

A SIXTEENTH CENTURY PAINTED CEILING FROM WINCHESTER COLLEGE

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INTRODUCTION

A dismantled ceiling composed of painted oak boards with part of a frieze was discovered and identified by T. R. Kirby during alterations in Winchester College in 1885. It is a rare and unusually complete survival of an early sixteenth century decorative scheme using Renaissance motifs, and was probably painted during the wardenship of John White, perhaps to celebrate the wedding of Mary Tudor and Philip of Spain in Winchester in 1554. The boards were transferred on loan to the care of Winchester Museum in 1980, and cleaned and assembled in the City's Westgate. This paper discusses the provenance and likely date of the ceiling and describes the conservation and installation work.

The discovery of the panels

Kirby described the discovery of the panels when he exhibited them at the Society of Antiquaries in 1886. In 1885 a wooden partition in the original warden's lodgings had been taken down and found to be constructed of reused oak boards, faced up with canvas and paper which concealed their original decoration. There were said to be 135 eight-inch boards measuring about 6½ ft long. Grouped together, some of the boards made up panels decorated with a pair of medallions, one bearing the initials IW and the other 'a female Tudor or a male Spanish head'. Other, wider boards were fitted together to form fragments of what now can be identified as a frieze, on which supporters hold portrait medallions or plaques bearing the words 'Vive le roi', with texts from Ecclesiastes. Kirby attributed the initials to John White, Warden of Winchester College from 1541–1554, who was present at the wedding of Queen Mary I and Philip of Spain,

which took place in Winchester Cathedral in July 1554. The verse Eccles, ix. 9 (Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity . .) found an echo in 'Vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas' quoted on the frieze, making it an appropriate motto for the wedding. Kirby used the phrase 'waterwork', quoting from Shakespeare's *King Henry IV*, Part II, act ii, scene i¹, to describe the painted boards (Kirby 1892, 276).

Perhaps because the literary context fits a wall painting, Kirby and subsequent observers seem to have assumed that all the panels were wainscot for a wall. He noted the difficulty he had had in matching the pieces and concluded that a considerable part must be missing (Kirby 1886, 186–199).

The 'waterwork' was stored at the College and in 1915 it was sent on loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum, where it was seen and recorded by Francis Reader in his list of domestic wall paintings (Reader 1936, 256; 277). It was returned to the College in 1946. By then it was clear that some of the panels were from a ceiling, but a suitable position could not be found where it could be reinstalled. One problem was that the rooms originally occupied by the warden had been remodelled internally to create Tenth Chamber, a dormitory for the Scholars. Careful research by Herbert Chitty (1916, 75–76) had shown that the warden's lodgings had originally comprised two rooms, one above the other, now called Election Chamber and Tower Chamber over Middle Gate, together with the long, first floor room to the east of Election Chamber which was divided up into a bedroom and dressing room for the accommodation of the warden of New College when he visited Winchester, probably during the wardenship of Dr Burton (1724–66). These partitions were made up of the



Figs 1, 2 Sections of the boarded frieze from Winchester College, assembled and displayed in the Westgate. (Photograph by G. Palmer)

re-used sixteenth century boards rediscovered in 1885 during the alterations to create Tenth Chamber.

The oak boards, some still assembled into panels, were stored in the College Cheese Room and subsequently the Beer Cellar, while the College, with the advice of Mr John Harvey the advisory architect, continued to seek an appropriate permanent place for them. In 1974 the curator of Winchester City Museum, while engaged on research into timber ceilings, approached the College for permission to study the panels. This led eventually to an agreement between the City and College authorities to have the boards cleaned, photographed and reassembled for display in the Westgate of the City of Winchester. These processes are described for the record in the note on conservation (below).

DESCRIPTION AND DATING

Size and layout

The surviving boards have been assembled to form a ceiling made up of fifteen painted panels each about 35 inches square and six oblong panels (35 ins × 22 ins), forming a total surface area of 400 ft². There are also 40 planks remaining of what was formerly a long frieze formed of a continuous band of upright boards now varying in length from 45–53 ins. On estimate, the frieze must have covered about 45 running feet of wall space, and the painted area was about 50 ins high. This estimate is based upon the pattern repeat that we can assume from the two main surviving continuous pieces of the design (together made up of boards measuring 15 running feet), and as further represented by the painted fragments on 25 unconnected boards² (Fig. 6).

Construction

Examination by Daniel Miles (see below, *Analysis of timberwork*), has shown that there are two phases of construction: the ceiling and part of the frieze are of Baltic oak and the

remaining part of the frieze is in English oak, differently jointed and put up some thirty years later.

The painted decoration

The design is in grisaille: brown and black pigments painted over a white ground, enhanced by touches of sgraffito. The only colour is on the twisted string of the frieze which alternates red with yellow ochre. On some fragments traces of olive green remain. On the ceiling boards, it is the painting that defines the individual panels, two square panels to each group of four boards, or four oblong panels to a group of seven (Fig 5). Each panel has a brown border 1¼ in wide. Separating each panel is an unpainted 1-inch strip, bare to the wood, with nail holes, which was interpreted as the original accommodation for an applied moulding that would create the effect of a coffered ceiling, an impression reinforced by the effect of depth created by sidelighting the painted heads. On the frieze, there is an unpainted area of 3–4 ins below the painted area, which may indicate where wainscot covered it.

The design of the panels

The ceiling panels have a repetitive design based on medallions, one in the centre and one, quartered, at each corner with foliate sokles which are linked to four double ballusters supporting the Tudor rose in the space between the medallions. The design is accurately laid out and presumably traced or stencilled to achieve exact repeats. The coffer mouldings and borders however split and disperse the overall design.

The medallions hold the cypher IW alternating with portrait heads, in full profile or three quarters view. There are seven portraits of women and thirteen of men, with one too abraded to identify. A detailed catalogue is given in Appendix 1.

Most of the women are wearing gowns and headdresses that were fashionable in the second quarter of the sixteenth century. At that time



Fig. 3 Four sections of the boarded ceiling from Winchester College, assembled in the Westgate. (Photograph by G. Palmer).

the gown was laced at the back in a V shape and in front had a square neckline and was worn over a high-necked chemise or partlet. The partlet beneath was of fine linen, collarless or gathered to a narrow neck band. Later a small collar and from about 1540 a little frill or ruff was attached. The headdresses represented are variations of the French hood, which was set well back from the forehead (H), over centre-parted hair, sometimes with the black velvet hood that hung behind pinned over the top of the crown as in F. The headdress is worn with a hat (N), coif/veil (M) or streamers (Q2). Q1 is wearing a little plumed hat on the back of her head over a cap, and the gown and semi backview stance seem Italianate. R1 is apparently wearing her hair in wired and

decorative cauls over her ears, beneath a flat brimmed hat. The French hood was popular until as late as 1580, but the introduction of collars and neck frills by the 1540s, which are absent here, set the fashions worn by these heads rather earlier (Sichel 1984, 20–21). They are familiar amongst the portraits of Hans Holbein, as worn by the ladies of the court of Henry VIII (Parker 1945, 48–49; 61–62).

Some of the young men are also wearing fashionable costume of the early sixteenth century, with slashed sleeves and coats with wide revers, some faced in fur, as in B, G and R2. Felt hats with slashed, curled or punched decoration are worn by E, H and P1, who wears a brooch or pilgrim badge in his hat. However, most of the male portraits are in decorative parade armour with fantastic helmets



Fig. 4 Four sections of the boarded ceiling from Winchester College, assembled in the Westgate. (Photograph by G. Palmer)

(B, J, P2). D1, in a wreath and knotted drapery, is evidently a Roman emperor.

There is no apparent logic to the arrangement of the heads, nor are there any inscriptions or attributes that might identify them with, for example, antique heroes and heroines which were popular subjects in schemes of the period.

The frieze

The elements of the frieze are:

- 1) a gothic cresting of trefoils and cusps.
- 2) the main frieze with a repeat pattern of (2a) two winged boys wearing tunics and each carrying an object like a flaming orb. This

appears to be a kind of burning censor or grenade. The boys have fishy and foliated tails which terminate in lobed vases from which spring horses' heads. They support, beneath the closed crown of England, a tablet with the words 'VIVE LE ROY'. There follow (2b) two winged, naked putti who between them hold a medallion wreathed in laurel: one having a profile head of a warrior with a moustache facing left wearing a contemporary sixteenth century parade helmet or burgonet. Another fragment from a repeat of this pattern has the front view of a woman in a square necked gown, and a French hood (Fig 3).

