

CROYLAND ABBEY



Official
Guide

£1.50



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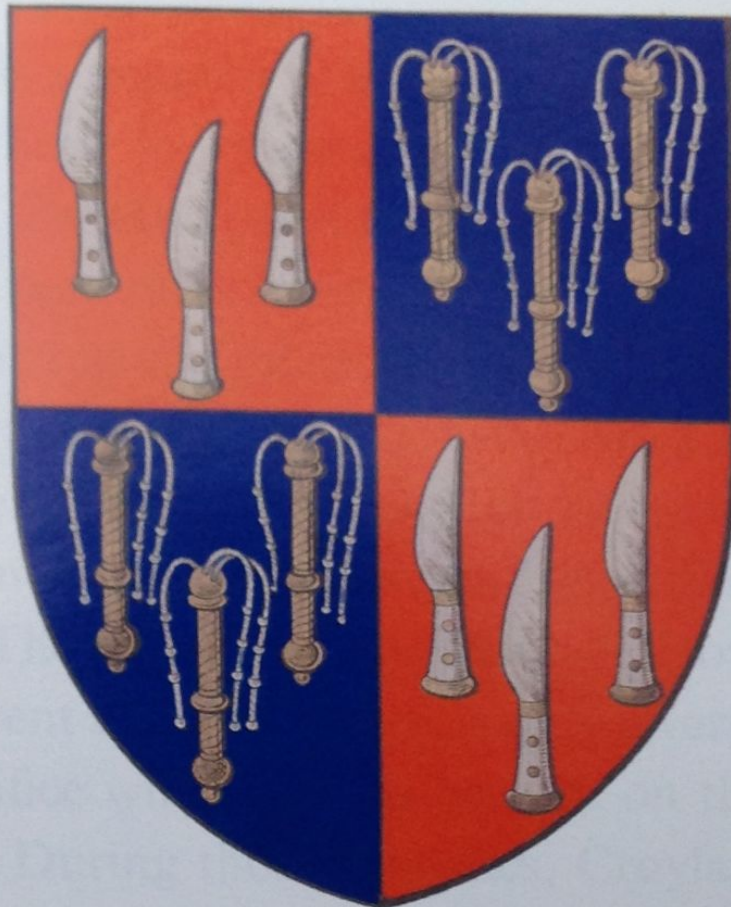
VISITOR'S GUIDE
to
CROYLAND ABBEY
(OUR LADY, ST. BARTHOLOMEW AND ST. GUTHLAC)
AND TRINITY BRIDGE

Compiled by

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Dedicated to friends and Parishioners in Crowland
Proceeds to the maintenance of the Abbey

Revised edition 1999



Croyland Abbey coat of arms.

The whip is that presented to Guthlac by St. Bartholomew, the knife the symbol of St. Bartholomews martyrdom.

INTRODUCTION

As one travels across the flatness of the South Lincolnshire Fens, it is difficult to imagine that the whole area, which is now some of Britain's most fertile and productive areas of arable land, was once entirely marsh and wetland, with a series of isolated and inhospitable islands. Upon one such island, known as Croyland, was established almost thirteen centuries ago, a small church and hermitage which was later to become one of the nation's most important Benedictine monasteries. The present parish church of Crowland, though still magnificent and impressive, is only a very small part of the great edifice which was to be seen on this site in past generations. During those centuries, Croyland Abbey has had many fortunes, both good and bad, and its history makes a fascinating story.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CROYLAND ABBEY

Saint Guthlac

Our story begins at the very end of the 7th century AD. A young man named Guthlac, who was a soldier and the son of a Mercian nobleman called Penwald and his wife Tette, had decided to give up the military life for the habit of a monk. He joined the monastery at Repton in Derbyshire at the age of 24. After two years, he sought greater seclusion and obtained permission to adopt the life of a hermit. With a boatman called Tatwin and a servant by the name of Beccelm, Guthlac sought a desolate spot in the Fens, and landed on the island of Croyland on St. Bartholomew's Day, 699 AD.

The story of Guthlac's life is told by his biographer, the monk Felix, who was almost his contemporary, and is illustrated in the Guthlac Roll, a series of beautifully detailed drawings of the 12th century. The Guthlac Roll is kept in the British Library, but copies of it can be seen on display in the Abbey.



One of the 18 illustrations from Guthlacs Roll
Guthlac being co-ordinated by Hedda, Bishop of Winchester

Guthlac and his companions set up small cells and a simple oratory. Here Guthlac lived until his death in 714 AD. It was a miserable existence. Felix says that Guthlac dressed in skins, and the only nourishment he took was a scrap of barley bread and a small cup of muddy water after sunset! Ague and marsh fever assailed him, and the inhabitants of the island were

rough and barbarous. It is not surprising that he thought of these evils as personal attacks on him by demons. This is how Felix describes them:

“they were ferocious in appearance, terrible in shape, with great heads, long necks, thin faces, yellow complexions, filthy beards, shaggy ears, wild foreheads, fierce eyes, foul mouths, horses’ teeth, throats vomiting flames, twisted jaws, thick lips, strident voices, singed hair, fat cheeks, pigeon breasts, scabby thighs, knotty knees, crooked legs, swollen ankles, splay feet, spreading mouths, raucous cries.”

When, in his distress, they had carried him off to the very jaws of hell, the Apostle Saint Bartholomew, his patron, appeared to him in a vision, rescued him and gave him a scourge or whip to ward off his assailants.



Again from Guthlacs Roll
Guthlac at the mouth of Hell receiving a whip from St. Bartholomew

Guthlac gained a reputation for holiness of life, and was visited by many people in search of spiritual counsel. One who came to him was Ethelbald, a pretender to the throne of Mercia, fleeing from his cousin Coelred. Guthlac prophesied that Ethelbald would become king, and the latter vowed that in that event he would built an abbey on that site in honour of Guthlac. He fulfilled his vow by laying the foundation stone on St. Bartholomew’s Day, 716 AD.

The early days of the Abbey

The story of Croyland Abbey is told in the "Croyland Chronicle", which purports to have been written by the historian-abbot, Ingulphus (1076-1109), and continued by other writers. It is, however, contended that it is, in fact, a fourteenth-century production which contains many inaccuracies and anachronisms. Many medieval monasteries claimed a greater antiquity and continuity than can be proven today, but we should not simply dismiss the Chronicle as a spurious forgery; it is a valuable part of the corporate memory and tradition of the community which lived and worked and worshipped here.

According to the Chronicle, Ethelbald gave extensive lands to the monks of Crowland, which he guaranteed in a Charter. He appointed Kenulph, a monk of Evesham, to be the first Abbot. The first buildings were probably of wood or wattle with thatched roofs. None of this structure still stands, although some of the oak piles used for foundations have been unearthed. It is probably inaccurate to say that the monks could be called "Benedictine" at this stage.

