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**Excavations at Temple Church, Bristol: a report on the
excavations by Andrew Saunders, 1960.**

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By STEWART BROWN

INTRODUCTION

The Site (Fig. 1)

The remains of Temple Church stand on Temple Street off Victoria Street in the city centre of Bristol (OS Nat. Grid ST 59327273). This part of the city was formerly marshland lying across the river Avon from the late Saxon and Norman town and within the manor of Bedminster. Settlement of the marshland had begun by the early 12th century, and substantial quays had been built alongside the river by the middle of that century (Good 1990/91, 29–32; Nicholson and Hillam 1987, 141). Development of the port town continued rapidly throughout the 13th century, and with the construction of the Portwall in the mid 13th century the former marsh, by then a thriving industrial suburb, was brought within the town's defences (Cronne 1946, 37–39; Fig. 1A).

The church is a Scheduled Monument (SM 20041). Its standing remains comprise a Grade II* listed building. The site is owned by the Bristol Diocesan Board of Finance and managed by English Heritage under a Guardianship agreement dating from 1958.

The local geology comprises estuarine alluvium overlying Redcliffe Sandstone (British Geological Survey Map, Sheet 264, Bristol).

The Project

In 1960 thirteen exploratory trenches were opened across the interior of the church by the Ministry of Works' direct labour force under the direction of Andrew Saunders. The objective of the exercise was limited to establishing the extent of the former 12th-century church with a view to marking out its plan at ground surface level for display purposes. The excavations uncovered sufficient of the buried foundations to reconstruct a reasonably complete plan which is now represented on site in stone.

There is no record of finds having been recovered, apart from one complete floor tile which was retrieved from the vestiges of a 15th-century tiled pavement close to the south wall of the nave. Building stone types were described in general terms only. The geology and source of stone were not identified. Sections were recorded, providing some stratigraphic relationships, although not every deposit and feature was described in full. No levels were taken. The excavation archive, although incomplete, includes some original written records, a collection of black and white photographs, a general plan of the excavations drawn up in 1966, and an excavation archive report written by Andrew Saunders in 1993.

The present report results from a review by English Heritage of previously unpublished work on Temple Church, and forms part of a Conservation Plan which aims to secure the future of the

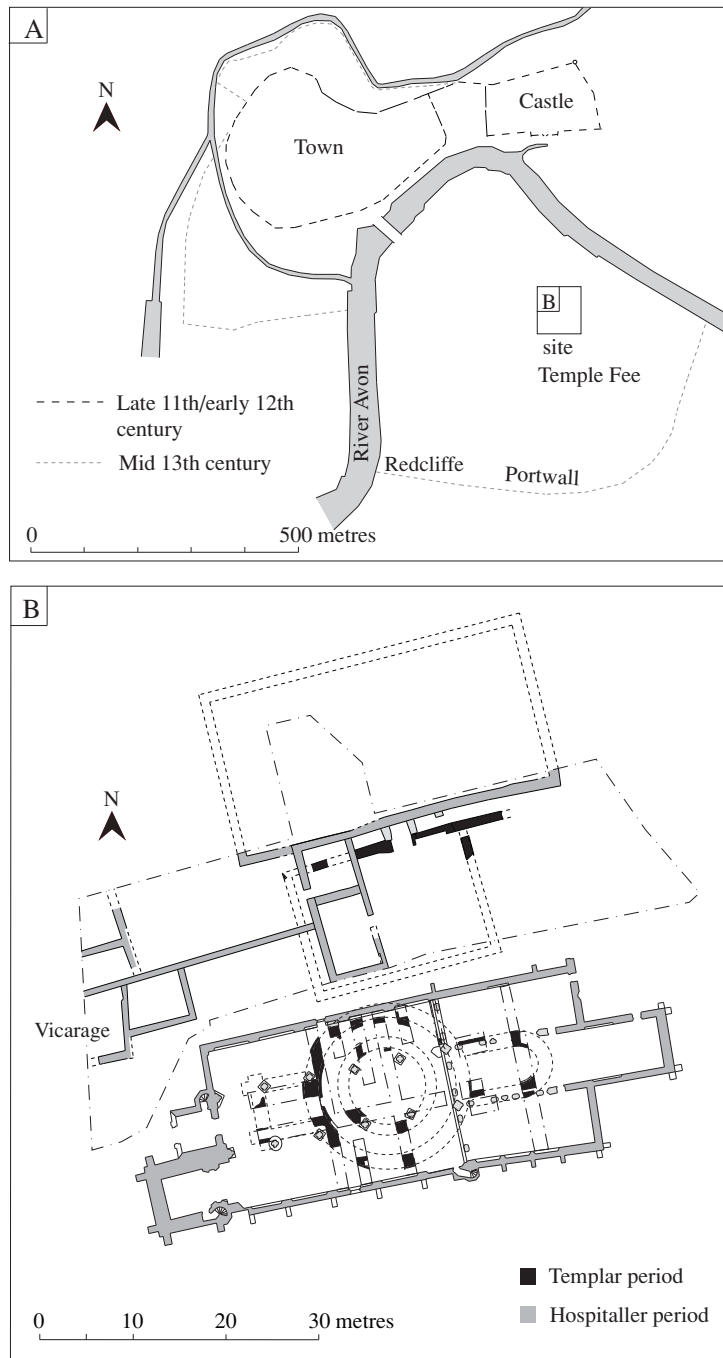


Fig. 1. A: Location of the site of the Templar church in relation to the Norman town of Bristol; B: Plan of the church and the 1971 excavations to the north on the site of the Templar preceptory.