3) below is a string course of twisted red and yellow strands, or perhaps it represents the dentils of a classical cornice.

4) Plaques with inscriptions from Ecclesiastes alternating with small roundels in which small three-quarter-length figures are gesticulating or pointing at the texts. They include a man in classical armour, a bearded sage in furred gown and turban, a bearded man in a cloak and a turbaned sage.

The texts appear to be loose paraphrases of the following verses of Ecclesiastes in the Vulgate:

TEMPUS QUAERENDI TPS AMITTENDI
(? ch. 3 v. 5: tempus spargendi lapides et tempus colligendi)

VANITAS VANITATUM ET OMNIA
VANITAS (ch. 1 v. 2)

TEMPUS PERGENDI TPS DESISTENDI
(? ch. 3 v. 8: tempus scindendi et tempus consuendi or possibly v. 8: tempus belli at tempus paci)

VANITAS VANITATUM ET OMNIA
VANITAS (ch. 1 v. 2)

. LOQV (Ch. 3 v. 7 . . tempus tacendi et tempus loquendi)

Other fragments repeat the 'VANITAS' verse, in all six times, and there are two more verses of which only letters can be made out:

TEMPU . . NDI . TPS . .
. . . OL . .

The texts are positioned so that the two halves of verse 7 lie below the portraits of the man and

woman respectively, so a translation might be 'a time for proceeding, a time for standing back' below the man while 'a time for keeping silent, a time for speaking' is below the woman's portrait.

Several individual boards survive giving fragmentary evidence for the rest of the pattern. Fig 4, drawn by Nicholas Griffiths after a careful study of these boards, which are difficult to decipher since the paint is in poor condition, is an attempt to reconstruct the sequence. This is not entirely consistent, since although the alternation of the type 2a with the 2b design is adhered to, the inscriptions beneath do not match, so that there are two VANITAS inscriptions together beneath one roundel.

ANALYSIS OF TIMBERWORK *by Daniel Miles*

In 1979 four panels were subjected to dendrochronological analysis by Dr John Fletcher of the Research Laboratory for Archaeology, Oxford University. Samples 10, 12 and 13 were from individual odd panels from the fragmented sections of frieze, and sample 11 was from the section of fifteen consecutive panels which is now mounted as part of the museum display at the Westgate. Sample 10 produced a date span of AD 1224–1459, sample 11 spanned 1432–1537, sample 12 spanned 1223–1357, and sample 13 spanned 1402–1488. None of the four samples had any sapwood, or heartwood/sapwood boundaries, and a felling date of after 1550 was proposed for the group (Fletcher 1980).

In 1995, the dating was reviewed for publication and the twenty-two unmounted frieze boards were assessed for further dendrochronological potential. Five boards were found with some sapwood or heartwood/sapwood boundary and these were selected for dating at Mapledurham. It immediately became evident that the timber was imported from Eastern Europe as the five samples matched very highly with the BALTIC 1 chronology, produced by J Hillam and I Tyers during a re-analysis of 177 sets of tree-ring measurements from panels paintings by Fletcher (Hillam & Tyers 1995, 395–405). As none of the samples had complete sapwood, it was not possible to give precise felling

dates. However, it is known that Polish oaks had, within 90% confidence limits, between 9 and 23 rings of sapwood (Wazny & Eckstein 1991, 35–49). Of the five samples with evidence of sapwood, two were found to have originated from the same tree, therefore four felling date ranges were produced, ranging from AD 1491–1505 to 1498–1512 as shown in Table 1.

However, these four felling date ranges were at variance with Fletcher's sample 11, which had a last measured ring of 1537 with no evidence of heartwood/sapwood boundary. Therefore it was decided to re-examine the four panels dated in 1979. Three of these were identified within the group of 22 loose boards, and were remeasured, making particular note of Fletcher's reference marks. For sample 10, Fletcher ascribed a first measured ring date of 1224 whereas the 1995 analysis gave this ring a 1227 date, three years adrift. The first measured ring of Fletcher's sample 12 had been dated in 1979 to 1223, whereas the re-analysis redated this to 1228, five years later. Fletcher's sample 13 was measured at the other end of the board so it was not possible to make a direct comparison, and his sample 11 had been mounted in the museum display. The misdating, albeit by only a few years or so, can probably be attributed to the fact that the panels were initially read *in situ* with a hand lens, whereas the 1995 analysis was accomplished by removing a thin slice from the end of the panel which was then polished and measured under a microscope, with far more precision. Primarily, however, it was not apparent in 1979 that the Winchester samples, or the rest of Fletcher's art-historical material, had originated from the Baltic, and they matched poorly by today's standard against British chronologies. During the period of 1976 to 1985 much of Fletcher's art-historical chronologies were in fact dated five years too early (Baillie, 1995) which would account for the misdating of sample 12 and partly for sample 10. Still, one must remember that those were pioneering days.

However, the re-analysis of the three accessible Fletcher samples did not give any later dates than the four felling date ranges already derived, therefore the rest of the loose boards were analysed and dated. These were combined and

averaged together to form the site master WNCSTR1 which spanned the years AD 1207–1495. Thirteen individual trees were identified, with five boards found to have originated from a single tree. All samples were found to have matched the BALTIC1 chronology best, with the site master matching with a t-value of 16.12, suggesting the boards all came from the same Baltic source. They are likely to have come either from Riga, at the mouth of the river Dvina flowing from the east in Russia, or from the port of Danzig, which via the river Vistula was the gateway to southern Poland.

However, the problem of the single board which Dr Fletcher dated to 1537 still remained. Either it had been misdated, or it was a later alteration or repair. Consequently, the exhibits in the Westgate were dismantled and three boards removed for analysis, including Fletcher's sample 11. All three boards had both ends prepared by sanding and were measured with a hand lens, mainly to minimise the loss of fabric and because the rings were much wider.^a Again, it was immediately apparent that these were of a different quality of oak, and an English origin was thought more likely. The three boards were found to have originated from the same tree, and produced another site master WNCSTR2. This was dated against English chronologies with the highest match being with MASTERAL (Haddon-Reece & Miles 1993) with a t-value of 10.77. The group of three panels were found to span the years AD 1403–1537, perfectly confirming Fletcher's 1979 dating.

Thus, a two phase construction has been proven, with the first producing four felling date ranges of AD 1491–1505, 1495–1509, 1496–1510, and 1498–1512. Assuming all of the panels derived from the same source and were felled within the same year, a felling date range common to all four ranges would be from AD 1498–1505. This is based on known estimates sapwood for timber likely to have been exported through the port of Danzig; had the timber originated from Riga, then it is likely the felling date ranges could have been narrowed still further (Baillie 1995). One of the loose panels to be dated included a fragment of the ceiling. This was found to be from the same tree as one of the

Table 1 Winchester College painted panels: summary of tree ring dating

Sample number	Timber identification (see Figure 15)	Dates AD spanning	Heartwood/ sapwood bdry	No of rings of sapwood	no of rings	mean ring width (mm)	felling date ranges
PHASE 1 PANELS (BAL TIC)							
wcp1	Panel no 1 (JMF dendro #13)	1342-1466			125	1.51	
wcp5	Panel no 5	1235-1466			232	1.04	
wcp6	Panel no 6	1219-1449			231	0.97	
* wcp7	Panel no 7	1247-1440			194	1.07	
wcp8	Panel no 8	1214-1414			201	0.86	
wcp9	Panel no 9	1430-1495	1490	5	66	2.76	} 1498-1512
wcp10	Panel no 10	1410-1487	1487	H/S	78	2.52	
* wcp11	Panel no 11	1208-1468			261	0.84	
wcp12	Panel no 12	1271-1424			154	0.91	
wcp13	Panel no 13	1231-1468			238	0.97	
wcp14	Panel no 14	1251-1470			220	0.93	
wcp15	Panel no 15 (JMF dendro #12)	1228-1466			239	1.00	
wcp16a	Panel no 16	1207-1463			257	0.91	
* wcp17	Panel no 17 (JMF dendro #10)	1226-1466			241	0.86	
* wcp18	Panel no 18	1275-1467			193	1.19	
wcp19	Panel no 19	1260-1486	1486	H/S	227	1.05	1495-1509
* wcp20	Panel no 20	1362-1487	1482	5	126	1.88	1491-1505
* wcp21	Panel no 21	1328-1465			138	1.41	
wcp22	Panel no 22	1238-1422			185	1.01	
wcp23	Panel no 23	1314-1489	1487	2	176	1.27	1496-1510
* wcp24	Panel no 24	1227-1470			244	0.82	
wcp26	Ceiling panel	1299-1444			146	1.46	
* Trcc A	Mean of wcp1+23	1314-1489			176	1.35	
* Tree B	Mean of wcp5+6	1219-1466			248	1.01	
* Tree C	Mean of wcp19+26	1260-1486			227	1.19	
* Tree D	Mean of wcp9+10	1410-1495			86	2.58	
* Tree E	Mean of wcp12+13+14+15+22	128-1470			243	0.97	
* Tree F	Mean of wcp8+16a	1207-1463			257	0.90	
= WNCHSTR1	Phase 1 site master	1207-1495			289	1.14	1498-1505 (common overlap)
PHASE 2 PANELS (ENGLISH)							
* wcp25a	Panel 'a' (JMF dendro #11)	1432-1537			106	2.71	
* wcp25b	Panel 'b'	1410-1535			126	2.20	
* wcp25c	Panel 'c'	1403-1524			122	2.25	
= WNCHSTR2	Phase 2 - Mean of wcp25a+b+c	1403-1537			135	2.36	After 1547

* = sample included in site-master

frieze panels, thus confirming that the older frieze and ceiling were erected at the same time. The second phase comprised the separate run of frieze and as none of the samples had any sapwood or heartwood/sapwood boundaries, it was dated with a *terminus post quem* of AD 1547.