The coming of the Danes

In 870 AD the Danes over-ran the country, and attacked the Abbey. The story is told of some of the monks escaping with the body of St. Guthlac, his psalter and whip, and some jewels and charters, having buried the Abbey's plate in the well in the cloister – it has never yet been found! The Danes murdered the Abbot Theodore and some of the monks as they were celebrating Mass, and in an attempt to discover more treasures, broke open many of the tombs. Being disappointed, the attackers heaped up the bodies and burned them, and the monastery buildings. They then went and destroyed Peterborough Abbey, only to lose the plunder they had gained in the River Nene. It is said that only Turgar, a boy-monk ten years of age, escaped in disguise and joined some of the other monks who had found their way to Thorney. The community barely survived, in a most depressed state, and with very few monks.

The Second Abbey

In 946 AD, the three remaining aged monks were visited in their ruined church by Turketyl, the chancellor of King Edred. He was so impressed by their holiness and hospitality that he became a monk and resolved to join their community. Turketyl was appointed abbot, and under the direction of

the king, embarked upon the restoration of the monastery, building in the Saxon style. The community now lived according to the Rule of St. Benedict. The Chronicle gives details of the lands and possessions granted to the monks, and a description of some aspects of their communal life, and of the buildings in which they lived.

The Great Fire

No part of Turketyl's Abbey now survives, because it was all razed to the ground in the disastrous fire of 1091. A plumber working on the tower had banked down his fire with ashes, but the wind got up during the night and caused the embers to blaze up. Soon all the buildings were alight, and Abbot Ingulphus gives a dramatic eye-witness account of the destruction, not only of the church and monastic buildings, but also of the library, with its valuable charters and manuscripts, and a curious and costly sphere designed to illustrate the working of the solar system. Ingulphus immediately set about reconstruction, but he must have been an indifferent builder, because his work was all levelled to the ground at the next rebuilding.

During the abbacy of Ingulphus, we are told that there were 62 monks belonging to the Abbey, besides over 100 other monks' from other monasteries, each of whom had a stall in the choir, a seat in the refectory, and a bed in the dormitory.

At this time, Hereward the Wake was leading a resistance against the Normans, and was finally said to have been buried at Croyland Abbey with his wife Torfrida, and perhaps his mother, Lady Godiva.

The Third Abbey

In 1109, Joffrid of Orleans became the 15th Abbot, and began a most extensive reconstruction of the church and monastery buildings in the Norman style. In 1113, 28 foundation stones were laid for the new building. A great feast and meal was held for more than 5,000 people within the Abbey precincts, whilst the Abbot of Thorney, and of Croyland and 400 monks were fed in the refectory. In 1118 an earthquake destroyed much of the new work at Croyland, which was yet without a roof. Parts of Joffrid's Abbey can still be seen:

- (a) the fine norman dog-tooth west arch of the central tower;

- (b) the west front of the south aisle and a doorway into the north aisle;
- (c) the eastern halves of the two most easterly arches of the Nave;
- (d) the font, built into the south pier of the east arch of the tower.

The Chronicle states that, during the abbacy of Joffrid, monks were sent from Croyland to Cambridge. They hired a barn and gave lectures, and the number of their students expanded so much that great profit accrued to the Abbey, and eventually the great University came to birth through their efforts. This story may be doubted, but what is certain is that Abbot Lytlington, in 1428, established in Cambridge a Hostel for student-monks of the Benedictine Order, which was later to become Magdalene College. The Heraldic Arms of the Abbey can still be seen in the quadrangle of that College.

In 1143, another fire destroyed a great part of the work begun by Joffrid.

The Fourth Abbey

Successive abbots undertook further rebuildings and alterations; Henry de Longchamps built the West Front from the spring of the arch to the top. Abbots Overton, Upton and Lytlington built in the Perpendicular style. William of Wermington, master mason, whose monument can be seen in the tower, was responsible for the vaulting in the north aisle. The north-west tower was built in 1427.

Life in the monastery

Although the monks individually took a vow of proverty, the monasteries in the Middle Ages became very wealthy corporate bodies, due to the generosity of benefactors. They were major landowners in medieval times. Croyland Abbey owned land in six counties, and had the right of presentation of the priest in fifty parishes. The abbots had seats in Parliament, lived in a manner not very different from feudal lords, and were much concerned with affairs of state, and the temporal duties of large-scale landowners. The Abbey was often involved in legal and financial disputes.

The timetable of a typical day in the monastery gives an idea of the activities of the monks (times varied according to the season of the year):



Master William of Wermington
The Mason

Translation:-

Here lies Master William of Wermington, the Mason, on the soul of whom, God of His Grace gave absolution.

The effigy holds in the right hand a 'T' square, and in the left a pair of compasses.

Sermons in stones, here is one. Always live upon the square, and within thy compass, or means.

This Master Mason is represented wearing a monk's cowl, and a long flowing robe.

This stone was found in the Parvise in 1887. Its length is 6ft. 1½in, 2ft 6in. wide, and 6in. thick.

William of Wermington, also called William of Croyland, Master of the Works in 1427, "built from the ground the new work of the lower church, to which he himself, his friends, and relatives contributed largely".

In 1688, the nave roof, which was painted and gilded, became insecure. It finally collapsed in 1720. In 1743, the south aisle was taken down in order to provide stone for buttresses, and for filling in the arches on the north side of the nave. Thus only the North Aisle could now be used as the Parish Church; it is a mere one-eighth of the size of the monastic church which existed before 1539.

Subsequently, further collapse and deterioration of the ruins took place, and townspeople found the Abbey a useful quarry for the building of their own houses.

Later conservations

No serious effort at conservation was attempted until the late 19th century, when the building was in danger of total collapse. The Rev. T.H. Le Boeuf wrote over 17,000 letters and appeals, and succeeded in raising the £3,000 necessary to save the Abbey from total ruin. The West Front of the Abbey was conserved in 1980-83.

