



SAINT EDMUND'S CHAPEL
DOVER

AND

ITS RESTORATION

TERENCE EDMUND TANNER



LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Plate 1 St Richard consecrating St Edmund's Chapel</i>	4
<i>Plate 2 St Richard dying in the Maison Dieu</i>	6
<i>Plate 3 The Maison Dieu</i>	10
<i>Plate 4 The Chapel as a Forge</i>	14
<i>Plate 5 Exterior of the Chapel being restored</i>	17
<i>Plate 6 The Carpenter at work</i>	19
<i>Plate 7 The Mason at work</i>	20
<i>Plate 8 The Chapel before restoration commenced</i>	24
<i>Plate 9 The Exterior of the Chapel nearing completion</i>	25
<i>Plate 10 Ground Plan of the Chapel</i>	26
<i>Plate 11 The Seal of St Edmund—obverse</i>	29
<i>Plate 12 The Seal of St Edmund—reverse</i>	29
<i>Plate 13 The Seal of St Richard—obverse</i>	30
<i>Plate 14 The Seal of St Richard—reverse</i>	30
<i>Plate 15 The Shrine of St Edmund of Canterbury, Pontigny Abbey</i>	32
<i>Plate 16 Robert Forsyth's carving of St Richard in the Maison Dieu</i>	38

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FOREWORD

THE reader of this story might charitably think that I know a little about many things. Let me disillusion him. Knowing the right people saves trouble in many departments of life.

I want this account of St Edmund's Chapel, Dover, to read easily for the ordinary resident of Dover and the passing visitor. So little of it is my own, that almost every line could be punctuated with references.

As I have kept references to a minimum, let me acknowledge my authorities, and assure my readers that one or other would vouch for the accuracy of what is written:

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<i>Archaeology</i>	Mr Brian Philp, A.C.C.S., of the Kent Archaeological Research Groups' Council.
<i>Seals</i>	Mr P. H. Lawson, of the Department of MSS., British Museum.

Father Whatmore has been a friend for many years.

One of the nice things about the restoration of this Chapel is that all these are now my friends.

SAINT EDMUND'S CHAPEL, DOVER AND ITS RESTORATION

THE CONSECRATION OF THE CHAPEL AND THE DEATH OF ST RICHARD

ST EDMUND'S CHAPEL is unique. It is the first Chapel consecrated to St Edmund, and claims to be the only Chapel still standing consecrated by an English canonized saint to the honour of an English canonized saint. St Edmund and St Richard were the first two scholars of the University of Oxford to be canonized.

St Richard's confessor, the Dominican priest, Ralph Bocking, in his *Life of St Richard*, published about 1270, wrote:

In the course of preaching (the Crusade), Richard came to the famous Kent port called Dover, and he stayed in the Maison Dieu in that town. He was asked by the Master (*Michael de Kenebaston, 1248-71*) and Brethren of this hospice to consecrate a chapel to the honour of St Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, his former master and patron, which they had just built in their Cemetery for the Poor.

His face (indeed his whole body) lit up with joy, and he gladly agreed to their request. He went to the Chapel and solemnly consecrated it with great devotion.

It is in these words that St Edmund's Chapel, Dover, comes into recorded history. The day was *Laetare Sunday*, 30th March 1253. It was the fulfilment of a wish that Richard had cherished for nine years. The people of Dover gathered around the Chapel and in his sermon (which was a model of brevity), St Richard left nothing unsaid in emphasizing the uniqueness of the occasion. He said:

Dearly beloved: I ask you to bless and praise the Lord with me for allowing me to be present at this consecration, to his honour and to the honour of our beloved father, St Edmund. Ever since I was consecrated bishop, it has been my deepest wish—something I have prayed for with all my strength—that

before my death, I should consecrate at least one church to his memory. From the very depths of my heart, I thank God that he has not cheated me of my heart's desire. And now, brethren, I know that I am shortly to die and I commend my soul to your prayers.

He finished mass, blessed the people, and went back to the Maison Dieu. He had fulfilled his last wish, preached his last sermon and said his last mass.

