



WOODWORK EXAMPLES

Introduction to Woodwork

This aspect of church interiors can be particularly rewarding because it is little documented in most parish churches and their guidebooks, and there is a great range of details to explore. It is commonplace to find that specific mouldings and decorative carving have been adopted and repeated by successive woodworkers making fittings at a site; but rare to discover who the designers or craftsmen actually were. Sometimes they are recorded in Terriers or the Churchwarden's book. Think Gothic architecture, the furniture was designed by architects and the craftsmanship is good. The important point is to understand what the item is and how it is put together.

Benches, doors (with their metal door furniture) and roof structures must be recorded at each site and guidance can be had from 'Inside Churches', and 'Recording a Church; An Illustrated Glossary' but sometimes more help is needed which these samples will give.

DOORS

Doors can either be recorded singly in clockwise order around the church or they may be grouped together and given one number. If the latter, the doors should still be recorded in a clockwise number round the church and given numbers 30X A,B,C etc.

This is an example of a door with a sketch to guide you.

314A DOOR (For doorway see Stonework 204A) Phs S Aisle / Exterior

1 Interior

A round-headed door of four planks reinforced with portcullis framing. The wooden lock-box has been inserted on the E side beneath the central cross piece with the corresponding keep on the E jamb. The door closes against the inner face of the doorway, being approximately 8cm wider than the arch.

Furniture

The wrap-round pin-hung strap hinges are attached to the cross piece of the frame and decorated with stamped chevrons. A 19th c latch with knob replaces a former Suffolk latch of which traces remain. There are two iron U-shaped rests for the original bar attached to the central cross piece.

Exterior

Round-headed with four broad planks with beaded joints.

Furniture

A pair of wrought iron chevron patterned hinges have triple split ends with trefoil terminals and branching scrolls with rosette and scalloped leaf terminals. The cast iron drop handle on a cruciform back plate with keyhole below is of a later date.

- 2 Oak, iron
- 3 13th c (ref. a) and 19th c
- 4 h. 260 x w. 84 x d. 12cm
- 5-6 -



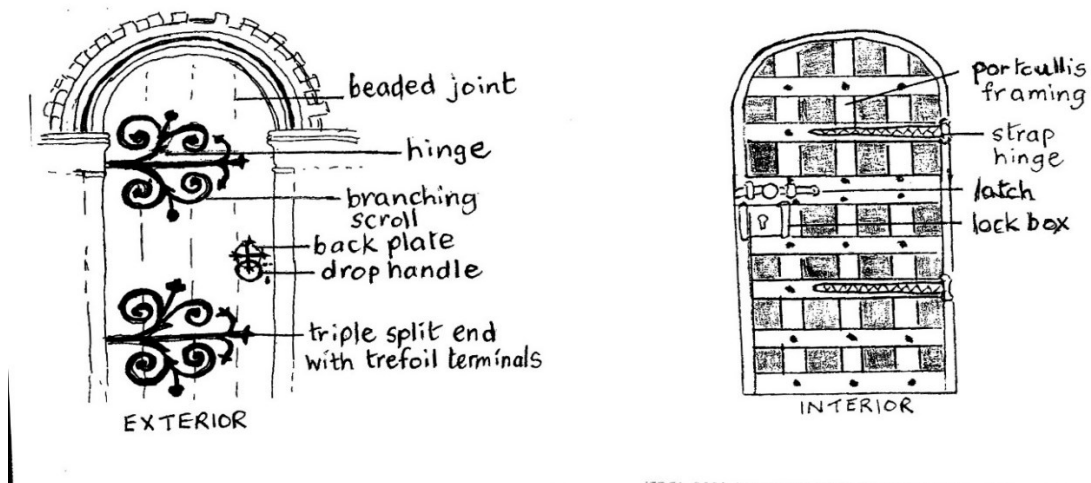
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- 7 The hinges are thought to be of local workmanship (ref a).
- 8-9 -
- 10 a) Church Guide