monument. The report has been compiled largely from the excavation archive. It also considers material drawn from subsequent related archaeological investigations conducted at and by the site. These comprise an excavation in 1971 by G.L. Good on the site of the Templar preceptory and later Hospitaller establishment to the north of the church (Good 1992); an historical and archaeological assessment of the standing fabric by Keystone Historic Buildings Consultants (Thorp 1995); and building recording by Wessex Archaeology which was targeted on specific areas affected by repair works (Wessex Archaeology 2000). The principal source of background historical information is a report by Richard Gem entitled 'The Church of Holy Cross Temple, Bristol' (Gem 1981). All unpublished reports are lodged in the site archive held by English Heritage.

Temple Church was one of the larger churches in Bristol and its remains show considerable architectural merit. This report mentions the various architectural styles present within the standing fabric for general dating purposes only. A more detailed discussion of its architecture and importance in the context of Bristol churches awaits future study.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Knights Templar and the Hospitallers

The monastic order known as the Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon, or Knights Templar, was one of a number of military orders founded during the Crusades in order to take control of the Holy Land and protect pilgrims travelling to Jerusalem. The Templars were founded in 1118 and provided one of the best fighting forces of the Crusades. The Order of the Hospital of St John, or the Hospitallers, was founded *c.*1070, initially to care for poor and sick pilgrims, but by the mid 12th century it had taken on military duties as well. The Templars and Hospitallers were amongst the most successful of the military orders, being recognized and endorsed by the Pope, and supported in their actions by the Christian faithful across Europe, who donated land and money to their cause.

The two orders combined a monastic and military way of life, including both ordained members and laymen. They built up powerful, economic networks across the whole of Christendom, each linguistic area forming a separate province governed by its own Master (Templars) or Prior (Hospitallers). They arrived in England about 1128, the Templars in particular benefiting from an immediate surge of popularity for their active role in the Holy Land. The Hospitallers were initially administered from France and were slower to acquire momentum in this country. Both orders established foundations across the British Isles, the most common type of which was known as a preceptory or commandery. Preceptories were enclosed conventual precincts set within sizable estates which provided regular income. They were managed by a preceptor, or professed knight of the Order. 'Commandery' is effectively an equivalent term used more frequently by the Hospitallers. Preceptories and commanderies were generally walled enclosures containing living quarters, a church and a cemetery. Their layout resembled that of a secular manor, with the principal buildings set around one or more open spaces, but lacked the formal claustral arrangement of a monastic plan (Sloane and Malcolm 2004, 3).

The Templars were suppressed in England in 1308. Many of their estates, including that at Bristol, were transferred to the Hospitallers in 1313 (Cronne 1946, 32). The Hospitaller Order lost its English properties in 1540 during the Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII.

