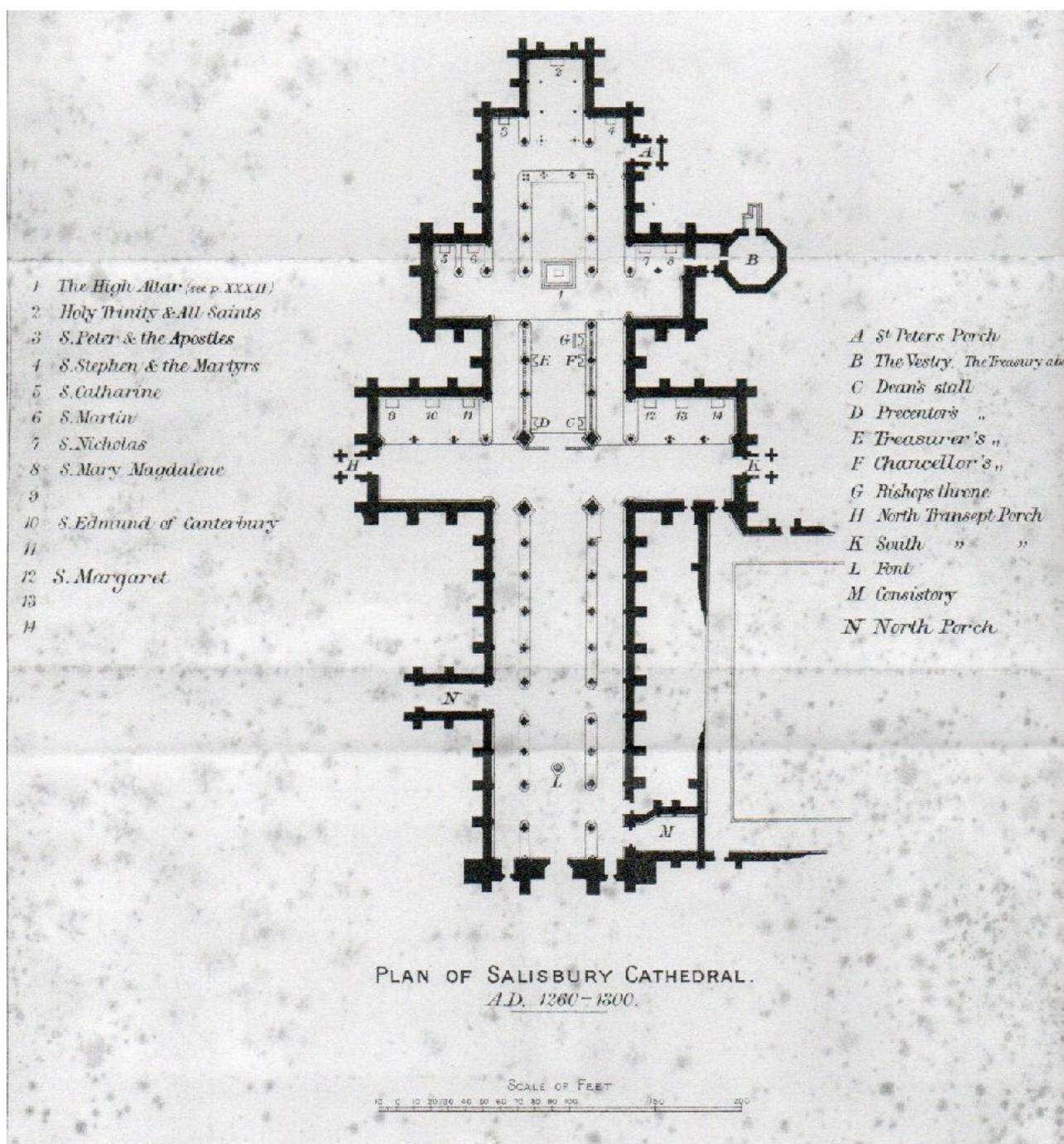
A Salisbury-Cathedral-centric view of History.

Editor: Mark Brandon: markandsuebrandon@outlook.com

WEBPAGE: jot-and-tittle.com Please note that all editions will best be available by joining the subscribers mailing list, either via the web-page or by e-mail to the editor.

A CUNNING PLAN

Working on the archive copies of the Chapter Minutes can be tiring on the eyes, so I am in the habit of having a break and perusing the book shelves. On one such foray I picked up *The Register of St. Osmund* edited by W H Rich Jones, Canon and Vicar of Bradford-on-Avon, dated December 1857. Originally fixed inside the cover was this plan of the early Cathedral that I thought might be of interest to you.