A WALK ROUND THE INTERIOR OF THE PRESENT CHURCH

The Parvise

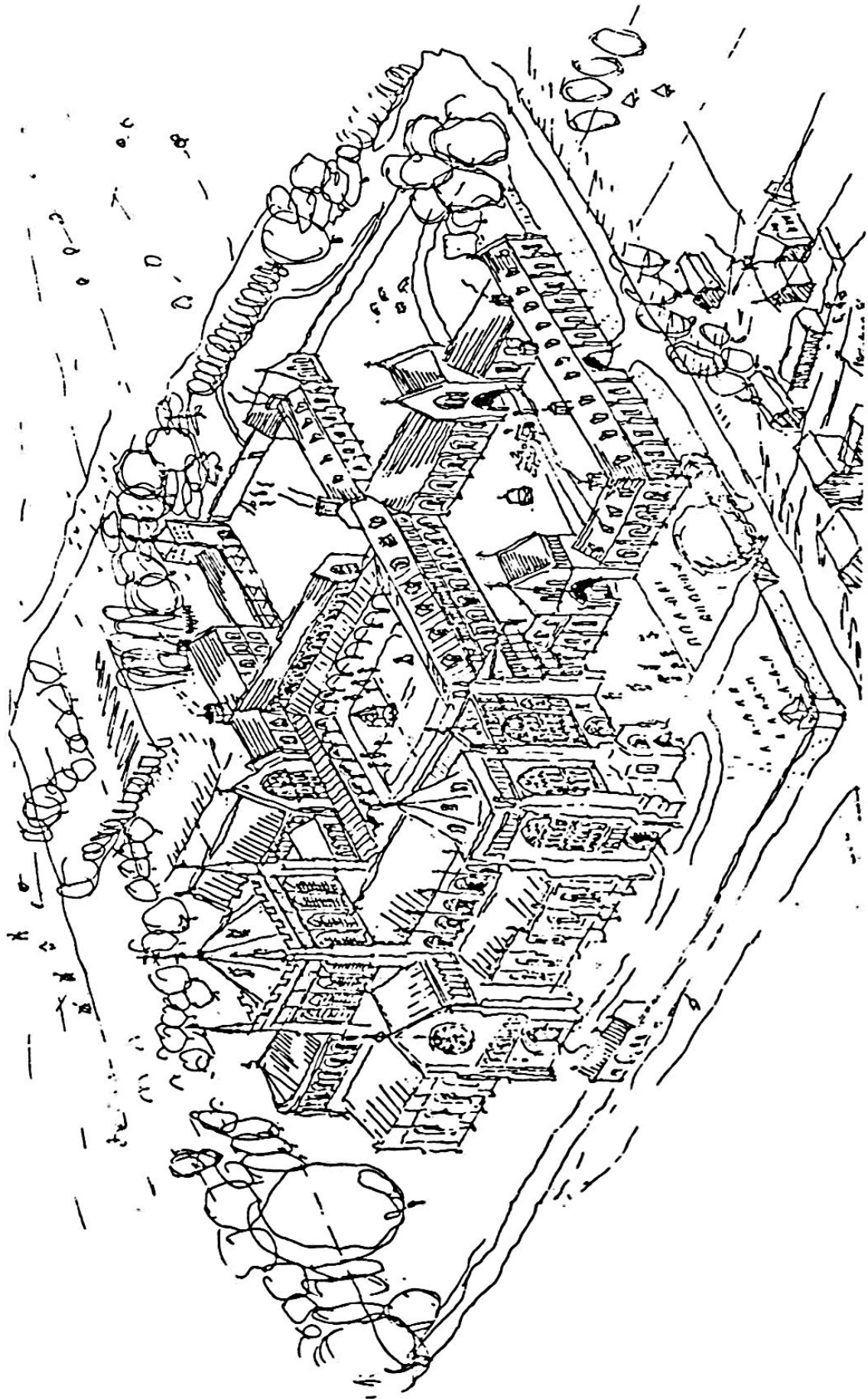
This is the room over the porch. It was provided as a residence for the parish priest, after the Dissolution. The room is cruciform in shape, and has a small window through which one can see the interior of the church. The room is equipped with an altar, and is occasionally used for small services.

Within the Porch

On the right may be seen a small room which the Abbey may have used as a cell to detain those criminals fleeing from justice, but who sought the sanctuary of the Church. Within this room are the remains of Abbot Joffrid's doorway. On the left is the stairway to the Parvise. This may once have been used as a mortuary. In 1732, Christopher Kitchen, a mad man, was chained to a post in the Mortuary, "to prevent any mischief that might ensue from him to the inhabitants".

Within the Tower

The font in the centre of the tower arch is of Perpendicular design, and was formerly situated in the Nave of the complete Church. The font built into the south pier of the tower is Abbot Joffrid's Norman Font. Prior to 1922, this



font was almost hidden by a massive stone screen surmounted by the "Poor Man's Loft"; one entered the church through a doorway in the screen. Similarly, there were galleries over the three chapels on the north side of the church. These were removed in 1922 as unsafe and unsightly. The small incised stone is possibly a Crusader heart casket. Note the large memorial slab to William of Wermington, who was responsible for the vaulting of the North Aisle and the building of the Tower in the 15th century.