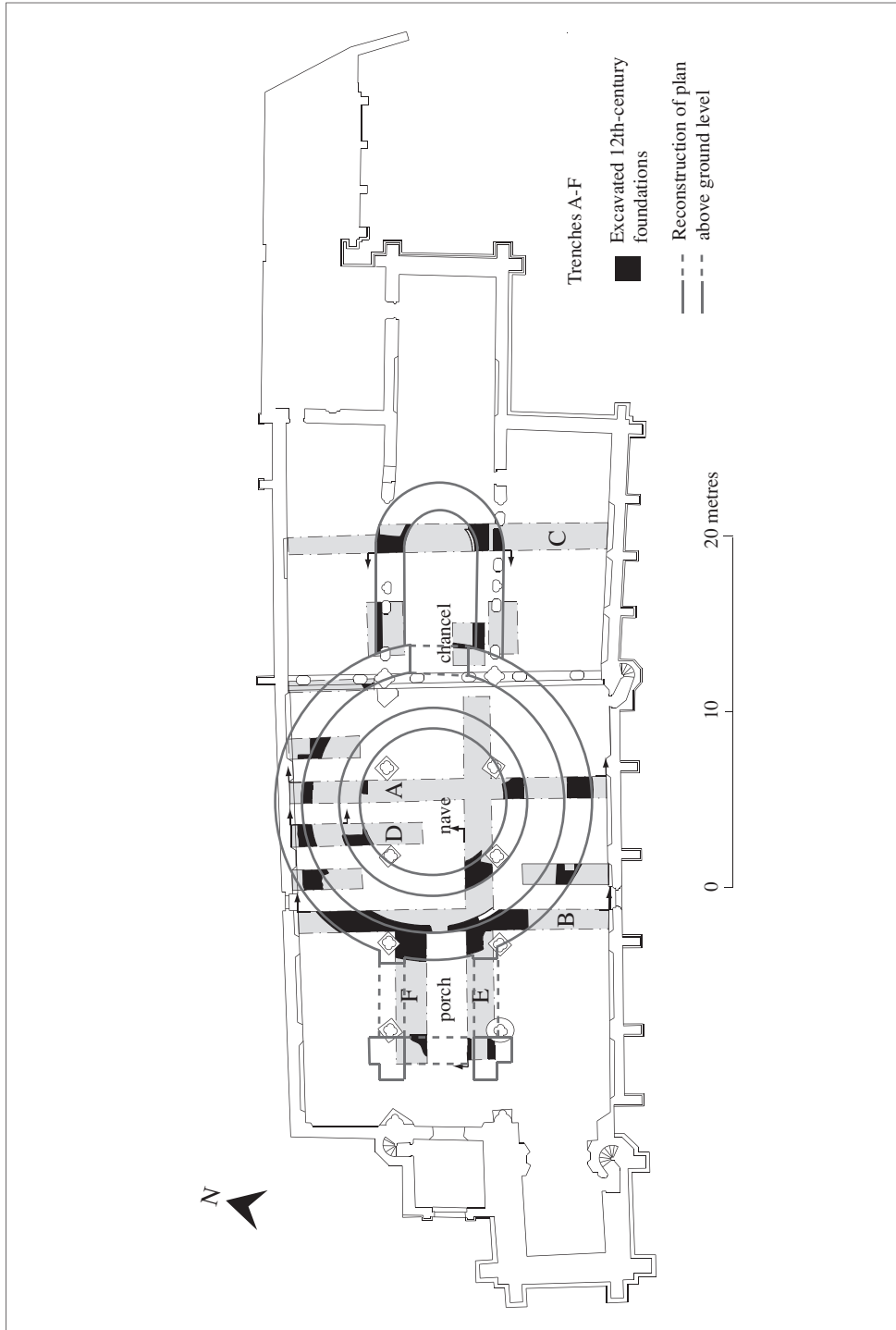


Fig. 2. Plan of the present church ruins and the 1960 excavation trenches A-F, showing reconstruction of 12th-century church plan.

The Preceptory at Bristol

The Templars built their preceptory at Bristol on land donated by Robert, earl of Gloucester, some time between the late 1120s and his death in 1147 (Lees 1935, 58). George Pryce in his *A Popular History of Bristol*, first published in 1861, states that Bristol Temple Church was reputed to have been founded in 1145 but goes on to dismiss the idea. By 1185, when a survey of all Templar estates in England was made, the Bristol preceptory had become an important administrative centre for Templar holdings in the West Country (Lees 1935, 58). In 1299 Edward I granted a chapel and parcel of land to the town's company of weavers for its own use (Sampson 1909, 87; Taylor 1887, 56). The chapel was attached to the Templars' church, and can be identified as that sited on the north side of the chancel, which was dedicated to St Katherine by the late 14th century (Taylor 1887, 56). By 1308 the church had a vicar (*Calendar of Patent Rolls* 1307–13, 134), showing that the Templars had come to an arrangement to share their church with the local population, and that the area immediately surrounding the preceptory buildings, known as Temple Fee, had become a parish.

Following the acquisition of the preceptory by the Hospitallers in 1313, the establishment lost its status as an administrative centre other than for Temple Fee itself, becoming subsidiary to the preceptory at Temple Combe in Somerset (Larking 1857, 184). It must however have profited from local prosperity as Bristol grew in the mid 14th century to become England's main port for the export of cloth. The Temple Fee suburb benefited in particular since it had already become the centre for weaving and associated trades. In the 1330s and 40s a dispute arose between the Hospitallers and the vicar concerning the income of the church. This was arbitrated in the court of the bishop of Bath and Wells (Holmes 1896, *passim*), and in 1342 it was agreed that the Hospitallers should receive 100s. a year from the receipts of the church, whilst the vicar retained the remainder of the income, together with the rent from some small houses next to the gate of the Hospitallers' dwelling. Documents from the same century show provision for a number of chantry priests in the church and there is reference to a Lady Chapel 'outside the entrance of the parish church of Temple' (*Calendar of Patent Rolls* 1330–4, 68; Taylor 1887, 58; Wadley 1886, 29, 55).

Burial of local parishioners became frequent in the church and cemetery to its south. More than thirty wills surviving from the late 14th and 15th century mention burial there (Wadley 1886, *passim*). Three wills dating from the 1390s record bequests toward the work of the church, one of which specifies 'to the work of the tower there, if it shall be renovated' (*ibid.* 31, 46, 54–5). This would suggest that a rebuilding and enlargement of the nave, which on architectural grounds dates from the later 14th century, was nearing completion and that attention was turning to a rebuilding of the tower next to the west porch. Further bequests were made toward the tower but work had evidently not begun by 1441. Later in the 15th century, however, William Worcestre refers to 'the foursquare tower newly built about the year 1460 by the parishioners of the town for ringing and sounding the magnificent bells' (Dallaway 1834, 115).

In 1544, soon after the Dissolution and suppression of the Hospitallers, the patronage of the church was purchased from the Crown by the city corporation of Bristol, together with part of the former Hospitaller lands (Barrett 1789, 544–5; Latham 1947, 27, 94–111). The Lady Chapel was demolished at about this time, but St Katherine's chapel remained to serve the weavers' company, which survived for another three centuries. The parish was by then beginning to decline and the number of wealthy merchants living in it dwindled (Lobel and Carus-Wilson 1975, 17).