The points I found of note were:

- A. The layout and naming of the many altars
- B. The lack of Chantry chapels at this date
- C. The shape of the Consistory Court
- D. The house off the Vestry
- E. The porches on both transepts and the Ambulatory
- F. The smallness of the Pulpitum/Rood Screen
- G. The small outside doorway between the southeast transept and the Vestry

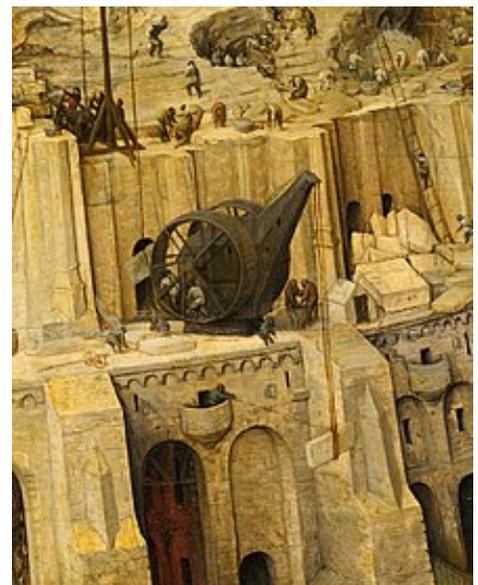
I assume that with the High Altar in its westerly position, the area to the east could have been for Osmund's shrine?

WINDLASS

I expect that, like me, you have taken our windlass (left) for granted. The word comes from the Anglo-Norman *vindass*, a winding pole. So I think that this name refers to the rope and spindle as the same word is used for a well-head and a crossbow winder. Possibly a better



description for our man-powered version is a treadwheel crane. These were a feature of medieval life, often in the form of a mobile crane as shown in Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *Tower of Babel* (courtesy of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, public domain). There is a recreated one in Bruges (1), a restored dockside version in Luneburg (2) and a massive one in Gdansk (4). Even Château Guédelon has one (see J&T No. 44). However, the most interesting

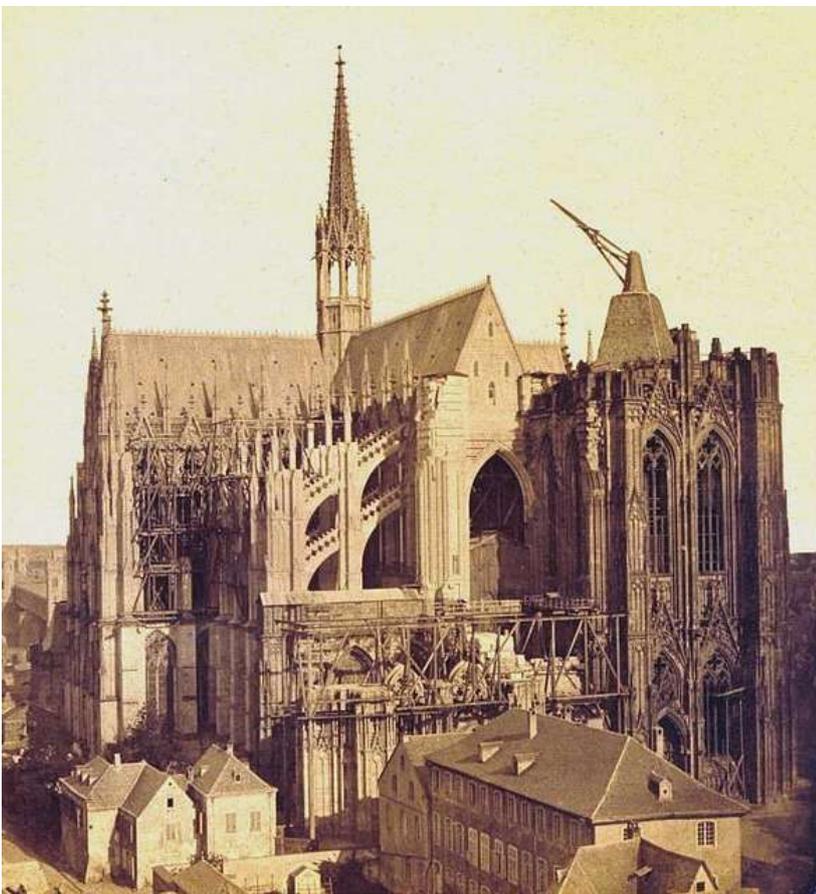


re-construction is (3) situated in Bonn - it is Roman - although I believe Archimedes' concept was the original for



changing rotational to vertical movement.