The first phase of the panels is distinguished by the very fine grained oak typical of imported boards from the Baltic. Throughout the medieval period a flourishing timber trade was conducted through the ports of the Hanseatic League, with very fine quality oak, sometimes known as Righolts, from the forests in the neighbourhood of the port of Riga (Salzman 1967). The Winchester panels varied between 7½" and 10" in width and are sometimes tapered from ¼" to ¾-7/8" in thickness. The boards are all converted from logs of at least 22" diameter, with the thin end originating near the centre of the tree and the outer edges being trimmed mainly to remove any sapwood. All of the planks are jointed in the typical medieval fashion for wainscot with V-edged panels of exceptional precision in which the thin edge of each board is bevelled to form the tongue which slots into an offset groove similarly bevelled in the thick edge of its neighbour to form a perfectly flush surface suitable for decorative painting. The groove has its V-section slightly truncated, whereas the panels from 26a East St Helen Street Abingdon, dating from about 75 years earlier, has both the positive and negative edges perfectly sharp (Miles & Haddon-Reece 1995, 64-7). Both of these examples are somewhat later than those cited by Hewett who had found the sharp V-edges on only the earliest examples, while his fourteenth century examples had a flattened V-section like the Winchester panels (Hewett 1982, 348).

It is perhaps significant to note that in three instances, panels adjacent to each other on the frieze assembly were actually from the same tree and is indicative that the timber has remained together as a consignment all the way from the Baltic. Clearly Baltic oak was imported in board form but the question remains as to where the boards were finished and jointed. Transporting the boards from the time of conversion from the log, to the warehouse at port, onto the quayside and onto the ship, reversing the process at

Southampton⁶ through to Winchester, would have required constant stacking and unstacking. It is unlikely that despite about a dozen 'shuffles' from woodland to College, where the boards might have been planed and jointed, such a significant proportion of boards from the same parent tree would have remained together. The answer instead would seem to be that the boards were prepared, seasoned and jointed before shipping. The careful packing or bundling required to protect the delicate edges of the finished panels during transport would also have kept batches of panels together from the Eastern European workshop to the College where they would have been unpacked in the Warden's rooms whereupon they were installed.

The boards appear to have been converted from the log primarily through sawing. Most seem to be radially sawn, but a significant number are sawn tangentially, suggesting a certain degree of parallel sawing. Whilst the face side of each board was most likely sawn and then finished with a smoothing plane, only seven were found to have been sawn on the back, with the remaining fifteen boards having their backs dressed with an axe. Four of these boards sawn on both sides plus one with the back dressed with an axe were found to have originated from the same tree. When comparing the angle of the rings in each sample in relation to the annual rings at a comparative scale (accounting for the usual offset pith), it was found that few of the samples were actually radially aligned (Fig. 15).

The seven boards with sawn backs seem to suggest some form of mechanical sawing. The saw cuts are a consistent 15° pitch and have no sign of backstroke. Water-powered sawmills were known on the continent during the medieval period (Rackham 1982), and it is entirely conceivable that an operation on the scale of the Baltic timber trade would have made use of mechanization.

The boards vary in length from 6'-6" for the ceiling and 3'-7" for the frieze. Although many of the frieze panels are shorter, this probably resulted from the boards being trimmed down when reused in the eighteenth century, rather than their being originally jointed. Most of the end joints of the ceiling were masked by an

applied moulded rib (now missing) which divided the ceiling up into square or rectangular panels. This had been the usual method of constructing timber ceilings for several hundred years, and an exact parallel can be seen at 26a East St Helen Street, Abingdon. The Winchester frieze panels, which are the only loose panels now available for study, show nail holes at inconsistent centres, usually one or two per panel which relate to the primary fixing to timber grounds of some sort on the walls. They were fixed through the back flange of the groove which was wider than the front bevel, thus allowing the panels to be secretly fixed.

The second phase panels are quite different in size and style from the Phase 1 panels. These are wider-grained English oak, again tangentially-sawn rather than radially sawn, and are tongued and grooved in which the tongues are formed by the square feather-edge of the plank which is let into a groove within the centre of the butt edge of the adjoining board and bevelled. This then forms a surface which is not flush but stepped not unlike clapboards (Fig 15). These boards vary in width from 9" to 14½" and in thickness from ¾" to ⅝". Unlike the earlier frieze panels, these boards appear to be of a more consistent length of 4'-2". However, these were fixed through the face of the board, filled, and painted over. A complete series of fifteen boards remains, but it is thought that at least one or two more boards would be necessary to complete the right-hand end of the painting. Three panels from this series were analysed by dendrochronology which showed that all three derived from the same log, and indeed visual inspection suggested that all fifteen were. It is interesting that a different method of jointing should be employed in this new section of panelling, which is less suited for painting, considering that it would most likely have been erected solely for the purpose of receiving the frieze painting which was painted on both the old and new timberwork.

The Antique style

The style of both the frieze and the ceiling is uncompromisingly in the Antique style, with no hint of gothic detail except in the trefoil cresting.

The fashion for Antique or grotesque work was introduced from Italy and France during the early part of the century by the foreign craftsmen working at the court of Henry VIII. Both temporary work for tournaments and diplomatic receptions, and more permanent decorations for his palaces were produced. The tomb of Henry VII in Westminster Abbey created by the Florentine Pietro Torrigiano between 1512 and 1518 seems to have been the initial source for a number of decorative elements, in particular the motif of cherubs as supporters of the Royal Coat of arms beneath a large crown (Whinney 1964, 4-5). This was adopted as a royal badge by Henry VIII in diverse contexts such as seals and documents. A version is incorporated into the panelling of the Long Gallery at the Wyne, Hampshire, the house of Lord Sandys. Another device (represented on the Winchester College ceiling) which can also be seen in its earliest and purest version at the Wyne is the antique head in a circular frame or wreath. The plaster roundel with the bust of the Emperor Probus at the Wyne is attributed to Giovanni di Maiano, who made the series of Roman emperors in roundels to decorate the gatehouses at Hampton Court for Cardinal Wolsey before 1529 (Pevsner and Lloyd 1967, 634; Whinney 1964, 4-5). There were similar heads in stone, of which fragments have been excavated, at Basing House. Another source for these portrait medallions was evidently Roman coinage, also cut gemstones, itaglios and cameos. The pattern books of German engravers such as Daniel Hopper (c 1470-1536) or Virgil Solis (1514-1562) may have provided a more accessible source for English craftsmen (O'Dell-Franke 1977 figs 95-98, Koch 1981, Byrne 1981). Virgil Solis's engravings feature medallions in series (often in threes) of Roman emperors, marmadukes, peasants, soldiers, heroes and heroines of antiquity and legend or personified nations as represented by female heads in contemporary headdresses. It may have been Daniel Hopper's rendering of the combined cornucopia and seahorse (Fig 8) that influenced many schemes and appears on the Winchester College frieze.