From c.1701 to 1726, the interior of the church was extensively refurbished and the west porch provided with a new façade (Barrett 1789, 543–4; Harvey 1909, 156–7). Other major restorations took place in 1872 and from 1907 to 1911 (Taylor 1887, 51; Harvey 1909, 146; Pritchard 1908

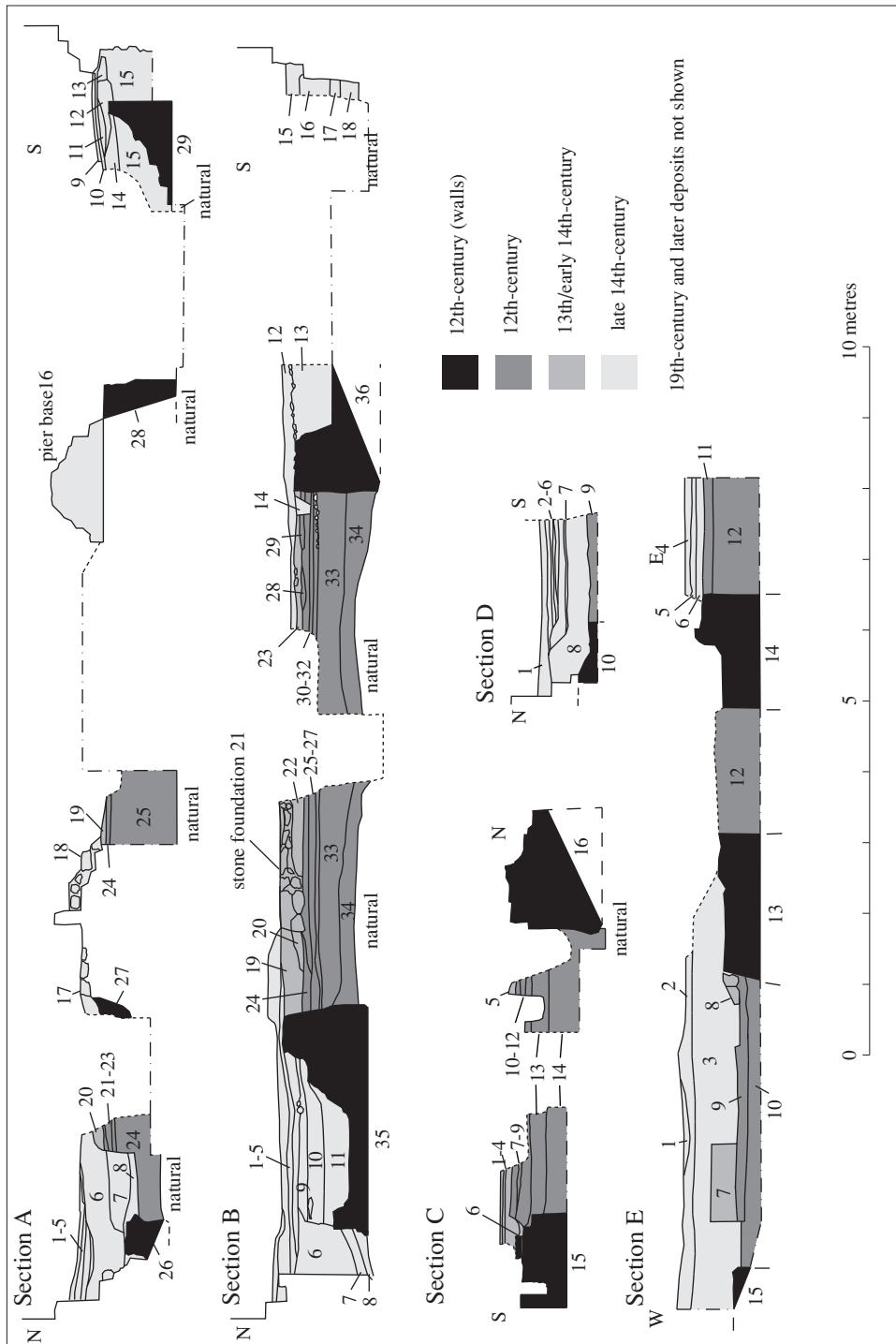


Fig. 3. Sections A-E.

and 1911). Curiously, observations made in 1872, when groundwork revealed some of the 12th-century foundations, suggested an oval rather than circular plan, the dimensions being recorded as 43 by 23 ft (Taylor 1875, 51; Harvey 1909, 146). It seems likely, however, that this idea arose from a misunderstanding of the church's overall layout. The work of 1907 included refacing of parts of the nave exterior. Further work in 1911 included new vestries built on the north side of the chancel and stone screens built across the west ends of the north and south chapels. The church was extensively damaged by bombing in 1940 during the Second World War.

THE 1960 EXCAVATIONS

For the purposes of clarity, features and deposits dating from the 19th century and later have been omitted from the accompanying section drawings and a revised series of context numbers has been used.

The Early 12th-Century Church (Fig. 4, Phase 1)

Sufficient of the 12th-century church foundations was excavated to establish that the original church comprised a round nave, containing an internal circular footing for an aisle arcade, and a chancel terminating in a semicircular apse to the east (Figs. 2 and 5). The excavated foundations showed a considerable variation in width (external walls 1.6–2.0 m; aisle wall 1.35–1.55 m). This variation appears random rather than regular, but a pattern may possibly emerge should more of the plan be recovered in the future. The foundations were battered in places (Fig. 3: Section B, wall 35; Section E, wall 12); elsewhere they had one or more internal off-sets (eg. Fig. 3: Section C, walls 15 and 16). It is clear, therefore, that the foundations became narrower as they were built up. It seems likely that the nave and aisle walls above ground level would have followed a more regular and truly concentric plan, so that construction of the upper parts of the church would not have been unnecessarily difficult. Indeed Fig. 4, Phase 1, shows that it is possible to reconstruct a concentric plan within the limits of the excavated foundations, excepting two small areas where the foundations had been partially destroyed by later intrusions. The width of the external walls above ground level would thus have been close to 1.5 m, the internal aisle wall being a little narrower (1.2 m). The width across the interior of the nave (including the aisle) must have been in the order of 15 m. The width of the chancel was close to 4 m.