314A



314A

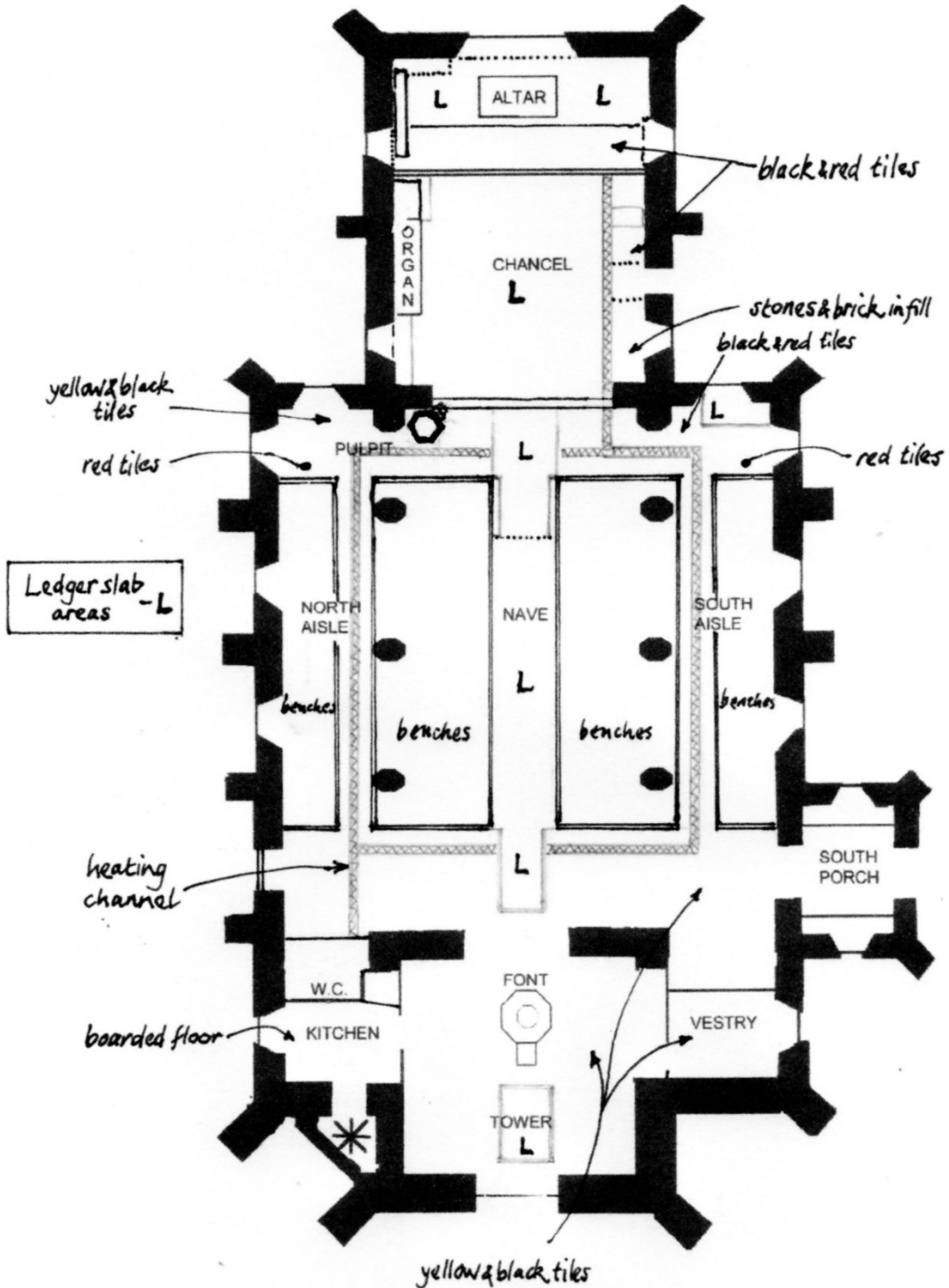




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BENCHES AND CHAIRS

It is essential to make a seating plan and you may also need a plan to identify the position of poppyheads and corbels. Here is an example (including a floor plan).





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Glastonbury Chairs

Glastonbury chairs are widespread in Britain, and all originate in style from one in the Bishop's Palace at Wells, Somerset, illustrated in *Specimens of Ancient Furniture* by Henry Shaw, publ.1833. (*The Glastonbury Chair*, article by Gabriel Olive for Regional Furniture Society.

[www.regionalfurnituresociety.files.wordpress.com], following *Regional Furniture* vol.VII, 1994.)

It is a chair with a panel back and X-shaped legs joined by a cross bar. The shaped arms from the seat to the back are both held by wooden pins.

The only description required beyond 'Glastonbury', is the rake of the back, shape of the arms and decoration, which may be on both the inside and rear of the back and arms, the wood, measurement and date.

Examples below:

303 GLASTONBURY CHAIRS (2) Phs CHANCEL

A A plain example, usually placed on the S side.

1 This Glastonbury chair is constructed to the standard pattern; it has a plain seat board, and a 20 degree raked backboard, framed around 4 narrow vertical boards. The back upper rail has horizontal reeded decoration, and the edges of all timbers – arms, legs, seat, and back stiles – are incised with a double line. Tapestry cushion (**406B**) on seat.

2 Oak

3 19th c

4 h. 80 x w. 59 x d. 60cm o/a (seat d. 40cm)

5-6 -

7 see **303B**

8-10 -

B An elaborately carved and dated example, usually placed on the N side.

1 A Glastonbury chair constructed to the standard pattern; it has a recessed panel seat board (filled with glued carpet), and a 15 degree raked backboard. The back upper rail has a continuous blind recessed scooped frieze with fleur-de-lys tops, and the seat back is entirely filled with lozenge stylised flowerhead decoration. The arms have relatively deep swelling elbows, and are carved on the outer face, with oak leaves and acorns on the L side, and vine leaves with grapes on the R side. The edges of the seat rails are decorated with leaves and grapes, the R side including the date 1858 / intertwined. The outer faces of the legs are filled with repeated incised squares of stylised flowerhead. The upper edges of the seat, legs and side rails of the backboard are all incised in a recessed twin-line moulding. Loose cushion on seat.