The 'belle donne' majolica plates made in Gubbio near Urbino in the 1520s may have



Fig. 5 Head of a woman: fragment from the Winchester College frieze. (Photograph by G. Palmer)

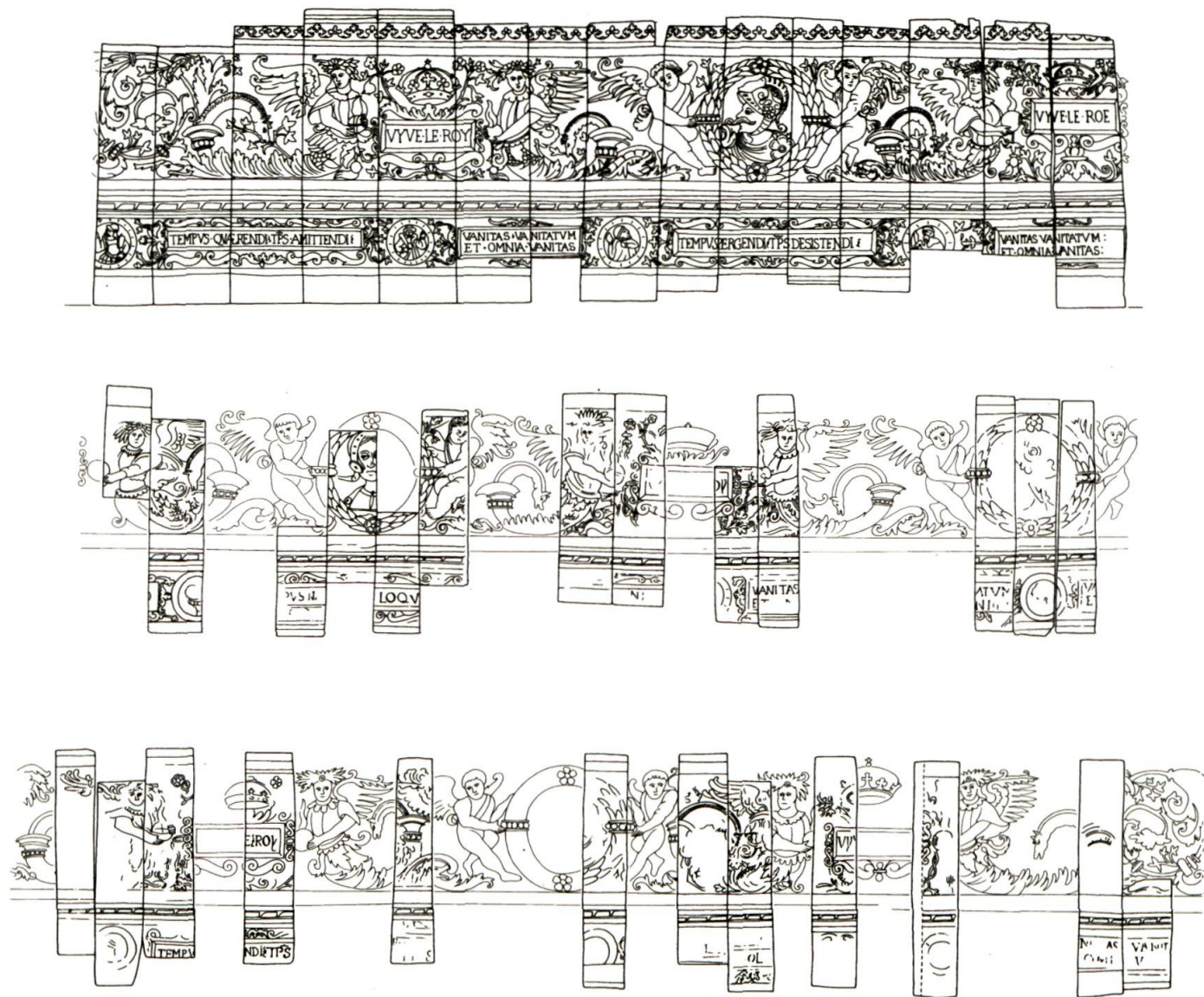


Fig. 6 Reconstruction of the design on the Winchester College frieze based on all fragments. (Drawing N. Griffiths)



Fig. 7 Details of the portrait heads from the Winchester College ceiling. (Photographs G. Palmer)

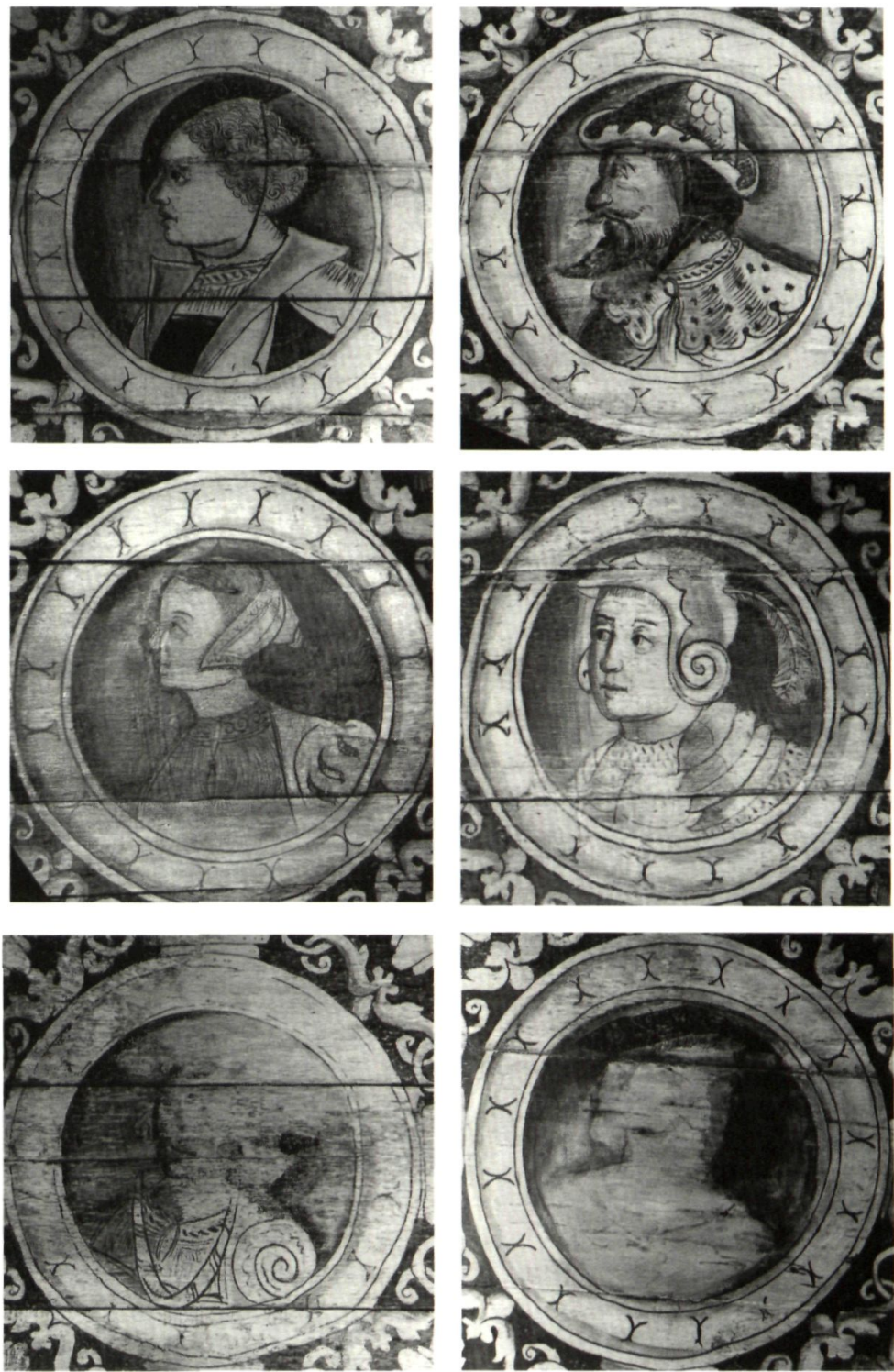


Fig. 8 Details of the portrait heads from the Winchester College ceiling. (Photograph by G. Palmer)

found their way to England for courtly use – some of the heads (QA) on the Winchester College ceiling seem indebted to direct Italian influence (Wilson 1987). Other characteristic devices which contributed to the vocabulary of the antique style were scrolls, dolphins, shells, elegant leafy foliage, tasselled cords, ribbons, architectural pieces such as balusters and candelabra, in whole or in part, cornices and tablets with handles. In the dissemination of this style, heraldic paraphernalia were added, while gothic elements were often retained surprisingly late: Bishop Gardiner's chapel and tomb in Winchester Cathedral, for example, has a gothic stone fan vault above a reredos in mature Renaissance style (Biddle 1993, 282–287). Serifed Roman letters and abbreviations in Latin biblical texts or heraldic mottos. Any or all of these elements might be assembled to form the design of metalwork, jewelry, embroidery, illumination, as well as painted or sculpted design. In regional contexts the problem is usually one of dating, since the fashion for the antique lasted well into the seventeenth century; indeed, one of the best proponents of it was Henry Peacham, who said in his textbook the *Art of Drawing*, published in 1606,