Parts of another 12th-century wall footing extending from north to south were uncovered 4.2 m to the west of the nave. A footing in this position was probably associated with a western porch, the footing underlying its front (west) wall. The presence of a western porch is also indicated by two layers of stone paving, probably floor surfaces or foundations for a floor, which were confined to the area between the wall footing and the nave wall. The paving overlapped the wall footing and abutted the nave wall, thus appearing to have been laid within the porch at a later date. The paving, together with some overlying remnants of ashlar masonry, may well belong to a phase of alteration or rebuilding of the porch dating from the 13th or early 14th century (Secondary Features, below). Since it was decided at the time of excavation that the latter features should be preserved *in situ*, the early 12th-century levels in the porch area were not examined.

The 12th-century foundations were of loosely-coursed rubble comprising hard grey sandstone with some inclusions of a softer yellow stone. The masonry was set in a light brown or pale purple sandy mortar with no large aggregate. The chancel foundations were continuous in construction with those of the nave. The foundations were built directly on natural, stiff blue alluvial clay or were dug shallowly into its surface. Turf and topsoil must have been cleared from the site before

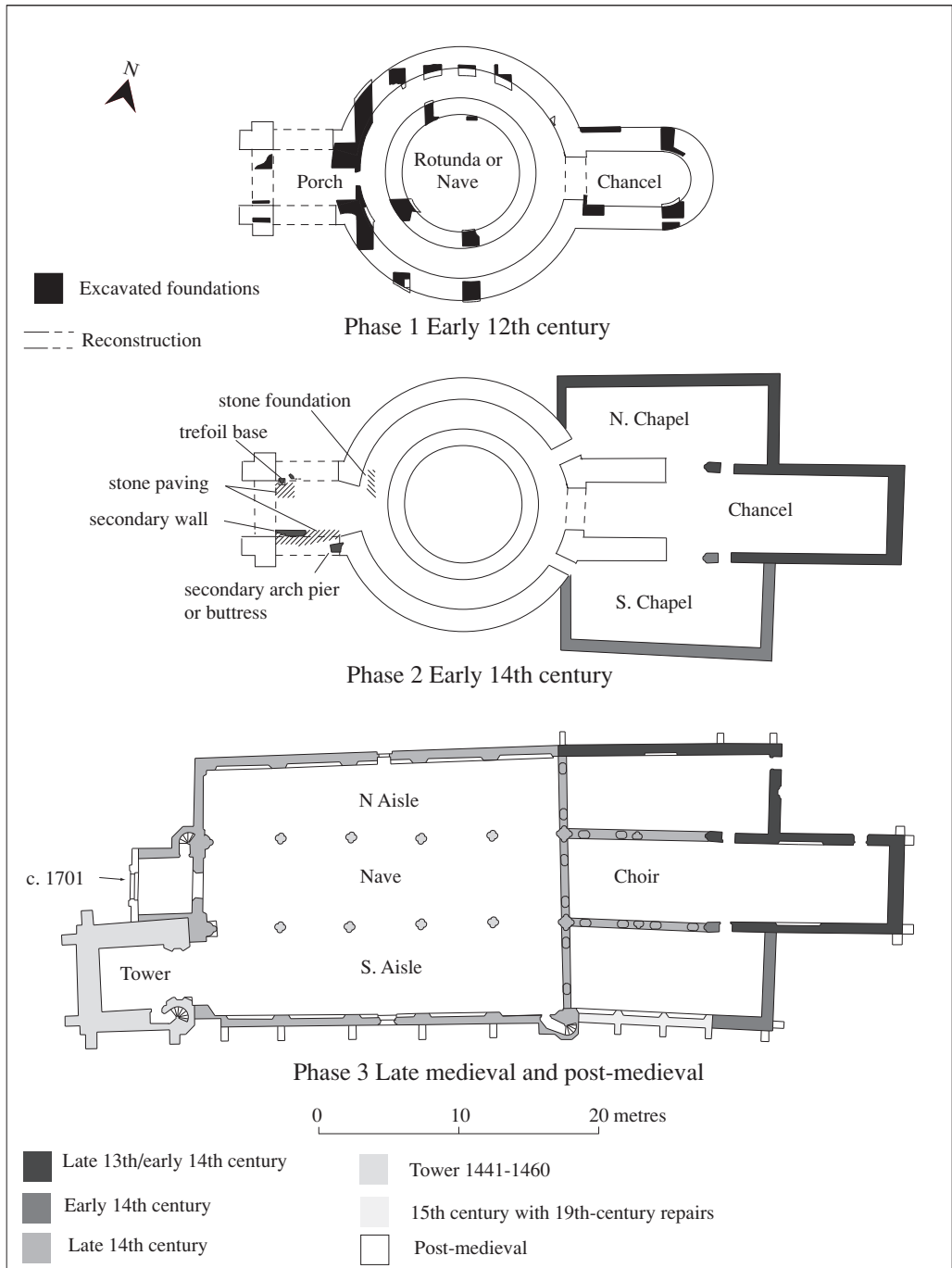


Fig. 4. Phase plans showing development of the church.