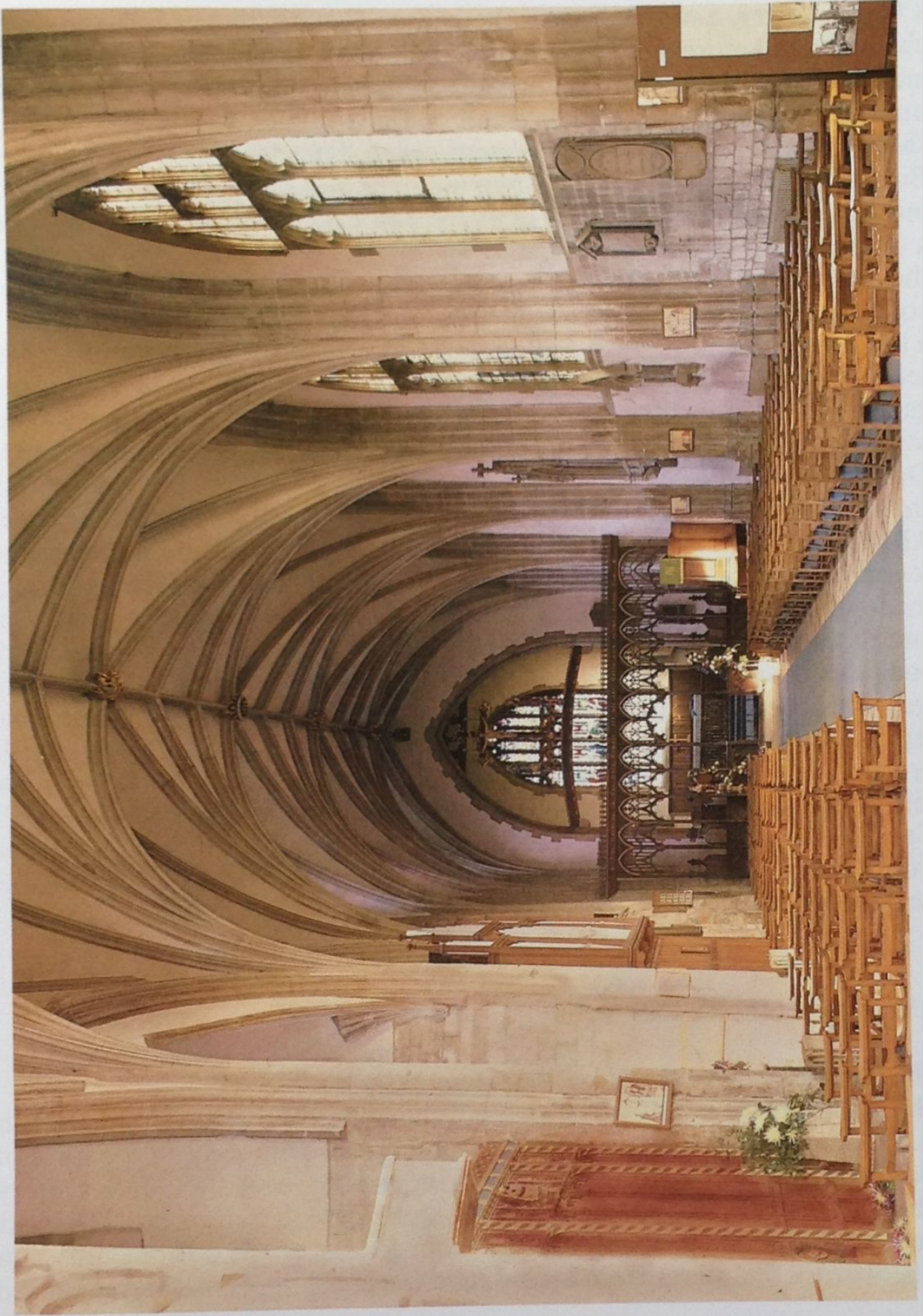
The Bells

The bells of Croyland Abbey are notable in several important respects, Croyland had the first tuned peal in England, and among the first in the world. Abbot Turketyl had a great bell cast, called Guthlac. Egelric (Abbot 975-984) added six more to complete the tuned peal; they were named Bartholomew and Beccelm, Turketyl and Tatwin, Pega and Bega. The bells were hung in the central tower, which was destroyed in the fire of 1091. A separate belfry with two small bells was erected, which perished in the next fire. Another outward belfry was built by Abbot Ralph de Merske, and at one time, there were two sets of bells, one in the outward belfry and one in the central tower. There are now six bells; the tenor bell was re-cast in 1430, it weighs 10 cwt. and bears an abbatical coat of arms and the words "May the bell of John resound through many years (In Multis Annis Resonet Campana Johannis). Jesu mercy Ladi help." The bells have one of the longest draught in the country, the ropes being 90 feet long. Croyland Abbey bells were also among the first to be broadcast in the early days of radio in 1926. They have been broadcast several times since and televised in December 1989 during the programme, "Romance in the Stones", in connection with William Stukeley. The present bell guides were designed by the Rev. Law James and installed by Taylors of Loughborough in 1928 at a cost of £50. The bells were overhauled and changed from plain to ball bearings in 1982. In former years, the Curfew was rung each evening at 8 p.m.

Within the North Aisle (Parish Church)

The fine tierceron vaulting of the roof is to be admired, as are the roof bosses, in an excellent state of preservation. The centre boss represents a pastoral staff over a tun, and is a pun on the name "Overton". The boss above the chancel is a "Foliolate head" – it may be a semi-pagan representation of fertility, or suggest "I am the true vine".

There were three *side chapels* on the north side, originally dedicated to St. Katherine, St. John the Baptist and the Holy Trinity. One is now used as



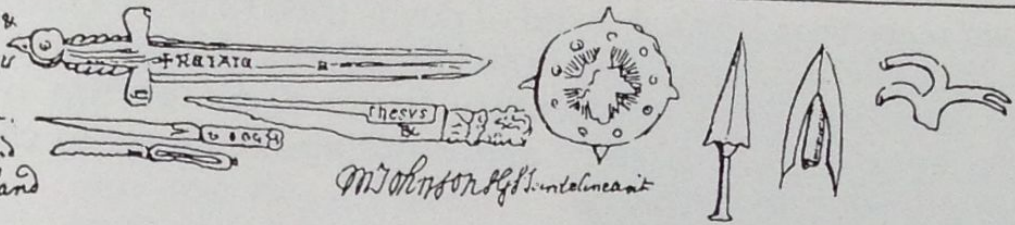
a Choir Vestry, and one houses the *organ*. This organ was formerly in the chancel, and before that, it surmounted the (now removed) west gallery. The annals of the Abbey tell that, in 1460, Abbot Lytlington had a large organ built in the monastery, while a small one was carried from London on the shoulders of two porters. The present organ dates from 1899 and is by Mr Binns of Bramley and contains two manuals and 12 speaking stops. It was moved to its present position in 1926. *The Chancel Screen* once enclosed a chapel in the north transept, and was moved to its present position after the Dissolution. It was thus never a Rood Screen. Traces of medieval colouring and gilding may be seen on it, and the workmanship is ascribed to a brother of the monastery, Simon de Eresby, in 1413. On the screen can be seen a small carving of Guthlac in his boat. In the 19th century a hideous gallery rested upon the screen, overhanging the altar, with seats facing towards the pulpit! The beautiful Rood, on its beam, was erected in 1933. During the Middle Ages, and up to the Civil War, the Abbey was very rich in *stained glass*, but it was all destroyed during the Abbey's turbulent history. All the present glass is 20th century, apart from fragments of medieval glass, found in the roof, which have been inserted in the tracery of the window on the south side. *The Abbey Chest*, standing in the Lady Chapel, is of solid oak and dates from the 15th century. It is fastened with three large Victorian padlocks. The reason the three locks is to ensure the presence when the chest was opened of the two churchwardens and the Rector who each had separate keys. There is a small compartment inside locked with one key, the property of the Rector. It formerly contained the sacramental plate, registers and civil documents. The parish registers are now housed in the County Archives in Lincoln Castle, and run to many volumes. They date from 1639, and on the first page is found the entry: "Oliver Cromwell died September 3rd, 1658" (surrounded by flourishes).

AMONG THE RUINS

The Quatrefoil over the Nave west door

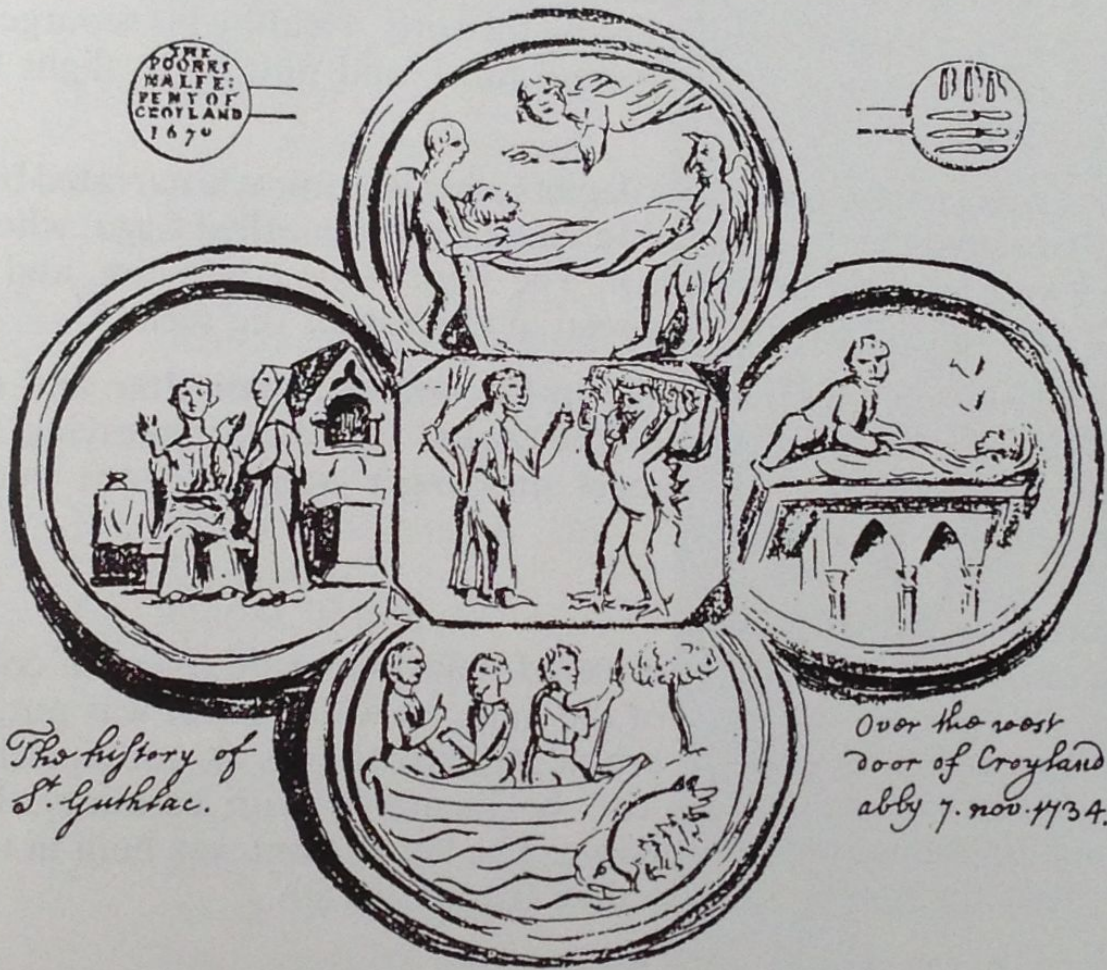
This sculpture (four-leaf-clover shaped) shows in relief scenes from the life of St. Guthlac, and can be seen to correspond closely with some of the scenes in the Guthlac Roll. The work dates from the middle years of the 13th century, when English art reached one of its climaxes of skill and talent. The heads were knocked off, probably by the iconoclasts of the 17th century, but otherwise the sculptures are in a good state, having been cleaned and conserved.