John Capgrave (1393-1474), who edited an anonymous *Life of St Richard*, written some years before Bocking's, probably in connection with the canonization of St Richard, tells of the next few days:

On the day following the dedication, weak from his many labours and sickness, and not realizing at his usual hour of rising that his strength was leaving him, he went to chapel and began to sing the divine office. When, however, he stood up to say mass, his limbs could no longer support him. He fell fainting to the ground. His friends carried him in their arms and laid him on his bed. He told William, his Chaplain, that he would not recover from this illness, and ordered him to prepare carefully everything that was necessary for his funeral, lest his 'familia' should be worried about the arrangements. He told Simon of Tarring the day on which he would die. He asked that a crucifix should be brought to him, and with great devotion he kissed the places of the sacred wounds; and he began to caress it very gently, as if he saw our Saviour in the very act of dying, and he said: 'I give thanks to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits which you have given me, for all the pains and insults which you have borne for me: on account of which this sad lament escaped your lips "There is no sorrow like unto my sorrow". You, Lord, know that if you wanted, I would suffer all manner of insults and torture, and death itself for you, and since you know that this is true, have mercy on me because I commend my soul to you.' He frequently repeated the words of the psalmist: 'Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit'. And turning to Our Lady, both in his heart and on his lips, he said: 'Mary, mother of grace, mother of mercy, protect us against our enemy, and receive us at the hour of our death'. He told his Chaplains not to cease repeating these words in his ear. As he prayed, surrounded by priests, religious, clerics and the faithful laymen, the blessed Richard gave back his soul to his Creator.



Plate 1. St. Richard consecrating St. Edmund's Chapel

(C. Howard & Son Ltd., Chichester, Sussex)

He departed this world about the fifty-sixth year of his life, and the ninth year of his pontificate: on the third day of April, at midnight. His body, which had endured so many vigils and been broken by the hard earth on which he had so often lain, was emaciated by his fasts and frail on account of his austerities, but after his death it was radiant and glowed with an unnatural light.

Ralph Bocking, in his fuller account of Richard's death, gives more details about his foretelling of the actual day of his death. Simon of Tarring, faithful as always, was close to his bed, and as Richard grew weak, he said: 'My lord, the celebration of Our Lord's Passion is close at hand, and as you have been a sharer in his sufferings, by his grace you will be a sharer in his joy'. The saint smiled and, applying to himself the words of the psalmist, said: 'I was glad when they said to me "We will go into the house of the Lord"', and turning to Simon, he said: 'I will share in the great feast on Friday', and because his speech was so weak, Simon did not hear him, and kept quiet. Then the bishop said: 'Did you not understand me? Is not today Wednesday?' and Simon said, 'Yes, my lord', and the saint said: 'Well, not tomorrow, Thursday, but the next day, Friday, I will share in the feast'.

In many modern accounts of St. Richard's death it is written that he died on Good Friday, 3rd April 1253. Some writers add the flourish that he died at 3 p.m., and there is even one who, for good measure, asserts that he died at 3 p.m., repeating the words: 'Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit'.

The chronology of his last week, however, was:

- Sunday — March 30th. Mid-Lent Sunday: consecrated St Edmund's Chapel.
- Monday — March 31st. Taken ill.
- Thursday — April 3rd. Died 'about midnight'.

This is confirmed by Ralph Bocking, who proves himself a reliable witness, and by reference to the calendar of 1253. Good Friday that year was on 18th April.

In his last days Richard concentrated solely on dying. When a doctor was called and wanted to take specimens he said:

'What on earth is the use of making further examination of my body when death is already at the door. It is clear that I am shortly to leave this body behind me, and what matters now is that I should think about the Lord.'



Photo 2. St. Richard lying in the bed

St. Edmund's Chapel, Dover

As Bocking commented:

'He seemed to put away all the concern a Martha has for many things. He wanted only one thing—what Mary was praised for because she had chosen it above everything else.'

After Richard's death, and especially after his canonization (January 1262), St Edmund's Chapel, as well as being the Chapel for the Cemetery of the Poor, was a place of pilgrimage.