Fig. 5. Trench E, looking west, showing aisle and nave wall foundations (foreground) and porch area (background).

construction began. Surrounding the foundations up to a depth of 0.8 m was a series of make-up deposits comprising grey, grey-brown or blue-grey clay with patches of rubble and stone chippings (Fig. 3: Section A, 24, 25; Section B, 33, 34; Section C, 9, 12–14; Section D, 9; Section E, 10, 12).

Overlying these deposits were thin layers of red sand, mortar and stone chippings, which together appear to have constituted the earliest floor levels (Fig. 3: Section A, 21–23; Section B, 25–27, 28, 29, 30–32; Section C, 7, 8, 10–12; Section E, 11). In places these deposits had been compacted to form a distinct surface, which may possibly represent the floor level itself. Alternatively, these layers could have been used as bedding for a more robust flooring material, such as stone paving, which was lifted at a later time for re-use, although none such was uncovered *in situ*. Two successive compacted surfaces were recorded in the nave aisle at the west end of the church, the earlier dating from the early 12th century, the second probably from the 13th or early 14th century (Fig. 3: Section B, surfaces of layers 25 and 19). An off-set surviving in the adjacent nave wall at a height of 0.28 m above the level of the earlier surface was interpreted by the excavator as part of a bench seat, although this seems rather too low for such a feature. The off-set was 0.38 m deep, had a base of flat stone slabs, and was described as retaining original plaster on its rear face (Fig. 6). It is possible, however, that later stone robbing of the wall, which extended down to this level, removed an ashlar block from this position, leaving behind a shallow vertical face of original mortar which would resemble wall plaster. A similar feature, also interpreted as wall plaster, was uncovered at the top of the south chancel wall footings, a little above a double off-set close to the level of the earlier floor (Fig. 3: Section C, 6).



Fig. 6. Trench E, looking south, showing nave wall off-set.

Secondary Features (Fig. 4, Phase 2)

Vestiges of some later alterations to the 12th-century church were uncovered at the west end of the nave as well as in the porch area. These are illustrated in Fig. 4, where they have been grouped together for convenience in Phase 2 (early 14th century). Their precise date is uncertain.

Part of a secondary stone foundation was uncovered within the nave aisle, a little to the north of the presumed site of the west doorway (Fig. 4, Phase 2, stone foundation). The foundation was shallow and comprised an area of flat-topped mortared masonry set at the same level as the second floor surface (Fig. 3, section B, 21). The excavator suggests that it may have been the base for a font, since there is a font in a similar position in the Hospitallers' church at Little Maplestead, Essex, although such a feature would have impeded access around the aisle. The foundation was sealed directly by 19th-century deposits, so there is a possibility that it was set into the ground at a later date and therefore relates to a later phase of the church.

In the porch area, overlying the stone paving, were fragmentary remains of secondary masonry. These included part of a wall footing extending in an E–W direction and incorporating limestone ashlar blocks, a number of dressed and moulded limestone ashlars including two chamfered stones set one on top of the other, and a moulded trilobe base set on a chamfered plinth (Figs. 7 and 8). In addition, a remnant of a further layer of stone paving, overlying the earlier one, was uncovered next to the nave wall. These later features were all sealed at the same stratigraphic horizon as the robbed-down nave wall footings and therefore must date from between the early 12th century and the late 14th-century demolition of the round nave. They probably represent alterations to, or rebuilding of, the porch. The E–W wall footing could represent the blocking of an arch on the



Fig. 7. Trench F, looking east, showing porch wall (foreground) and secondary paving with remains of ashlar masonry.



Fig. 8. Trench F, looking north, showing detail of secondary ashlar masonry with trilobe base.



Fig. 9. Trench A, looking west, showing remains of 15th-century encaustic tile pavement.



Fig. 10. Sample tile from 15th-century encaustic tile pavement (scale 1:2).

south side of the porch or possibly the addition of an internal stone bench. The position of the trilobe base on the north side of the porch entrance suggests that it formed part of a rear arch for a secondary doorway. Another secondary feature found in this area, just to the south of the stone paving, was a poorly-built footing for a short buttress-like wall projecting 1 m from the exterior of the nave. This was built up against the nave footings on the likely line of the porch south wall; it could have been associated with a rebuilding or repair of an open arch on the south side of the porch.

The Rebuilding of the Church in the Later Medieval Period (Fig. 4: Phase 3)

It is clear from the architectural styles of the standing structure that the present rectangular, aisled church was built in stages beginning at the east end in the late 13th or early 14th century and ending with the addition of the west tower in the mid 15th century (Standing Structure, below). The 1960 excavation revealed a number of thick deposits associated with the demolition of the earlier church and stone robbing of its foundations. These comprised an initial layer of crushed mortar covered by rubble and clay deposits containing some burnt material (Fig. 3: Section A, 7, 8, 15; Section B, 9–11, 13). Overlying these were construction levels for the building of a new chancel and nave, comprising mostly clay and rubble dumps (Fig. 3: Section A, 1–6, 11–14, 19; Section B, 1–8, 12, 15–18; Section C, 3, 4; Section D, 1–8; Section E, 1–6).