Arms &
 J. W. 1100
 found in
 of Welland
 in Crayland



M. Johnston of St. Dunstons

THE
 POORRES
 MALFE:
 PENY OF
 CEOTLAND
 1670



The history of
 St. Gutlac.

Over the west
 door of Crayland
 abby 7. nov. 1134.

DRAWING OF THE SCULPTURE IN THE QUATREFOIL OVER THE WEST DOOR OF THE RUINED NAVE ILLUSTRATING THE LIFE OF ST. GUTLAC THE HERMIT.

1. *First scene* (bottom lobe). Guthlac's arrival at the island of Croyland. A sow and her farrow can be seen, which is just when the Trojan hero Aeneas found at the site of the future city of Rome, according to Virgil's Aeneid.
2. *Second scene* (top lobe). A band of devils tried to carry Guthlac off to the jaws of hell. His courage and faith earned him the help of his patron, St. Bartholomew, whose fragmentary figure is at the top of the scene, appearing in a blaze of glory and ordering the devils to carry Guthlac peacefully back to Croyland.
3. *Third scene* (centre panel). The 13th century writer Matthew Paris says that Bartholomew gave Guthlac a whip with which to ward off the devils. Here Guthlac is seen walking boldly forward, wielding his scourge (traces of the cords are just visible behind him), and putting to flight two fat scared devils.
4. *Fourth scene* (right lobe). This depicts a healing miracle narrated by Felix. Guthlac cured the illness of a Mercian nobleman called Egga, who lies on a bed with his head on a pillow. The saint stoops over him, and an evil spirit flies off. (A fragment is seen at the top of the scene.)
5. *Fifth scene* (left lobe). Guthlac in his oratory, with altar and chalice, speaking to Prince Ethelbald (the seated figure), prophesying that he would become King. An angel messenger appears from under the canopied arch on the right.

The Statues on the West Front

During conservation, it was discovered that there were traces of colour on some of the statues, and some of the lime, on which paint was put, on the ashlar. This indicates that the whole west front was at one time brightly coloured. Not all the statues can be identified with certainty, but the following list seems at least probable. The West Front was built in the 13th century, but the figures seem to date from the 15th.

- Top Tier*
1. St. Philip, with loaves.
 2. St. James the Greater, with staff and wallet.
 3. St. Thomas, with spear, and hand raised to chin in attitude of doubt.
 4. St. Andrew, with saltire.
 5. St. Peter, with key and book.

6. St. Paul, with sword and book.
 7. & 8. Vacant.
 9. St. James the Less, with fuller's baton.
 10. St. Jude, with halbert and book.
- 2nd Tier*
11. King Ethelbald, Founder and first Royal Patron.
 12. St. Bartholomew, Patron Saint of the Abbey, with a knife, the symbol of his martyrdom.
 13. St. Guthlac, with whip, and a demon at his feet.
 14. King Richard II, Re-founder of the Abbey.
- 3rd Tier*
15. Kenulph, the First Abbot (716), or Turketyl (958), Abbot, and founder of a cell at Spalding.
 16. King William I, the Conqueror.
 17. Queen Matilda.
 18. Abbot Ingulphus, the Historian.
- 4th Tier*
19. Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury (1089).
 20. King Witlaf, who sought refuge at Croyland for four months, and was buried here, AD 825.
 21. Waltheof, Earl of Northumberland, who gave the Barnack stone.
 22. Abbot Joffried, who built the Choir.



Below the Sill Figures are missing from the small niches. The large headless figure on the left is uncertain. It is possible that it represents St. John, the other three figures, now missing, representing the other three Evangelists. Alternatively, it may represent "Synagoga" (the Old Covenant – its finely carved corbel depicts the Garden of Eden), while the statue surmounting the angel corbel on the right is "Ecclesia" (the New Covenant).
It is surmised that the gable, which once was at the top of the West Front, had a statue of Our Lord, which may be the statue now on Trinity Bridge.

In the Old Nave

Passing through the west doorway, a medieval stone slab is found on the inner wall. It has a fine floreated cross, and the words "Pray for the soul of John Tomson". The Croyland Chronicle records that John Tomson gave 10 marks for the building of the Abbey in 1422. Only two complete arches of the south arcade now remain; all the arches, and the clerestory arches above them remained until the end of the 18th century.

The Norman Arch is one of the glories of the Abbey. It has stood for 870 years. It was one of four arches which supported the central tower. When the tower, choir and transepts were demolished, the space between the arch and the stone screen was filled in with stone, apart from a small rectangular window. This space was re-opened in the 19th century. On the east side of the screen can be seen marks of fire, caused in 1796 by an ox-roast on the occasion of the coming of age of the son of the lord of the manor. The Old Nave was used for burial in the 18th and early 19th centuries, and the gravestones were moved when the ground level was lowered in 1929. The earth around the foot of one of the pillars on the south side has been excavated to demonstrate how "slices" of the old Norman pillars were used to make foundations for the new 14th century pillars.

Beyond the East end of the Old Nave was the Crossing, and the Choir, which ended in a semi-circular apse and terminated approximately where the eastern boundary wall of the churchyard now is. The cloisters were situated on the southern side of the Church, surrounded by the dormitories, refectory, Chapter House, abbot's house, workshops, stables, etc. There is now no trace whatsoever of these buildings. There is no possibility of excavation within the churchyard, because the whole area has been used for



burial, but there are doubtless foundations beneath the soil outside the curtelage of the churchyard. The magnificent *shrine of the body of St. Guthlac*, which had twice been translated, was finally over the High Altar of the monastic Church. It was richly ornamented with marble, precious metal and jewels. It was visited by many pilgrims in the Middle Ages, and miracles were reported to have taken place there. There is no trace of it now.