2 Oak

3 1858

4 h. 86 x w. 59 x d. 57cm o/a (at feet) (seat d. 41cm)

5-6 Possibly Rev James Ambrose Ogle



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- 7 The date carved on chair B closely follows the arrival in 1857 of the Rev. J.A Ogle, who was described as a craftsman and during a long ministry here he made many furnishings in timber, and mural painting. It is notable that the stylised flower-head lozenges on this chair back are very similar to those in the pulpit panels which Ogle definitely made; consequently this item was potentially also made by him.

8-10 -



303A



303B

An example of a 'Bishop's Chair':

301 STALL or BISHOP'S CHAIR Ph SANCTUARY

- 1 A small desk set, placed on the altar step close to the N wall. Church inventories refer to this as the "Bishop's Chair".
This set is mounted on a h. 10cm boarded plinth. The seat style is very similar to the sets of benches in the nave. The desk, on a 10 degree slope between plank uprights, has a recessed and largely open front of two sept-foiled ogee arches; the spandrels are pierced as two circles each enclosing a quatrefoil.
- 2 Oak
3 Likely to be 3rd ¼ 19th c by appearance
4 h. 96 (incl. plinth) x w. 85 x d.118cm
5-10 -



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The Altar or Communion Table:

3XX COMMUNION TABLE Phs NAVE

- 1 Placed centrally in the nave just below the chancel step; referred to in the church's lists as Our Lord's Table.

Made of two broad boards with rounded edges. On each side is a narrow footboard for two plain slab 'legs' (each 18 x 6cm in section), with a bevelled header piece screwed underneath across the boards.

Centrally on the table top is a worn brass plaque (l. 17.7 x w. 9.8cm), with 4 corner screws, inscribed in plain capitals with most initial letters raised:

THIS ALTAR, TOGETHER WITH THE SIDE TABLE,
PRAYER DESK, CROSS, KNEELER, AND RAIL
WERE MADE FROM WOOD SALVAGED FROM AN OLD PEW
BY
SIDNEY SMITH
ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER OF SEDGEFORD CHURCH
1965 – 1971 /

Underneath is a series of small jointing shapes cut into the boards in a regular pattern. There is an inscribed S iiiii, / and written C.S.SMITH / JUNE 1969 /

- 2 Oak, brass
3 1969
4 h. 90 x l. 183 x w. 67cm
5-6 C.S. Smith
7 The inscribed shapes underneath would be reflecting joints in the former assembly as part of a bench. Not all the items mentioned on the donation plaque can still be identified at the church.
8-10 -



308 table and plaque



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322 PRAYER DESK Phs N AISLE

- 1 A standard style of prie dieu or prayer desk, stored beside the N aisle altar.
A desk and kneeler board are mounted on bevel-edged footrails. The 5 degree sloping top has a rear edge upstand, and the plank sides are waisted, swelling to the top support, and for the bottom feet created by a trefoil cut out. The apron is formed as a shallow arch with pierced spandrels and pierced trefoil head tracery with cusps and corbels. The lower stretcher has an embattled upper edge, and is tenon-jointed through the sides, with horizontal pegs.
On the stretcher bar is a brass memorial plaque (h. 3.5 x w. 7.5cm) incised in plain caps (initial letters raised slightly) and cursive l/c; there are decorative lines beside the DD / of the first line, and separating the second and third lines of text.
- 2 Oak
- 3 1906
- 4 h. 80 x w. 51 x d. 58cm
- 5-6 -
- 7 This desk seems to be specified for communicants use as part of the 1932 Memorial Chapel furniture (ref a).
- 8 -
- 9 D.D. / F.J. TUCK. VICAR / *in gratiam memoriam* / *Norvic Convent 1906* /
- 10 a) Church Terrier list for 1933



322 memorial plaque

322



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3XX BISHOP'S CHAIR

Ph

VESTRY

1 Elaborately carved, high-backed carver chair. Scroll top with central motif of corn sheaves. The back is divided into two panels: The upper is narrow with lunette designs, above two scalloped extended lozenges below. The larger lower panel contains an amphora with a single flower and trailing foliage in a narrow moulded frame. Beneath and to the sides of this panel is a frame with a triangular moulding. The arms have a similar moulding within a narrow band each side, curve forward over the front frame and are supported on a short turned section. The seat is splayed and has a semi-circular moulding over a frieze similar to that found in the top section of the chair back. Back legs: square cut. Front legs: A high stretcher between the front legs is inserted into a square block between the seat and the lower stretcher; each stretcher is turned and moulded and inserted into a square block. The lower stretcher joining the side rails.

2 Oak

3 Mid 19th c

4 h. 122 x w. 60 x d. 55cm

5-10 -