The walls of the late medieval church contain three stone types not used in the 12th-century construction (recorded as reddish sandstone, a sarsen-like stone, and limestone). The excavated pier bases in the nave were built of grey sandstone rubble bonded with light brown mortar, and they varied in shape from approximately square to circular. The piers themselves were most often set on roughly square bases arranged diamond fashion and were bonded with a pinkish white mortar.

Overlying the construction levels was a series of thin deposits made up of mortar, sand and stone chippings, some with trampled surfaces. These are interpreted as floor levels or floor make-up deposits for the new church (Fig. 3: Section A, 1–5; Section B, 1–5, 12; Section C, 1, 2, 5; Section D, 1–6; Section E, 1, 2, 4–6). Above one of these surfaces, close to the south wall of the nave, was a small remnant from a 15th-century encaustic tile pavement laid on a bedding of white mortar (Fig. 3: Section A, 9–10; Fig. 9). The majority of the tiles displayed the device of a lion. One sample tile was retrieved (Fig. 10).

Standing Structure (Fig. 4, Phase 3)

The standing structure of the church has been the subject of two more recent studies (Thorp 1995; Wessex Archaeology 2000). These present detailed evidence for the following summary of the church's later development. A number of observations regarding the church fabric and architectural styles were initially made by G.L. Good (Good 1992).

In the late 13th or early 14th century the 12th-century apsidal chancel was replaced by a longer rectangular one with a chapel attached to its north side. The chapel is thought to be St Katherine's chapel granted to Bristol's company of weavers by Edward I in 1299. The window tracery in the chapel displays a simple Decorated style typical of the late 13th and early 14th century. The window tracery at the east end of the chancel is similar and probably dates from about the same time.

In 1331 Edward III granted a licence to John Fraunceys the younger to found a chantry in Temple Church (*Calendar of Patent Rolls* 1330–4, 68). This is thought to refer to the chapel flanking the south side of the chancel, although its present windows were inserted in the 15th century (below).

The Templars' round nave survived until the later 14th century when, together with the porch, it was demolished to make way for the present rectangular aisled structure with a new porch further to the west. The architectural style of the windows in the aisles and at the west end of the nave is early Perpendicular. Documentary evidence indicates building work on the nave was nearing completion in the 1390s (above). At the same time the nave arcade was continued eastward into the choir of the chancel. This might suggest that masonry of an earlier period had survived at the west end of the chancel and required replacing. It is possible that elements of the north and south walls of the Templar chancel had remained standing when the chancel was enlarged in the early 14th century (see Fig. 4, Phase 2).

The west tower was completed between 1441 and 1460 (above) after repeated problems with ground subsidence had been overcome. It is clear from the profile of the tower that sinking of the foundations into the soft alluvium beneath its west wall began early on in the construction. Successive stages of the tower were corrected to vertical but subsidence continued, resulting in a remarkable tiered construction of varying degrees from upright (the top of the tower has been recently measured as leaning 1.64 m from vertical). The south chapel of the chancel appears to have undergone partial rebuilding in the 15th century, since the present windows at its west end are Perpendicular in style and somewhat more elaborate than those in the nave.

THE 1971 EXCAVATIONS

G.L. Good's excavations to the north of Temple Church uncovered parts of a large building, possibly a hall, which is likely to have been the principal secular building within the Templar precinct (Fig. 1B). The building was demolished in the 14th century, probably soon after the property passed to the Knights Hospitaller, who replaced the hall with a much larger building, probably another hall block, further to the north. A smaller two-celled service wing was subsequently attached to the south wall of the new hall within a courtyard lying between the hall and the church.

In the mid 14th century a separate two-celled building was erected to the west. It served as the vicarage house for Temple Church until the church was bombed in 1940. To the north of the vicarage, beyond a boundary wall, was a garden area, used for industrial working of copper alloy, probably bell casting, in the 15th century. A building erected on the west side of this area was probably connected with the industrial activity, at least initially. The easternmost parts of the site were given over to gardens from the 14th century to *c.*1800.

DISCUSSION

The 12th-Century Round-Naved Church (Fig. 4, Phase 1)

Current archaeological knowledge regarding round-naved churches in Britain has been recently reviewed in the publication of excavations at the Hospitaller priory at Clerkenwell, London (Sloane and Malcolm 2004, 4–8). This helpfully summarizes the general context in which such churches were built and includes the excavated example at Bristol, although the results of the 1960 excavations had not been widely disseminated at the time. The following discussion completes what is known about the Bristol church's layout and considers this in relation to other members of the group, prefaced by a brief supporting outline of the wider context, referring primarily to the review by Sloane and Malcolm cited above.

The Templar church at Bristol is one of only sixteen round-naved churches known in Britain. Six retain standing fabric whilst evidence for ten more has been uncovered by excavation. The construction of such churches was principally a 12th-century phenomenon, linked closely with returning pilgrims and crusaders, especially members of the military orders, whose model for the design may have been inspired by the rotunda in the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Some of the earliest examples were built as parish churches (e.g. St Sepulchre, Northampton, built by 1116; St Nicholas on Orphir, Orkney, probably before 1122; Holy Sepulchre, Cambridge, possibly as early as *c.*1130), whilst another was a private chapel in Ludlow castle (St Mary Magdalene). Amongst the earliest round-naved churches built by the Templars, who apparently favoured them more than the Hospitallers, were the small commandery chapel at Dover (probably 1130s), the first Templar headquarters at Holborn, London (1144), and Bristol (late 1120s–1147). An early Hospitaller example was built at the priory of Clerkenwell, London (1140s). The latest round-naved church known in Britain is Little Maplestead, Essex, a Hospitaller preceptory founded in 1185.