THE ABBOTS OF CROYLAND ABBEY

AD

- 716 Kenulph, Monk of Evesham.
- 794 Patrick.
- 820 Siward.
- 850 Theodore, murdered at the altar by the Danes.
- 870 Godrick I.
- 941 Turketyl, formerly, Chancellor of King Edred. Founder of the Croyland Library.
- 975 Egelric I. Erected tower for first tuned peel of bells in England.
- 984 Egelric II.
- 992 Osketul, "Father of the Poor".
- 1005 Godrick II.
- 1019 Brithmer.
- 1048 Wulgate, ex-abbot of Peakirk.
- 1076 Ingulphus "the Historian".
- 1109 Joffrid of Orleans.
- 1124 Waldeve, deposed 1138.
- 1138 Godfrid, or Geoffrey.
- 1143 Edward.
- 1153 Robert de Redinges (Reading), prior of Lempster.
- 1190 Henry de Longchamps, monk of Evesham, brother of Bishop of Ely and Chancellor.
- 1236 Richard Bardeney, cellarer of this house.
- 1246 Thomas Welles, general and sub-prior.
- 1256 Ralph de Mercke, monk of Croyland.
- 1281 Richard de Croyland, native of the town, resigned 1303.
- 1305 Simon de Luffenham, resigned 1324.
- 1330 Henry de Caswick.
- 1356 Thomas de Bernack.

- 1376 John de Ashby.
 1393 Thomas Overton. Rebuilt the Nave, 1405. During his abbacy, Croyland became a Mitred Abbey.
 1417 Richard de Upton.
 1427 John Lytlington. Founded a hostel for Benedictine students at Cambridge, which became Magdalene College. During his abbacy, Henry VI visited the Abbey in 1460, and Edward IV in 1468.
 1469 John de Wisbech, prior of Freston. Rebuilt chapel of St. Pega at Peakirk. He abolished the ancient custom of giving knives to the populace on the Feast of St. Bartholomew. Some of these knives can be seen in the Museum of the Gentlemen's Society in Spalding.
 1476 Richard de Croyland.
 1483 Lambert Fosdyke.
 1487 Edmund Thorp, formerly prior of this house.
 1497 Philip Everard.
 1503 Robert Deepyng.
 1504 William Dodyng.
 1507 Richard Bardeney.
 1512 John Welles, who upon the Dissolution received a pension for life of £133. 6s. 8d. There were at this time only 31 monks in the Abbey.

Rectors of Croyland Abbey

- 1539 Thomas Crowland, alias Parker.
 1561 Sir Thomas Salkyld.
 1576 Thomas Fairchild.
 1589 Robert Chapman.
 1591 John Williamson.
 1592 Robert Chapman.
 1624 Augustin Bracher.
 1640 William Styles, Warden of Browne's Hospital, Stamford. In 1648, joined the Royalists, and acted as Captain.
 1654 Richard Lee.
 1654 John Gyles.
 1655 Richard Lee, presented by Oliver Cromwell.
 1671 Henry Perne.
 1722 Culpepper Butcher.
 1724 Barnaby Gooche.
 1730 James Benson, blind. He also had a blind sexton, William Hill, who lost his sight while walking in snow, yet could still find every grave in the churchyard. See memorial tablet in the Tower.

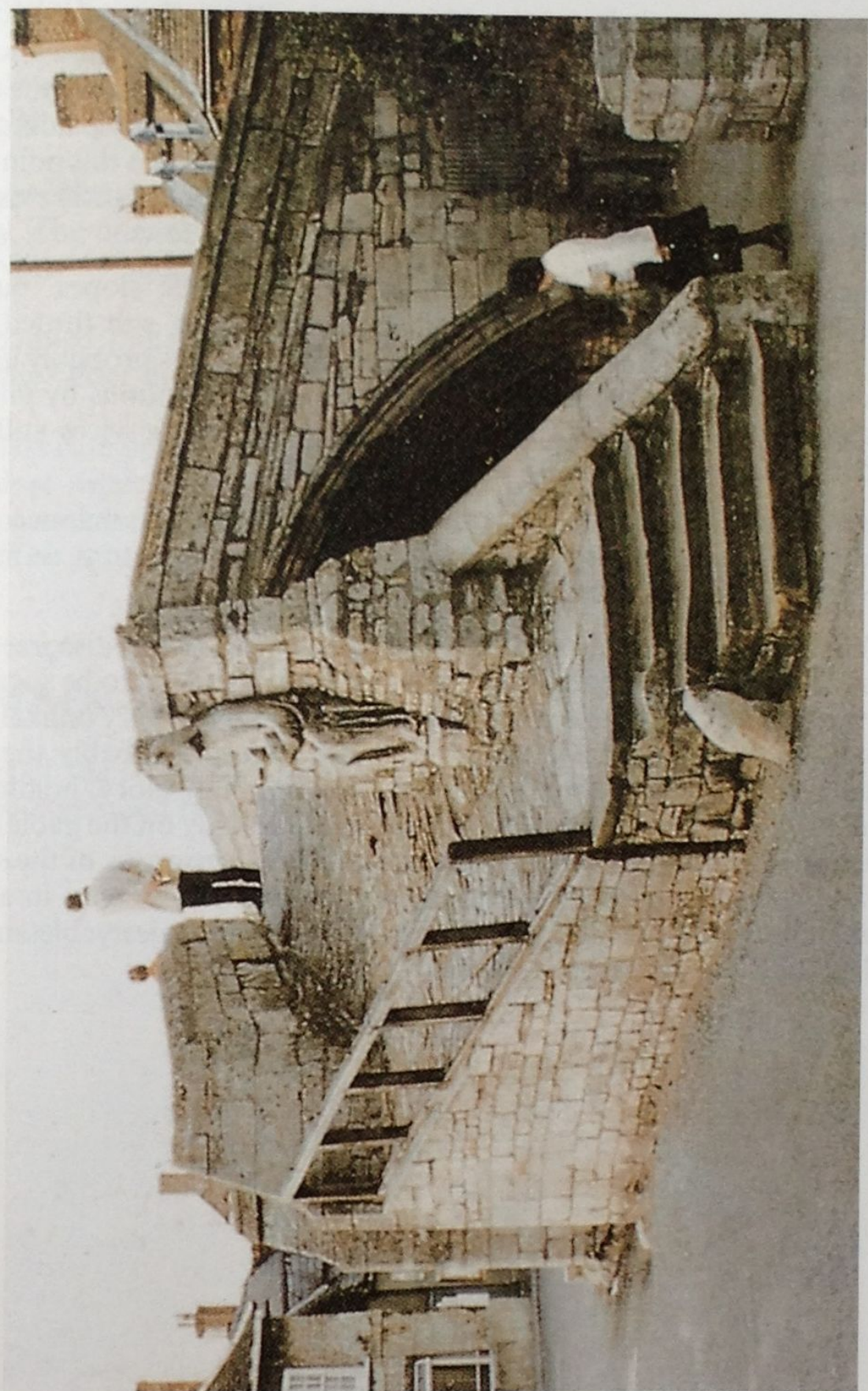
- 1761 William Sandiver, also Curate of Thorney.
- 1762 James Thompson, also Curate of Thorney.
- 1767 Moore Scribo.
- 1808 James Blundell, also Minister of Whaplode Drove.
- 1834 John Bates.
- 1884 Thomas Henry Le Boeuf, formerly Curate of Croyland. Much of the Abbey restored and saved from ruin. Tower underpinned, New chancel built, new organ.
- 1906 Arthur Henry Morris. Abbey Institute built.
- 1913 Sidney Charles Calver.
- 1922 Hubert Larken. Suggested lowering of Abbey floor.
- 1925 George Daniel Kenworthy Clowes. East window and north window.
- 1936 Ernest Alexander Barrett.
- 1941 Edward Arden.
- 1946 Howard Vernon Green.
- 1954 Charles Ivor Lee.
- 1964 Francis Bert Cutler.
- 1981 Stanley Swift. Conservation of West Front completed.
- 1987 John Allen Crust.
- 1998 Dr Francis Gordon-Kerr.