Salisbury is one of three cathedrals where the machine is still in-situ, the other being Peterborough and Ely. Tewkesbury Abbey has one in-situ and Beverley Minster's is still in the church. Chesterfield's is now in a museum - I wonder how it operated with a crooked spire? Finally, Cologne Cathedral, *Kölner Dom*, (left) had a medieval crane on top of one of its twin towers. It was a source of embarrassment to the inhabitants for 400 years - until building the Cathedral was finished; it had begun in 1248 but halted around 1560 and completed in 1880. A local saying translates as *When the Cologne Cathedral is finished, the world ends*.



A free standing baptistry goes back to the 7th century and there have been graves* uncovered that date from the 6th century. The original cathedral was built by 818 but was destroyed by fire in 1248 - no doubt they used the insurance money to fund the new cathedral. Around 50 types of stone have been used in its construction, principally of volcanic rock shipped down the Rhine from their own quarry at the Drachenfels near Bonn. The stone is not very homogenous and reacts badly to changes in temperature. In the past damage has been caused by bombing (us) and industrial pollution, now though it is the extreme weather of Climate Change. Scaffolding has become a permanent feature.

It is the largest medieval cathedral in Europe and attracts 20,000 visitors a day. The choir has the largest height to width ratio of any medieval church 3.6:1 which to my mind ruins the aesthetic. The Dom has been famous since 1164 as the home of the shrine to the Three Kings 'rescued' by the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick Barbarossa from the Basilica of Sant'Eustorgio, Milan. This was a great draw for pilgrims and a great source of money for the Bishop.

The subjects in the Victorian period raised two-thirds of the cost of completion whilst the Protestant Prussian State paid the other third. Their motive was to try and improve relations with the large Catholic population they had acquired and to symbolise German nationhood. Although this is a UNESCO World Heritage site, I was amazed on my visit to see that German engineers had built a car-park under the cathedral!

A COLD CASE

Above there was mention of graves these were of a woman and a 6-year old boy discovered by accident in the 1950s. Modern forensic scientists have been having a second look at the remains, now dated to 526AD. Leather gloves had been placed in both graves and under the electron microscope blood was discovered on the surface. This blood was found to contain high levels of molybdenum, enough to cause death. The Molybdenum came from Lead Acetate; since Roman times, *sugar of lead* ($\text{Pb}(\text{CH}_3\text{COO})_2$) had been used to sweeten wine. A similar concentration was found in the bones of 30 bodies who lived in *Londinium*.