'Antique so called *ab antiquitate*, because the invention and use of these above all other kinds among the Grecians especially, was the most ancient and in greatest request, the Italians calleth it L'Antica; it hath the principall use in plate, cloaks, armour, all manner of compartments, curious architecture, borders of maps etc. . . . The forme of it is a general and (as I may say) an unnatural or unordered composition for delight's sake, of men, beasts, birds, fishes, flowers etc. without (as we say) Rime or Reason; for the greater variety you show in your invention, the more you please, but remembering to observe a method of continuation of one and the same thing throughout your whole work without change or altering. You may, if you choose draw naked boys riding and playing with their paper mills or bubble shels upon goats, eagles, dolphins etc; the bones of ramnes heads hung with strings of beads and Ribans, satyrs, Tritons, apes, cornucopias, doggs yoked and drawing cucumbers, cherries and any kind of wild trail or vine after your own invention, with a thousand more such idle things, so that herin you cannot be too fantastical . . '

By the end of the sixteenth century antique work could be produced at 16d a yard to order, as in William Heron's bill for Whitehall in 1574: 'For painting of xl (yards) of newe whyte and black Antika on the outside of the galleries towards the garden at xvid a yarde, liijs iiijd' (Croft-Murray 1962, 27).

A taste for the antique was carried from the capital by courtiers and successful churchmen to adorn their new country houses or tombs. Nicholas Poyntz had the east range of Acton Court, Gloucestershire built for the visit of Henry VIII and Queen Anne Boleyn in 1535. It has a remarkable wall painting showing adorsed dolphins between double balusters supporting a classical roundel with a female head in profile (Bell 1991, 124). Robert Sherburne, Bishop of Chichester, retained Lambert Barnard, a painter who may have been English but was influenced by Netherlandish painting. He carried out a number of commissions: the ambitious scheme in the Chichester Cathedral, the nine Heroines of Antiquity on panels which may have formed a frieze at his country residence at Amberley Castle (Fig 9) and a boarded, coffered ceiling in the Bishops Palace at Chichester (Fig 10) (Croft-Murray 1957, 114; 118). In Winchester, the introduction of antique detail can be attributed to Bishop Langton (d. 1501) but it was his successor Bishop Fox (1501–28) whose remodelling of the presbytery in the Cathedral incorporated full-blown Renaissance friezes on the screens walls. It was probably Fox who acquired the wooden chests, which may be of Italian workmanship, ready-made to hold the bones of the Anglo Saxon and Norman kings; the device of the putti supporting a plaque can be seen on one of these (King Edmund) (Biddle 1993, 275–278). It may have been Fox or Sherburne (Steer 1960, 3–4) who commissioned the (now repositioned) pierced wooden screen in the chapel of the hospital of St Cross, which has portrait heads in medallions beneath ogee arches; this motif, but surrounded by sparse and elegant foliage, recurs later in the Cathedral on the desk fronts of the choir stalls carved to celebrate the dissolution of the priory and the establishment of the New Foundation in 1541 (Biddle 1993, 279–81).



Fig. 9 Details of the portrait heads from the Winchester College ceiling. (Photograph by G. Palmer)

Interior decoration in the early sixteenth century

Wainscot or 'seelyng' panelling and partitions were becoming fashionable in gentlemen's houses from the mid-fifteenth century, often as modernising to medieval stone buildings. Ceilings were usually no more elaborate than the exposed joists of the upper floor with the underside of the floor boards visible. To create an effect of vaulting the joists were boarded in from the underside, for example in the Presence Chamber at Hampton Court (about 1535), where wooden ribs and pendants were nailed on to the surface in imitation of fan vaulting. However for those with a taste for the antique, a coffered ceiling in the Roman style could be created by making the applied ribs form rectangular patterns. The ribs in effect became the moulding around square or oblong coffer panels, even though the depth of moulding of the original classical model could not be achieved in this way. One of the earliest English coffered ceilings is that of Wolsey's Closet in Hampton Court, which is essentially a plain boarded ceiling divided into squares and octagons, the panels having applied papier mache devices in relief, the wooded mouldings painted and gilt, with a wooden boss with lead leaves at the intersections (Gotch 1901, 174-5). This also has a narrow frieze at the top of the walls with confronted mermen, vases and dolphins. At the Palace of Stirling, erected by James V of Scotland before 1542, more depth in relief was achieved by pinning inside each coffer square a large (70-80 cm) deeply-carved wooden roundel, each with a different garland of leaves, fruits or flowers framing a contemporary or classical head (Dunbar 1975).

The use of 'seelyng' for wall surfaces as well as ceilings is documented in a contract between Sir Thomas Kitson and his builder Thomas Neker, at work on Hengrave Hall in Suffolk c 1525-38 (Gotch 1901, 148, Pevsner 1974, 262-263). This could refer to either true panelling with rails and stiles, the commonest surviving type of sixteenth century panelling, exemplified in the linen fold panelling at the Vyne, or it could be the feather-edged boards set vertically which line the walls

of the Council Chamber at Compton Wynyates (Lloyd 1931, 74). A complete early sixteenth century interior which exhibits all the fashionable elements can be seen at Thame Park, Oxfordshire, where the Abbot's parlour was refurbished in 1530-9 for Abbot Robert King (Sherwood 1974, 809-811). This has a flat plastered ceiling divided by ribs into square compartments, with large moulded cross beams decorated with Renaissance foliage ornament and heads in roundels. Below there is a shallow frieze with trailing arabesques and mermaids, and beneath a deep frieze with applied carved decoration originally painted and gilded with heraldic devices and portrait heads in roundels. The walls are clad with linenfold panelling, continuing around the room to enclose an internal porch. This room, with its comfortable fireplace and recess for oriel window, sums up the standards of comfort and ornament that a successful churchman might aspire to in the 1530s. As in the warden's rooms at Winchester College, the owner's initials are applied conspicuously to the ceiling timbers (Figs 9 & 10).

On a more modest level, the goods of Francis Chaynye of the Soke, Winchester, who died in 1556, included in the hall 'a painted sealyng of waynescote bordes & one olde painted clothe, 3sh. 4d.'³

These examples securely place the Winchester scheme within the prevailing fashions of the first half of the sixteenth century. It is possible however to narrow the historical context for the creation of the scheme to one man's career and uniquely, to a specific public occasion, that of a Royal visit indicated by the repeated 'VIVE LE ROY' tablets on the frieze. During the career of John White there were three Royal visits to Winchester: from the point of view of a pro-Catholic, only the third offered any genuine reason for rejoicing, while the first two required considerable tact if the fortunes of the College were to be preserved. The opportunities and motivation, both political and domestic, that led to the decoration of the warden's lodgings are now examined by reference to the often dramatic events in the life of John White.



Fig. 10 Details of the portrait heads and of the medallion with the cipher I.W., from the Winchester College ceiling. (Photographs by G. Palmer)

John White

The initials or cypher IW which appear on the ceiling panels opposite each head, are generally held to be those of John White, warden of Winchester College from 1541 until October 1554. White's connections with Winchester College were of long standing. Born in Farnham in 1510, he entered the College as a scholar in

1521. After attaining his MA at New College in 1534, together with a mentor and patron in Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, he was appointed Headmaster (Pedagogus) of Winchester College in April 1535, when he was 25. The warden at this time was Edward More, who would have been responsible for organising the reception, that same year, of Thomas Cromwell's Commissioner Dr Lee, whose formal visitation



Fig. 11 Decorative ceiling of the Abbot's parlour at Thame Park, Oxfordshire. (Photograph by RCHME © Crown Copyright)

resulted in the College's exemption from the payment of tenths, along with that of other educational establishments, 'where youth and good wyttys be educate and nouryshed in vertue and larnyng.' Later, in September, Henry VIII came to Wolvesey Palace during his progress to the west country, when the College presented 'two oxen, ten sheep and twelve capons for his favour in matters concerning the College at a cost of £6. 7.4.'