Many people living in Dover today can tell you of bones and chalk tombs found in the ground, close to St Edmund's Chapel. It has always been so. Mr Ravington Jones' transcript of the Hammond MSS., p. 22 (Drawer No. 214, in the Court Room, Maison Dieu, Dover), reads: 'St Edmund's Chapel is now—A.D. 1764—to be seen entire, and a vast number of human bones have lately been discovered near it'. And C. R. Haines (*Dover Priory*, 1930, p. 150) tells of a rather gruesome event. The floor of the Comet Inn, which stood in Priory Road immediately south of the Chapel, fell in and a vault was discovered, containing chalk coffins placed on shelves. Mr Barnes, the proprietor of the Comet Inn, kept one of the skulls and it was still on the mantelpiece when his widow died in 1891.

It is, however, as a thirteenth-century Pilgrimage Chapel that St Edmund's has most interest.

In the floor beside the altar, there is a small cist (pronounced 'kist') which is almost without doubt the spot where the bowels of St Richard were buried.

To us in the twentieth century the mention of bowels has rather unpleasant associations, but in the thirteenth century people were not so squeamish, or perhaps they were more biblical. 'Bowels' in the Bible is associated with mercy, and in particular, with God's mercy towards man (Ps. xxiv, 6; Luke i, 78; I John iii, 17—among many that could be quoted).

It was a common medieval practice to 'eviscerate' a dead person to slow down the process of corruption when there was a time-lapse between death and burial.

Besides Ralph Bocking, with Richard when he died was another friend—Simon, Vicar of Tarring (near Worthing), who had taken him in when Henry III threatened with dire penalties anyone who fed or housed him.

These two men presided over the arrangements for Richard's burial. That the disembowelling was not just a practical precaution

to prevent too-rapid decomposition is amply testified by what Ralph Bocking wrote in his *Life of St Richard*:

Before his death, Richard had willed that his body should be buried in his Cathedral Church at Chichester, which is quite a long way from the place where he died. I think, therefore, that it was not so much by human design as by divine providence that he, who during his life had never shut the bowels of his mercy to the needs of the poor, should, in his death, give the bowels of his body to the poor. So it was that when his bowels were taken from his body, they were reverently buried in the Chapel of the Cemetery of the Poor, which just previously he had dedicated to the honour of St Edmund, the Confessor. Can anyone doubt that this was not well done? His very bowels preserved the memory of St Edmund. For his words and his last will and testament prove that he loved Edmund to the innermost depths of his being.

At the spot where his bowels were buried, many favours were granted to those who prayed 'through the bowels of the divine mercy and by the merits of St Richard'.

When the Chapel was being restored, it was considered possible that the 'bowels of St Richard' had been placed in an urn or wooden box or leather bag since it was obvious that Ralph Bocking had considered them a precious relic. It was decided, therefore, to invite a team led by Brian Philp, the well-known Kent archaeologist, to excavate the inside area of the Chapel. Many of the results appear elsewhere in this story, but I record here in some detail those which concern the relics of St Richard.

A priori, it was considered probable that the relic would have been buried near the altar. It was also thought that the altar would have been at the east end of the Chapel. The first excavation was, therefore, at the east end. This revealed a lot about the history of the Chapel, but although the dig went back, through the Roman level, to the undisturbed 'natural' level of the earth, no sign was found of anything to suggest a thirteenth-century burial.

The finds of this trial excavation were so interesting that the next days were taken up with further excavations to confirm and enlarge its findings. The base of the altar had now been located in the eastern half of the Chapel, more towards the middle than the eastern end.

It was only on the last day of the dig that excavations were made near the altar base. These revealed a small cist to the south side of the altar. The original 'hole' had been some thirty-four inches long, and some twenty-two inches wide. It had been dug into the earth without any dressing. The base was earth. The sides had then been roughly plastered with puddled chalk. This had simply been hand-pressed round the sides of the hole, about three inches thick. The resulting cavity had been filled in with loose earth from the thirteenth-century layer of the Chapel's soil, and covered with a layer of chalk and mortar.

What led to the discovery of this cist was a round hole, three inches in diameter, at a very, very slight angle, inclining to the altar. This hole was found to be eleven inches in depth. Undoubtedly a wooden stake had originally been placed in the loose earth of the cist and protruded out of the cist and touched the altar. The stake had rotted away. The cist was partially sealed by the base of the altar.