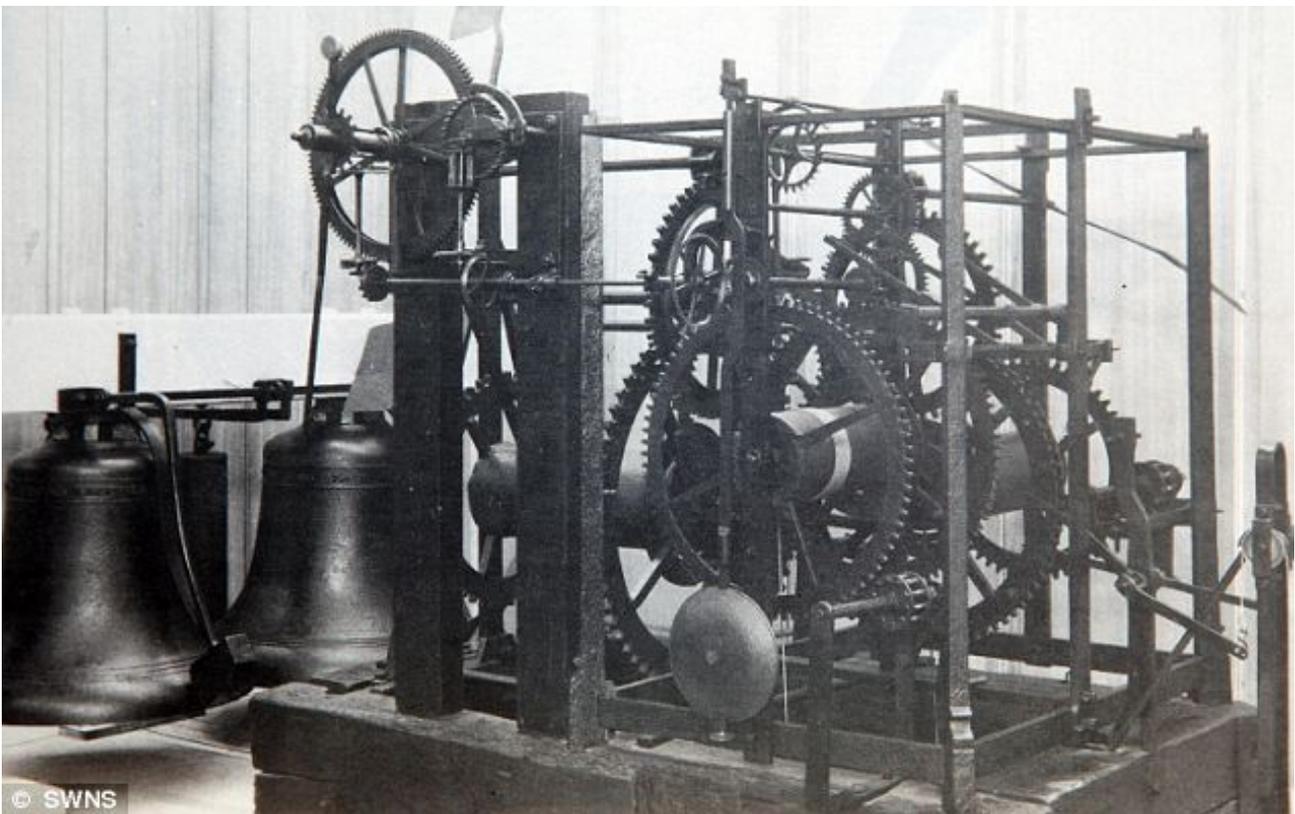
The practice was to boil down unfermented grape juice to concentrate the sugars. Reducing the volume to half was called *defrutum* and to a third was called *sapa*. Unfortunately, the kettles used were made of lead alloys (Page 3 pic). Eventually, the lead acetate could be produced in a crystalline form like today's sugar or salt and so was then used in cooking. Some historians even believe that this was the primary cause of the Fall of the Roman Empire.



Incidentally, DNA testing showed that the two victims were unrelated.

THE WELLS CLOCK

Is this our clock's sister? The workings of the original Wells clock are almost identical to our own (plus later additions). Ours has been dated to 1386 -9 Wells to possibly five years later, built probably by the same *orologier*. The Wells Communar's account rolls for 1392/3 includes an entry for a clock-keepers wages. Bishop Ralph Erghum was a prominent supporter of Richard II, consecrated at Bruges, became Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and was at Salisbury from 1375 - 1388. He was translated to Bath and Wells in 1388 and remained as Bishop until 1400. Coincidentally, Edward III invited over three Dutch clockmakers in 1368. Current thought though is that both clocks were made by an Englishman.



The original clock (above) is now in the British Museum. The pendulum was added following Galileo's studies in the mid 17th century. The Wells clock has a quarter-striking mechanism in addition to the hour-striking and an internal clock face (the oldest in the world). Incidentally a wooden carving of Christ the Redeemer was added below the clock face in 1956 as a reminder that this is not a museum or a toy-shop.

For those interested in such things, Wells has two clock faces, an external one with quarter jacks and an internal one that is astronomical (pre-Copernicus) and has automata rather than quarter-jacks. Other wonderful clocks in the area can be found at Wimborne Minster, Sherborne Abbey, Ottery St. Mary and Exeter Cathedral. I am indebted principally to the late R P Howgrave-Graham and the Friends of Wells Cathedral's booklet of 1978.

QUEEN OF TILES

The hunting palace of the Angevin kings is one of Salisbury's jewels although hidden away on private land. It is accessible by the Clarendon path if you are fit enough. Luckily there is a thriving association looking after the monument - The Friends of Clarendon Palace (go to <https://clarendonpalace.org.uk/>) - who are well worth joining especially if you fancy a group weeding exercise. Their latest newsletter includes an interesting article on Elizabeth

Eames MBE (1918 - 2008). My late mother was a specialist in Medieval tiles, mainly working at Chichester Cathedral, and I should think she would have loved to have swapped notes with Elizabeth.