TRINITY BRIDGE

The second of Crowland's ancient Monuments is the Triangular (or Trinity) Bridge, which stands in the centre of the town, at the junction of North, South, East and West Streets. It is a very curious structure, and said to be unique.

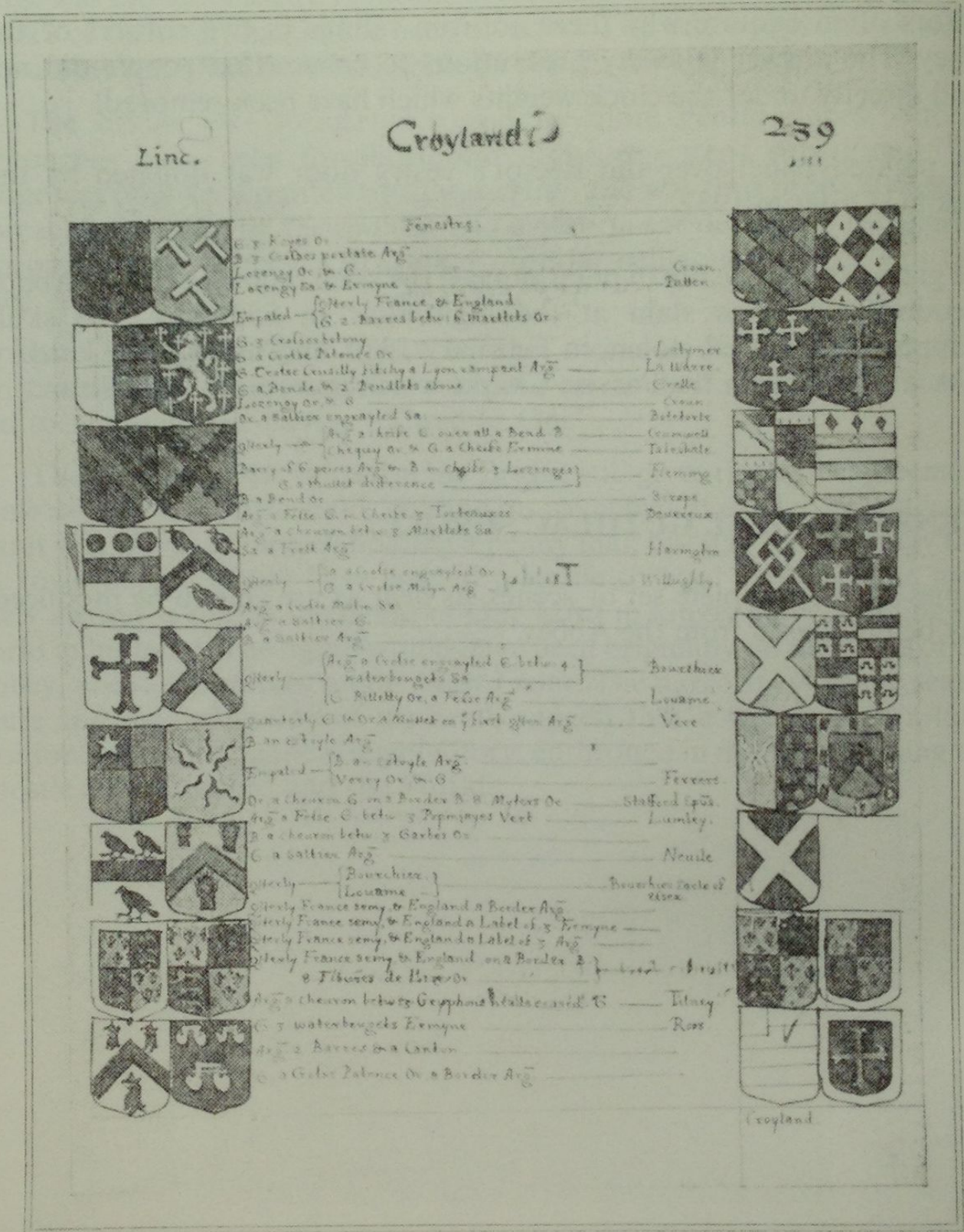
The present bridge was built between 1360 and 1390. It is in the late Decorated or early transitional style. It appears, however, that this bridge replaced an earlier one of the same style, but constructed of timber. The Charter of King Ethelbald (AD 716) refers to the "Bridge of Croyland", and King Edred's Charter (AD 943) speaks of the "triangular bridge of Croyland" as a means of measuring the boundaries of the land in the royal gift.

The bridge stands on dry land, and may appear to the visitor to serve no useful purpose. However, it should be remembered that, prior to the draining of the Fens, Crowland was a group of islands, and its main "streets" were waterways. It was at this point that the River Welland divided



A SCENE FROM ST. GUTHLAC SCROLL

Copies of the complete set of scenes, as near as are able to be produced may be purchased from the Abbey.



COATS OF ARMS

Research by Derek Balding

COATS OF ARMS AS DEPICTED IN THE WINDOWS OF CROYLAND ABBEY BEFORE THE GREAT REBELLION

Fenestre

1	G. 3 Keyes Or	
2	B. 3 Crosses portate Arg.	
3	Lozengy Or, & G.	
4	Lozengy Sa. & Ermyne	Croun
5	Empaled } Q/terly France, & England.	Patten
		G.2. Barres betw. 6. Martlets Or.
6	G.3. Crosses botony	
7	G. a Crosse Patonce Or	Latymer
8	G. Crosse Crusilly fitchy a Lyon rampant Arg.	La Warre
9	G. a Bende, & 2 Bendlets above	Grelle
10	Lozengy Or, & G.	Croun
11	Or, a Saltier engrayled Sa.	Botetorte
12	Q/terly } Arg. a Cheife G. overall a Bend B	Crumwell
		Chequy Or, & G. a Cheife Ermine
13	Barry of 6 pieces Arg & B. in Cheife. 3 Lozenges G. a Mullet difference	Tateshale
14	B a Bend Or	Fleming
15	Arg. a Fesse G. in Cheife. 3. Torteauxes	Scrope
16	Arg. a Chevron betw. 3. Martlets Sa:	Deureux
17	Sa. a Frett Arg	Harington
18	Q/terly } Sa. a Crosse engrayled Or	Willughby
		G. a Crosse Molyn Arg.
19	Arg. a Crosse Molim Sa.	
20	Arg. a Saltier, G.	
21	B. a Saltier Arg	
22	Q/terly } Arg. a Crosse engrayled. G. betw 4 waterbougets Sa.	Bourthier
		G. Billetty Or, a Fesse Arg
23	Quarterly G. & Or, a Mullet on y first q/ter Arg.	Vere
24	B. an Estoyle Arg.	
25	Empaled } B. an Estoyle Arg.	
		Verry Or, & G.
26	Or, a Chevron G. on a Border B. 8. Myters Or	Ferrers
27	Arg a Fesse G. betw 3 Popinjays Vert	Stafford Epus
28	B a Chevron betw 3. Garbes Or	Lumley
29	G. a Saltier Arg.	Neuile
30	Q/terly } Bouchier	Bouchier Earle
		Lousine ?
		of Essex