In 1542 John White became Warden, and probably took Holy Orders at this time. He would then have moved into the suite of rooms reserved for the warden since John Morys' time, and which

he would have occupied until his resignation in October 1554, after he was appointed Bishop of Lincoln by Queen Mary. Herbert Chitty (1916, 75–76) refers to an inventory of plate made on 18 November 1554, taken for his successor John Boxall: "Item there remayneth with Mr Warden ii gobletts with one cover doble gilt left in the paynted chamber by my Lorde of Lincolne as yt apertythe by an inventorie in his own hande." (Chitty 1916, 76) This appears to be the only contemporary reference to the painted panels, perhaps because the Warden paid for the decoration of his rooms out of his own purse, rather than at the expense of the College which



Fig. 12 Engraving by Daniel Hopfer, ornament with grotesque sea-horse. (Photograph: Warburg Institute)

would have been evidence in the Bursar's account rolls.

If we accept that the 'painted chamber' was ordered during John White's wardenship and that it incorporated the panels and ceiling found in the warden's lodgings, the question remains as to what event occasioned its installation. Complimentary references to the sovereign (including badges, cyphers and mottos of a loyal nature) were normal elements of interior decoration at the time and the repeat 'vive le roi' inscriptions on the frieze suggest that a royal visit was anticipated. The threats hanging over the future of the College during the 1540s and 1550s might have been sufficient to justify a show of loyalty through the latter part of the reign of Henry VIII and of Edward VI. Probably only the death of Henry VIII in January 1547 averted the execution of the 1545 Act for the dissolution of Colleges, Chantries and Free chapels, which included Winchester College, hitherto explicitly exempt. On his accession, Edward VI once again ordered special exemptions to the Act, including the College which escaped dissolution, but the

Warden and Fellows were obliged to accept and carry out the (Protestant) Injunctions imposed by the Royal Commissioners in 1547. As a staunch Catholic, White must have felt his loyalty under strain. In 1550 he completed and sent to Louvain for publication *Diacosiomartyrion*, a book in Latin verse in support of the doctrine of Transubstantiation against the views of the Protestant theologian Peter Martyr, and he was subsequently committed to the Tower for receiving 'divers bookes and lettres from beyonde the sea.' There he received, by order of the Council, instruction from Archbishop Cranmer and was apparently 'reclaimed' since in May 1552 he was admitted to the prebend of Eccleshall in Lichfield Cathedral. It seems then that he would have been back in Winchester to welcome Edward VI when he made a state visit to the College in September 1552 and was received, as was customary for visiting sovereigns, with the presentation of congratulatory Latin verses by the boys.

Although it is possible that White was influenced by political expediency in his choice of

theme when decorating his rooms, and must, like others, have been capable of submerging his own religious leanings where the good of the College was concerned, the accession of a committed Catholic monarch would have been a genuine cause for celebration. On Mary's accession, Stephen Gardiner was made Lord High Chancellor and restored to the bishopric of Winchester. John White too rose to prominence, he sat on several commissions which restored bishops and preached in St Pauls on 25 November 1553 in favour of the restoration of religious processions.

The Royal wedding

At Mary's second parliament, called in April 1554, the marriage contract between the Queen and Philip of Spain was accepted. The organisation of the Royal wedding in Winchester, which took place on 25 July 1554, was a unique opportunity for display and celebration which was orchestrated by Gardiner who had a key role in the planning (Hilton 1937, 46). The practical arrangements were in hand by June 10th when he issued orders for the construction of the staging in the nave of the Cathedral, and the accommodation for the Queen in the Bishop's palace at Wolvesey must have been planned well in advance since John Elder refers to the verses written by the Bishop 'in a white field which heralds call silver with fair Roman letters of black, which they call sable, above the inner of the place where the two princes lay, a month before they came hither' (Hilton 1940, 49).

The marriage service in the Cathedral, a great Renaissance pageant enacted on a 'mount' in front of the altar screen, was conducted by Gardiner assisted by five other bishops including John White who had been made Bishop of Lincoln in April that year. Contemporary accounts by observers, some of them Spanish courtiers (Himsworth 1961), all emphasise the splendour and dignity of the occasion, and the extreme care taken over protocol and the order of precedence which would indicate the status of the new King, keenly watched by observers in both courts. Philip was created King of Naples and King of Jerusalem by his father the Emperor

Charles V on the eve of the marriage so that Mary should marry a King rather than a Prince. This news was announced by Gardiner to maximum effect just as the espousals were about to begin, making it the occasion for a 'goodly oration to the people.'⁴

White, as Bishop of Lincoln, still however retained the wardenship of the College until his successor could be appointed. The newly married King and Queen paid a state visit to the College which as Hilton (1937, 60) points out, was probably short since the Bursar's account roll records only the provision of beer and spices. They were received, probably at the gate (ad portas) with congratulatory verses celebrating the marriage and stressing the common line of descent of both sovereigns from John of Gaunt. These were composed by the boys and included some by the warden himself. It is not known whether the royal pair entered the warden's rooms, but they gave generously to the College, and their alms were divided between the Fellows' building account for the College sanatorium at Moundsmere, the headmaster Thomas Hyde, an usher, the Choristers, and the children who had written and presented the verses (Barnard 1969, 49-50).

An inscription liberally sprinkled with 'vive le roi' would have fitted well with White's hopes for a peaceful and devout reign ahead, and he may well have wished to leave a tribute behind him when he left the College; certainly he planned ahead and wrote his own epitaph, soliciting the reader's 'pious prayers and intercessions' for the engraved brass which was ordered before he became Bishop of Lincoln (Barnard 1969, 111-112).

How much notice would have been required for the decoration of the ceiling and wainscot frieze in the warden's rooms? Three months at best and possibly as little as one month would have been available – and White had other responsibilities which kept him away from Winchester. We know however that the ceiling boards and part of the frieze could have been in place as early as 1505 (the wardenship of John Rede, 1501-1520) presumably bare of paint since there is no evidence of underpainting. It is possible that the ceiling was painted soon after

White became warden in 1542. The ceiling is notably lacking in any reference to royalty and the lettering of the IW of White's initials have cleft serifs and a background of decoratively looped and tasselled cord, unlike the frieze lettering which is austere Roman: hence there is no obvious continuity in the overall decorative organisation of ceiling and frieze. While the wedding arrangements were being put into place, all that would still be required at the College would be an extension to the existing frieze in new English oak, and an order for painted decoration to the whole.

Lambert Barnard

The use of decorative capitals in White's cypher on the ceiling may give a clue to the identity of the painter, for which no documentary evidence survives. Lambert Barnard was employed as a painter by Robert Sherburne and received an annuity from the Dean and Chapter of Chichester Cathedral from 1533 until his death in 1567. The ceiling he painted for the Bishop's palace (1524–1535) has design similarities with the Winchester one: both are of the flat boarded kind with raised applied mouldings dividing the field into square coffers. At Chichester each coffer is filled with a roundel with the coat of arms and badges of Sherburne, with his initials RS, and those of other Sussex noblemen such as Lord de la Warr and the Earl of Arundel; these alternate with the Tudor rose badge and initials of the King (H) and Queen Katherine (K). The capital letters are essentially Roman with foliate serifs, and they are linked by a writhing ribbon design in the background. Renaissance arabesques are employed on almost all examples of Barnard's script which is often a distinctive hybrid of Roman and gothic letters (Croft Murray 1956, 118, Steer 1958) (Fig 10).

Barnard also decorated the Bishop's Great Chamber at Amberley Castle, which had been fashioned from a remodelling of the medieval hall. From surviving fragments and an early 19th century description it appears that there was a frieze of life-size half-length figures representing on one side the nine Heroes of Antiquity (none of which survive) and on the other the Nine

Heroines (eight of these are now in Pallant House, Chichester). They were grouped into threes, forming a trytych, within painted arched frames. The subjects are identified by verses beneath taken from a ballad, the Nine Ladies Worthy: they are Semiramis, ? Menalippe, Hyppolita, ? Lampedo, Sinope, Thomyris and Cassandra. They wear contemporary sixteenth-century costume, heavily embellished and bejewelled, with fantastic headdresses, helmets or crowns. Cassandra and Thomyris wear helmets, and all have shields with coats of arms invented for them according to the fashion of the day (Croft Murray 1956, 120–2) (Fig 14).

Both of these decorative schemes for the Bishop of Chichester could well have been known to John White and could have influenced his choice of design. It is indeed possible that he employed Barnard himself to carry out his own work. Contacts between Winchester and Chichester were close: Sherburne (1453/4–1536) had been a pupil at Winchester College and was Master of St Cross 1492–1508 (Steer 1960, 3). He was a benefactor to the College: as recorded in the Winchester College copy of his *Liber Donationum ac Fundationum*, with its Renaissance illumination, he endowed four prebends at Chichester Cathedral, to be held by former Wykhamists, hence perhaps his use of the College motto, 'Maners makyth man' which appears in the lady chapel vault of Chichester Cathedral painted by Barnard.