All the churches, both large and small, originally had a 'keyhole' plan with an aisleless chancel projecting eastward from a round nave. Many chancels terminated in a semi-circular apse, as at Bristol, although some were rectangular (e.g. Dover and St Michael at Garway, Herefordshire, after 1180) and one had an angled apse (Ludlow). The round naves vary greatly in size, from a mere 6 m internal diameter at Orphir to 20 m, the largest known, at Clerkenwell. The nave at Bristol (15 m internal diameter) is smaller than Old Temple (Holborn, London), New Temple (off Fleet Street, London, *c.*1160), and the church of St Sepulchre, Northampton, but larger than Little Maplestead, Holy Sepulchre at Cambridge, and St Michael at Garway. Perhaps the closest in size is the approximately contemporary Templar church at Temple Bruer, Lincolnshire.

As in most of the larger churches, the nave at Bristol had an aisle arcade, above which would have risen a central drum pierced by windows in the manner of a lantern tower (as for instance at New Temple, London, and Holy Sepulchre, Cambridge). No evidence survived at Bristol for the number of piers in the arcade but the usual number for large churches was eight. New Temple, London, made do with only six (it had particularly large buttresses to help support the weight of the roof). The church at Maplestead, a much smaller building, also had six.

The presence of a western porch leading into the nave at Bristol is strongly suggested by the wall footing uncovered 4 m to the west of the nave, together with the stone paving found in the immediate area. In addition, there were a number of secondary masonry features which appear to have been associated with rebuilding or alteration to a porch in this position (Fig. 4, Phase 2). Western porches are known at many of the larger round-naved churches which usually accommodated the traditional pattern of access by a western doorway. The porch at Bristol may originally have been pierced by arches on its north and south. A short secondary stone footing uncovered on its south side projected from the nave wall and could have supported a pier associated with the rebuilding of an arch. Another secondary wall extending along the south side of the porch and faced with ashlar may represent blocking of the arch. Further remnants of secondary ashlar masonry were found at the north-west corner of the porch. These similarly could have formed part of the blocking of an arch. The latter masonry was associated with a trilobe moulded stone base which, to judge from its position, may have formed part of a rear arch for a secondary doorway. The original porch entrance presumably lay immediately to the west, on the line of the excavated wall footing marking the western side of the porch. The precise date of these latter alterations to the porch is uncertain, although they certainly took place some time before the late 14th-century rebuilding and enlargement of the nave. The only secondary feature to retain potentially datable detail is the trilobe base. Although photographed *in situ* (Figs. 7 and 8), it has no drawn record in the archive. In the opinion of Richard K. Morris the base could be attributed to the fourth quarter

of the 12th century if it possesses both a waterholding profile and angle fillets, as would appear from the photographs. Although he expresses reservations regarding the quality and therefore reliability of the visual evidence, Dr Morris adds that 'It would be a typical moulding of the West Country School, mature Romanesque, suggesting a respond continuing into an arch of the same profile, as a continuous order. An entrance arch for a porch would be an obvious usage'.

Another secondary feature, also of uncertain date, is the flat stone foundation uncovered in the nave aisle a little to the north of the presumed site of the nave's west doorway. This may have been for a font as the excavator suggests, or it might date from a later period and not relate to the early church.

The presence of a tower at the church, before the present Perpendicular one, is indicated by bequests made in the late 14th and early 15th century, including money left 'to the work of the bell tower if it shall be built anew' (Wadley 1886, 91–2). No physical evidence for an early tower was found by the excavations and none is evident in the standing structure. A tower could, however, have stood as a free-standing structure further to the west, similar to that built to the north-west of the nave at Garway.

Later Medieval Development (Fig. 4, Phases 2 and 3)

Development of the church began at the east end in the late 13th or early 14th century, when the chancel was rebuilt with the addition of a north side chapel. The south side chapel was added some time in the early 14th century. The round nave was left standing until the later 14th century when both it and the porch were entirely swept away to be replaced by the present rectangular aisled structure.

Other round-naved churches show a similar pattern of development, although the date at which individual developments took place varied considerably. It would appear that the east ends of such structures lent themselves more readily to extension and additions and were developed earlier, whilst the round naves were far less accommodating to modification and were either left standing or were rebuilt at a later date. This was the case for instance at New Temple Church and Clerkenwell, London; St Sepulchre, Northampton; Temple Bruer, Lincolnshire; and Holy Sepulchre, Cambridge.

Documentary evidence regarding the preceptory church at Bristol brings to light an interesting relationship between the monastic and local secular communities. The Templars became involved in the mercantile life of Bristol when St Katherine's chapel was granted to the company of weavers in 1299; whilst soon after, the Hospitallers appointed a vicar to serve the surrounding parish (Historical Background, above). By the late 15th century St Katherine's chapel was being used for wider civic purposes. On St Katherine's feast day and its eve the mayor, sheriff and other members of the city corporation joined the company of weavers in celebrating their patron saint, attending services in the chapel, processing around the city and returning to the church for mass (Toulmin Smith 1872, 80). These kinds of arrangements with the neighbouring population have been noted at some other preceptories but have not yet been studied in detail (Gilchrist 1995, 77).

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