- 31 Q/terly France semy & England a Border Arg.
 32 Q/terly France semy & England a Label of 3. Ermyne
 33 Q/terly France semy, & England a Label of 3. Arg.
 34 Q/terly France semy, & England, on a Border, B.
 8 Fleures de L'ise Or
 35 Arg. a Chevron betw 3 Gryphons Heads erased, G. Tilney
 36 G. 3. waterbougets Ermyne Roos
 37 Arg. 2. Barres & a Canton
 38 G. a Crosse Patonce Or, a Border Arg.

COATS OF ARMS – CROYLAND ABBEY

	Interpretation	Row	Number
1	Red background, three keys in gold. (The illustration appears plain black, but in others where gold is depicted it stands out clearly. Possibly the illustration was not completed.)	1	1
2	Blue background, three crosses potent (like a set-square) in silver.	1	2
3	Diamond shapes, alternately coloured gold and red.	1	3
4	Diamond shapes, alternately coloured black and ermine. (Ermine fur was often used to adorn Coats of Arms, and was depicted in illustrations as black 'tails' on white.)	1	4
5	Shielf is divided down the centre:- Left side – should show the arms of France and England, one above the other, but the illustration is left blank. Right side – Red background with two horizontal bars between six swallows in gold. (The bars can just be seen but not the swallows. The illustration may again be incomplete.)	2	1
6	Red background, three crosses botony (the ends are split in three and rounded – like buds on a stem). (N.B. We are not told what colour are the crosses, but to judge from the brightness it is probably silver. This is out of sequence.)	2	3
7	Red background, one cross patonce (with floriated ends) in gold.	2	4
8	Red background, with a field of crosses (cut to a point) and a lion erect, in silver. (N.B. This should have been in 6th place.)	2	2
9	Red background, divided in two diagonally, with two narrow stripes (diagonally) in top half. (We are not told the colour of the stripes, possibly gold.)	3	1
10	Diamond shapes, alternately coloured gold and red. (The same as number 3 above, and as it is not illustrated again it appears to have been written in by error.)		
11	Gold background, a diagonal cross with wavy edges in black.	3	2

		Row	Number
12	Shield is quartered with top left and bottom right being the same, and bottom left and top right the same:– T.L./B.R. Silver background with top section in red, and a bar diagonally over everything in blue. (The bar should be described as 'engrayled', as it has wavy edges.) T.R./B.L. Chequered, alternate squares in gold and red, and the top section in ermine.	3	2
13	Six horizontal stripes, alternately silver and blue. In the top section – three diamonds in red. Immediately below the centre diamond is a small five-pointed star. (The star is what is known as a Mark of Cadency, and would indicate that the Arms belonged to the third son of the family.)	3	4
14	Shield divided diagonally from the top left and coloured alternately blue and gold. (This is another one which is described but not illustrated.)		
15	Silver background with a red horizontal stripe across the centre and three	4	1
16	Silver background with a chevron between three swallows in black.	4	2
17	Black background with a fret (describes the design) in silver.	4	3
18	Shield is quartered with the top left and bottom right being the same, and the bottom left and top right the same:– T.L./B.R. Black background with a gold cross with wavy edges. B.L./T.R. Red background with a silver cross with ends split in two and rounded.	4	4
19	Silver background with a cross (with ends split in two and rounded) in black.	5	1
20	Silver background with a diagonal cross in red.	5	2
21	Blue background with a diagonal cross in silver.	5	3
22	Shield is quartered with opposite corners the same:– T.L./B.R. Silver background with a red cross with wavy edges, between four waterbougets (yoke for carrying leather bottles) in black. B.L./T.R. Red background with upright rectangles in gold and a wide horizontal stripe in silver.	5	4
23	Quartered shield, with alternate quarters in red and gold, and a small star in the first quarter (sign of the third son).	6	1
24	Blue background with a silver star.	6	2
25	Shield in divided in half vertically:– L.H. Blue background with a silver star. R.H. All-over pattern (similar to rows of bells) in alternate gold and red).	6	3
26	Gold background, a red chevron, and a blue border which contains eight mitres, in gold.	6	4
27	Silver background with a red horizontal stripe in the centre between three green parrots.	7	1

	Row	Number
28 Blue background with a chevron between three sheaves of wheat in gold.	7	2
29 Red background with a silver diagonal cross.	7	3
30 A quartered shield. (There is no description of the designs, but two family names are quoted which seems to indicate that it would be their respective family crests. Possibly it was too intricate for him to illustrate. There is no shield displayed in row 7 – space 4.)		
31 to 34 All four of these shields are quartered with alternate designs of: an all-over pattern of French Fleur-de-Lys. English coat of Arms (presumably the Royal Family).		
Each shield is then differenced as follows:–		
31 All enclosed in a silver border.	8	1
32 Above the top England shield is a label () ermine.	8	2
33 Above the top England shield is a label in silver.	8	3
34 All enclosed in a blue border which contains 8 fleur-de-lys in gold.	8	4
35 Silver background with a chevron between three griffins' heads (with jagged edges) in red.	9	1
36 Red background with three waterbougets (see 22) in ermine.	9	2
37 Silver background with two thick stripes across and a small square in the top left hand corner. (This is only illustrated in outline, and does not appear to have been finished.)	9	3
38 Red background with a gold cross (ends split into three) all enclosed in a silver border.	9	4

POSTSCRIPT

It has only been possible, within this little booklet, to relate a small part of the story of Croyland Abbey over 13 centuries, and to give a brief explanation of what can be seen. However, the writer hopes that it will go some way towards giving the visitor an insight into the life and times of this fascinating Church.

Finally, it should be remembered that Croyland Abbey is not just an Ancient Monument, not just a museum piece. It is a spiritual focal point for the town, a sign of God's continuing presence among his people, a place open for prayer, and the place of worship for today's Anglican congregation.

It is hoped that those who have enjoyed their visit may wish to make a contribution, which will help to maintain this Abbey Church for this and future generations.

“How lovely is your dwelling-place: O Lord God of hosts!
My soul has a desire and longing to enter the courts of the Lord:
My heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.” (Psalm 84)