CONSERVATION

After their return to the College in 1946, the panels were kept in store, ultimately in the College Beer cellar, which has a stable environment friendly to woodwork. When examined in 1974, some of the panels had been assembled into groups on battens for exhibition, but were very discoloured and their subject hardly visible. It was clear that the first problem was that of handling, since the surface of the paint was flaking, and moving the boards would have jeopardised it further. Before any further examination could be attempted, they needed surface protection and

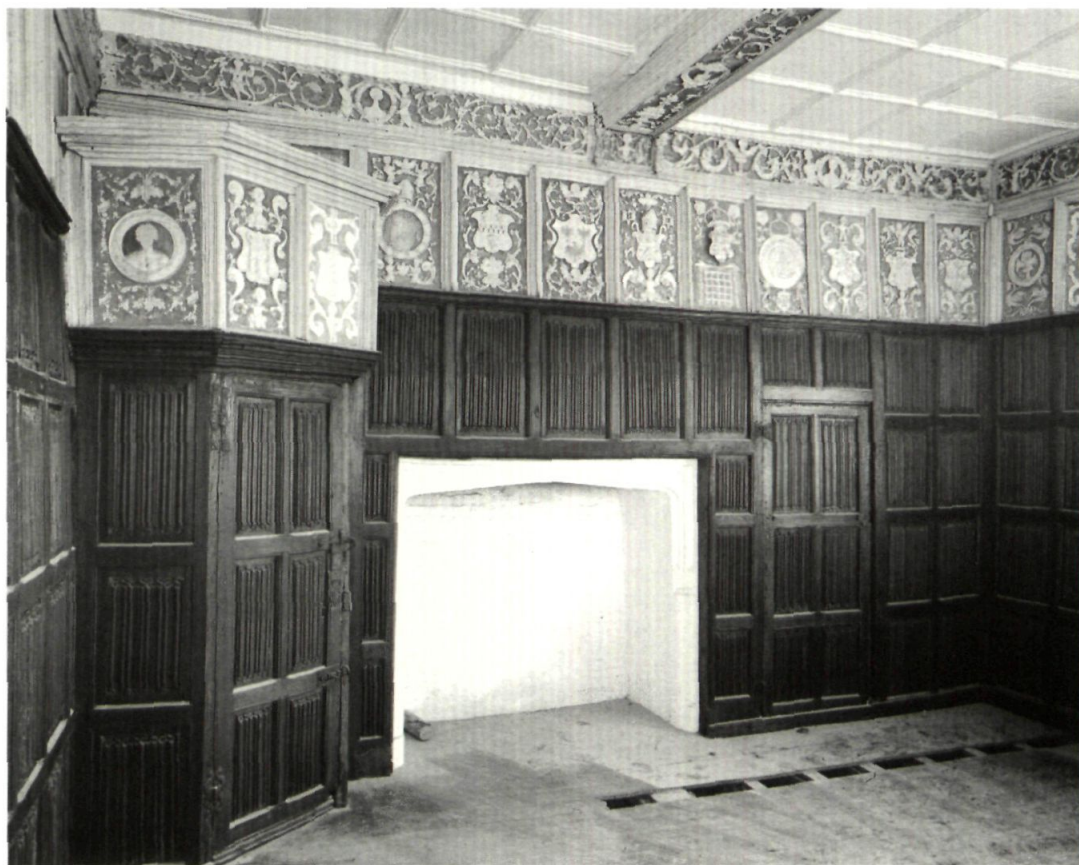


Fig. 13 The Abbot's Parlour at Thame Park: interior decoration with frieze and panelled walls. (Photograph by RCHME, © Crown Copyright)

photography. The Courtauld Institute agreed to carry out a photographic survey, board by board to a fixed scale, so that the photographs rather than the originals could be used like the pieces in a jigsaw puzzle to work out the form and extent of the ceiling and the frieze. After the photography was completed, two of the panels were sent to Pauline Plummer who worked out a strategy for their protection and conservation. In July 1978 all the remaining boards were covered in a protective film of Eltolene tissue fixed with a beeswax/dammar resin adhesive (5:2).

By now it was possible to appreciate the full

extent and importance of this remarkable survival of interior decorative art. It seemed a pity to return the boards to store: indeed the storage alone posed a problem for the College, so the debate on the feasibility of reinstating the whole scheme was reopened. The problems were financial, technical and logistical and it was recognised that conservation would have to be phased over a period of years. Once cleaned, the panels should be accessible to the public, but there was no appropriate site in the College since Tenth Chamber had been remodelled. However the City's Westgate is not dissimilar in size and construction to the Middle Gate of the College,



Fig. 14 Painted panels at Amberley Castle: three of the Nine Heroines of Antiquity – Cassandra, Sinope, Thomyris. (Photograph by J. Freeman, RCHME © Crown Copyright)

and it was agreed by the City and College authorities that this would make a good home for it. Grant aid from the Area Museums Service for S. E. England and from the Pilgrim's Trust ensured the project could go ahead (Lewis 1978, 16–17).

William Novis and Percy James Busby now joined the team and devised a programme whereby the ceiling panels could be mounted on a backing of three quarter inch plywood ready for handling and cleaning. They were grouped into modules of four boards, which equalled two square painted coffer panels with an IW roundel and a portrait head, (A–O) or four of the oblong ones (P, Q, R). The fifteen modules (forming 30 square panels) were arranged in three groups of five which exactly spanned the Westgate roof from north to south. The remaining oblong panels could be accommodated in the area above the east windows, beyond the main cross beam which would remain exposed. In order to accommodate the chequer board design of the alternating roundels, whilst keeping the heads and initials the right way up, it was necessary to break the one relationship of which we were certain, that between boards D and G which

were certainly originally adjacent. While the boards were still protected, all the remedial joinery was done (replacing missing planks in new oak and furring up). They were then returned to Pauline Plummer and her team who worked on the cleaning and consolidation in Winchester during visits made between 1978 and 1980.

No fragments remained of the original moulding that divided the panels into square coffers, and the only evidence lay in the unpainted areas of wood which indicated their position and width. Bishop Sherburne's ceiling at the Bishop's Palace at Chichester was examined and taken as a model for a slightly simplified version of the moulding, which was made up in pine and painted in black, red and yellow ochre. The Chichester ceiling has Gothicised foliate bosses at each intersection, but there was no evidence for this at Winchester, so this detail was omitted. After the paintwork was conserved, the panels were installed in the Westgate forming a suspended ceiling below the joists, but leaving the main beam exposed, the fixings being concealed beneath the new moulding (Lewis 1985, 16–23).

Conservation of the paintwork, by Pauline Plummer

The panels were deeply discoloured and flaking badly when I first saw them in 1976. I assumed them to be painted in oil on a gesso ground. A team worked in the College Beer Cellar in July 1977, when they faced the panels with Eltolene tissue and a beeswax/dammer resin adhesive in proportions 5:2. The joinery work was carried out next, and from March 1978 work continued on the panels, now mounted on plywood backboards. This work first involved treating and painting the new oak, since they would have become waxy during the removal of the facing of the adjacent, painted areas. Any flaws or holes were filled with epoxy wood resin and Liquitex paste (acrylic with marble dust). The grain was filled with a paste of 1:1 fine surface polyfilla and Cryla Primer. On drying this surface was lightly sanded and a tinted coat of Cryla Primer applied. Colours were yellow ochre, raw umber and a little black.

Once the surface of the new boards was safely sealed with Cryla, the waxed surface of the adjacent old boards could be treated. First, the panels were ironed to drive the wax under the loose paint, thus fixing it, and when all was secure, the paper was removed using white spirit and a little heat from a hot air blower. The panels were cleaned thoroughly with white spirit to remove all the surplus wax. Care had to be taken with the black linework which was unstable.

As with the new boards, holes and flaws were filled with Mendex and Liquitex paste. After various tests, it was found that a mixture of 1:1:1 water, white spirit and Vulpex soap was the most satisfactory for removing the discolouration of the original painting. It was washed off again very thoroughly with white spirit to remove all residues.