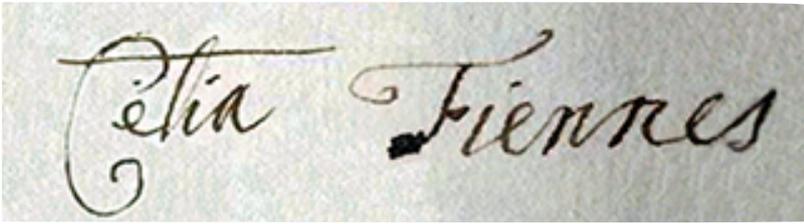
The King's Chapel tiled pavement (below) is now in the British Museum and regarded as one of its 13th century treasures. Mary South writes: *When I first saw the segment my reaction was 'thats a thing of pure mathematical beauty' and I am still lost in wonder at the mind that constructed it in the first place, and Eames who worked it out from fragments and (luckily) a good selection of the green tiles, but fewer patterned tiles. What she didn't realise initially was the significance of the angled ends of those green*



tiles. This controlled the diameter of each green band and therefore, the height of the tiles between each band. It really was an epic piece of work, and although she ultimately rejected her first 1963 effort, she stuck at it until it was right. We do owe her an immense debt. Her final judgement was that the central circular tile should be green and not brown. The original Latin inscription is lost so she compiled what we see with surviving letter tiles, and had coloured replacement ones made to fill the gaps.

CELIA 2

In J&T No. 125 there was a short article on Celia Fiennes, as a result of which, a friend lent me his copy of her *The Journeys* published in 1947 by The Cresset Press. I thought I would just give you a flavour of her style. Here she records a journey from Newton Toney by Salisbury in 1685. *All these houses round the Cathedrall which is esteemed the finest in England in all respects it only lyes low in a watry meadow so that the foundations is in the water made of faggots and timber, yet notwithstanding*



its want of a rising ground to stand on the steeple is seen many miles off the spire being so high it appears to us below as sharpe as a Dagger yet is in the compass on the top as bigg as a carte wheele, its all stone and carved

finely with spires and arches, there are severall doores into the Church, in the body of it stands the pulpet and seates on each side, there are two large Isle's runnes up on either side, the font stands below opposite to the quire that enters with 2 or 3 steps assent from a large Cross Isle that leades to the Cloysters in which is the Chapter House which is very large and supported only by one small stone Pillar in the middle, painted round the walls with figures carved the whole account of the book of Genesis, the Windows are painted very finely much of the history of the Bible: there is as many little Chappels in the Church as months in a yeare as many doores as weekes as many marble pillars as dayes as many windows as houres as m any partions in the windows as minutes in the year, the rooffe of the Church is very lofty and exactly neate in all things though not so large as some other Cathdralls: the top of the Quoire is exactly painted and it lookes as fresh as if but new done though of 300 yeares standing: there is a very good organ and a deske for the reader raised so high even with the organ for the advantage of the voice to be heard, yet the Church is so lofty that the Ecco drowns the intelligableness of the voice. And that is just one sentence!

ST. ALDHELM

Gordon Verity writes: Reference Osmund / Aldhelm J&T No.127 page 5, I went to school as a small boy at Sandle Manor and on Sunday we went in procession to church in Sandleheath. The church was dedicated to St Aldhelm, a bit surprising as Sandleheath is



just in Hampshire, not Wiltshire. Sadly I believe the church is now redundant. Ed: now transformed into a lovely village hall (top left).

Aldhelm (Ealdhelm in Old English) lived from c639 to 709. He was appointed Abbot of Malmesbury Abbey in 675 where he introduced the Benedictine Rule and became Bishop of Sherborne in 705. He was revered as a saint with the feast day of 25th May and was commemorated by a statue (niche 124 see J&T No.126) on Salisbury Cathedral's west front.



On Sunday 5 November 2023, Bishop Stephen gave out 3 St Aldhelm Crosses in a service at Salisbury Cathedral (middle left). In 2005, on the 1300th Anniversary of the consecration of St Aldhelm as the first Bishop in this part of Wessex, Bishop David Stancliffe established a diocesan award, the Cross of St Aldhelm, to give to people whose contribution to the life of the Church and the Diocese goes far beyond the normal call of duty.



The lovely Saxon church of St.Laurence in Bradford-on-Avon (bottom left) was probably founded by St. Aldhelm in 700.