At this stage it was realised that the original paintings must have been size-based, not oil as had been thought. The texture and presence of tiny holes were convincing proof. However, the fixing with wax had not darkened the light background noticeably, the paint was very well bound. Nor did the cleaning with a mixture containing water prove a problem for the

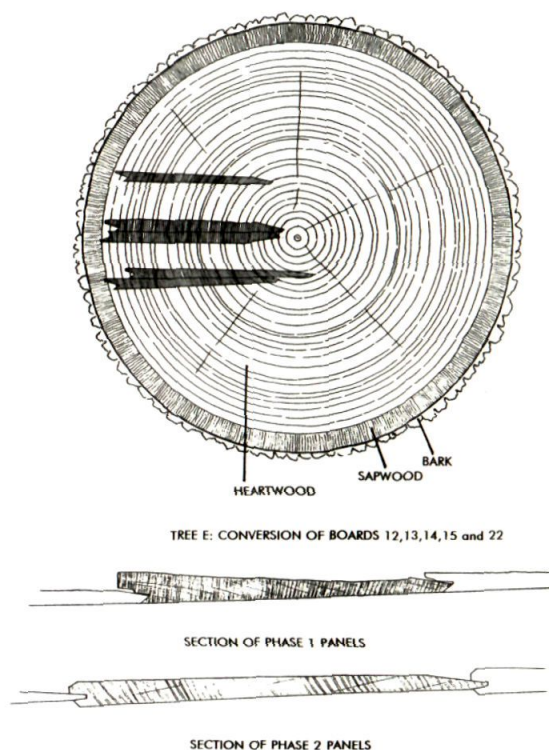


Fig. 15 Diagram to show method of converting panel boards from the tree; different jointing techniques for Phase 1 and Phase 2 boards.

background. The umber shadows and black lines were sensitive, and the background was carefully cleaned round them. Cleaning brought up the lights remarkably well in comparison with their former state.

When the original panels dried out, they were given a very thin coat of Ketone N and Cosmoloid wax varnish. This was intended as a slight barrier against dust, and to provide an insulating layer between the original and any retouching which might actually cover original material.

Retouching of the original painting and reconstruction of the new panels were both carried out with Cryla artists paints (flow formula). The new boards were painted with a light background colour, white and a little yellow ochre and raw umber. The outlines of

the designs were drawn in charcoal, and then painted and glazed down where appropriate. Colours were raw and burnt umber, and ivory black. These new panels were not given any final coating, nor was any applied to the original paint after retouching. Where serious abrasion had obliterated the detail of the heads, or large amounts of the decorative background, as in panel R.I., it was decided not to attempt retouching; otherwise, the policy was to retouch the decorative background in order to preserve the linear integrity of the design.

The frieze was stored until the winter of 1980–81. The boards were mounted in a similar way to the ceiling panels, with new oak used to fill in gaps and create an even lower edge. Only those boards that formed a continuous design (Phase 1) were used; these fell into two groups, one of 7 boards which would fit over the Westgate fireplace, and the other of 8 boards for the opposite wall. The remaining boards were stored. The treatment and materials used were the same as those for the ceiling.

CONCLUSION

The cleaning and organisation of the Winchester College ceiling and frieze confirmed the extent, size and character of a remarkable decorative scheme first discovered in 1885.

Dendrochronology indicates that the joinery is of two phases, the ceiling and part of the frieze dating to 1498–1505. The remaining frieze boards were not made until after 1547, supporting Kirby's view that the decoration of the frieze was commissioned by the warden John White in celebration of the marriage of Mary I and Philip of Spain in Winchester in 1554. The early diffusion of the Antique style and its sophisticated and scholarly application in domestic as well as ecclesiastical settings is evident in both Chichester and Winchester in the first half of the sixteenth century, fostered by churchmen like Robert Sherburne, and it made Renaissance ornament the natural choice for the Winchester College warden intent on bringing his draughty medieval quarters up to date by fitting them out comfortably in painted wainscot.

Appendix 1

There follows a catalogue of the portrait busts. The position of the portrait medallion in relation to the medallion with the IW initials, which shares the same panel, is indicated left or right.

A. (r.) Profile facing right of a youth in an antique helmet.

B. (r.) Profile head of a youth facing left, wearing a doublet with slashed sleeves and an antique helmet.

C. (r.) Three-quarters view head of a man facing right, with beard and moustache, wearing a scarf over his head and a corded cloak.

D. (l.) Profile facing left of an antique male head, with an aquiline nose, wearing a laurel wreath and toga, evidently a Roman emperor.

E. (l.) Three-quarters view of a youth facing left, wearing a felt hat with punched ornament.

F. (l.) Three-quarters view of a woman facing right, wearing an English hood with the tail of the hood secured on top of her head; gown with square cut neckline with gathered undershift.

G. (r.) Profile head of a young man facing left, wearing a coat with revers over a shirt gathered to the neck and doublet, and a small hat on the side of his head with a loose cord beneath his chin.

H. (r.) Profile of a bearded man facing left, wearing a hat with a curled and cut rim and a coat with a scalloped (permine) collar buttoned at the chin.

I. (r.) Profile of a woman facing left, wearing a gown with slashed sleeves, square cut bodice over an undershift gathered at the neck and a French hood set back over the hair.

J. (l.) Three-quarters view of a young man facing left wearing a helmet with a plume and chain armour with plates.

K. (l.) Very worn profile of a head facing left in armour.

L. (l.) Plank missing where painted roundel and head was.

M. (r.) Three-quarters view of a female head facing right wearing a veiled headdress, in a gown with a collar turned back to form revers, over a shift gathered at the neck.

N. (r.) Three-quarters view of a woman facing left wearing a hat over a headdress, square-necked bodice over shift gathered at the neck with an embroidered band.

O. (r.) Profile of a bearded man facing right, wearing a scarf or cloth over his head, a closely buttoned cloak with a collar.

P1. (l.) Profile facing left of a bearded man in a felt hat with the brim folded back at the front, and a badge pinned to the side, large earring. His cloak is pinned at neck and has a hood; evidently a traveller or pilgrim.

P2. (r.) Three-quarters view of a young man facing left wearing antique armour with pauldrons decorated with lions' masks, a complicated helmet with a ribbon secured at the earpieces.

Q1. (l.) Profile head of a woman facing right. Wearing an embroidered or brocade gown with heavy sleeves, laced up the back, and on her head

a circular hat with a curled plume over a crimped linen cap.

Q2. (r.) Three-quarters view of a woman facing right, wearing a round-necked bodice over a partlet gathered to an embroidered neck band. On her head a headdress set back from her hair parting with ear pieces from which starched ribbons flutter.

R1. (l.) (panel worn) Three-quarters view of female head facing left, wearing a broad-brimmed hat with a bunch of striped feathers over a cap or caul with ear pieces.

R2. (r.) Three-quarters view of a man facing left, wearing a jacket with an ermine collar over a square necked doublet and shirt gathered to the neck, flat hat on side of the head.

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Notes

^a The author is grateful for the assistance of Mr A Gallimore with the measuring and dating.

¹ 'Mistress Quickly: By the heavenly ground I tread on, I must be fain to pawn both my plate and the tapestry of my dining chambers.

Falstaff: Glasses, glasses is the only drinking; and for thy walls, a pretty slight drollery, or the story of the Prodigal, or the German hunting in waterwork, is worth a thousand of these bedhangings and these flea bitten tapestries.'

² Allowing for missing panels, the frieze and ceiling could have fitted the warden's room in the east range, which measured about 35 ft x 19 ft. The Election Chamber over the gate, and the room above, each have a ceiling area of 18 ft 7 ins x 20 ft 9 ins. The surviving square panels cover an area of 16 ft 4 ins x 20 ft 10 ins, which would fit one of the gate chambers quite neatly as they stand. Election Chamber has four tall medieval windows (restored from eighteenth century sashes after 1893), shown in Herbert Marsall's drawing of 1893 (Arnold 1893, 28) and there is insufficient space

above them for the frieze, but it is quite possible that sixteenth century wardens made the whole room more comfortable by putting in low casements and wainscot, of which an odd assembly of linenfold and square panelling survives, hardly changed since J. Radcliffe published his interior view of this room (Adams 1878, 44).

The oblong panels have been laid out to fit an area of 20 ft x 4 ft, which may have been for an alcove or passage or ante chamber. (There is such a chamber behind the staircase to the west, reached by a door from the warden's room in Middle gate.)

³ Information from Karen Parker.

⁴ The initials PR on the fireplace in the former posser's Servants' Room in the College are thought to stand for Phillipus Rex. (Himsworth 1961, 82)

⁵ The author is grateful for the assistance of Mr A Gallimore with the measuring and dating.

⁶ The 1447 inventory of Richard Thomas, merchant of Southampton, lists amongst his extensive stock of building materials and maritime goods, old wainscot and one hundred of Baltic oak (*Rigoldorum*), which was commonly used for wainscot. (Roberts and Parker 1991, 8-9)

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