It was very probably of thirteenth-century origin. It was certainly constructed to bury something. That 'thing' was important enough to merit a stake to indicate its exact position. Its position, at the base of the altar, indicates both the importance and the sacredness of what was buried. No mason was responsible for such a poor construction, which could suggest haste, consistent with a death and disembowelling.

Read again what the eye-witness, Ralph Bocking, wrote: 'At this spot many favours were granted', and there seems no reasonable doubt that this is the spot where the bowels of St Richard were buried.

No trace of an urn, a wooden box, or a leather bag was found. The slab of chalk and mortar which had covered the cist had prevented the loose earth inside from being subjected to any downward pressure, and when uncovered it was still remarkably loose. Had there been a container which in the course of time had rotted away, there would have been some settlement in this loose earth. The indications are, therefore, that this cist was prepared on the orders of Ralph Bocking and Simon of Tarring: that St Richard's bowels were reverently ('venerabiliter') deposited in it and covered with loose earth, and that the cavity was then slabbed over.

The question can be asked whether the stake was intended only 'to indicate the spot'?



Plate 3. The Maison Dieu

(Ray Warner Ltd, Dover)

Ralph Bocking continues:

As soon as his body, robed in his episcopal vestments, had been put in its coffin, a great crowd of people came from everywhere, to be present at the funeral of a man worthy of such veneration. That man was counted lucky who touched the coffin, or even the hem of the vestments, or who could touch with a ring or other ornament his face, hands, or feet. Whatever had touched the saint was considered to have been made holy and was kept as a relic.

It would not have been extraordinary in the middle ages if this stake had been a way of 'touching the saint', on the principle that what you do by another, you yourself do.

Strangely, there is corroboratory evidence in the case of St Edmund that the Chapel where the bowels were buried was not without significance.

St Edmund died at Soisy on 16th November 1240, and, as his body was to be taken to Pontigny to be buried, he, too, was eviscerated. Doctor C. H. Lawrence, in his *Life of St Edmund* (Oxford University Press, 1960, pp. 14 and 15), writes:

After the body had been embalmed, therefore, the clerks set off with the remains of their archbishop. The procession met with impressive demonstrations of popular devotion all along the route. At the village of Trainel enthusiasm became so intense that the abbot of Pontigny began to fear for the safety of his precious freight and decided to take a strong line with the thaumaturge. The saint was invoked and ordered in virtue of obedience (he was a confrater of Pontigny) to desist from his miracles until the procession reached home. Thereafter progress was better. In these propitious circumstances no time was lost in petitioning for a papal commission of inquiry. The earliest dated letter of postulation was dispatched in December 1240, by the abbot of Provins where St Edmund's entrails were buried.

It was the abbot of Provins, where his bowels were buried, who initiated the process of Canonization a month after Edmund's death, though 'the main initiative came from Pontigny'.

THE DISSOLUTION AND THE RE-DISCOVERY OF THE CHAPEL

PRESUMABLY, St Edmund's Chapel was still a place of pilgrimage at the time of the Reformation. In 1534, the Master and Brethren took the oath in support of royal supremacy, as required of them by the King's commissioners.

The monasteries and friaries were all dissolved by 1540, but hospitals, such as the Maison Dieu, were left for more piecemeal treatment. Possibly the Maison Dieu, like the Hospitals for Poor Priests and Eastbridge at Canterbury, would have continued to serve its various charitable purposes into Elizabethan times if, on the completion of the King's new harbour works, covetous eyes had not turned upon it. On his way to Calais in June 1544, Sir John Russell, Lord Privy Seal, reported from Dover to the King's Council that there was great need of a victualling yard there for the King's armed forces. He suggested that the appropriation of the

buildings of the Maison Dieu for that purpose would be 'the godliest act ever King made these thousand years within the realm'. On 11th December 1544, the Master and Brethren duly signed the surrender of the Maison Dieu, St Edmund's Chapel, and all its other property to King Henry VIII.

There is an obvious link between the surrender of the Maison Dieu with St Edmund's Chapel and the building of Dover Harbour. Both John Thomson, who was the Master of the Maison Dieu at the time of the surrender, and John Clerke, who was Master at the time of the taking of the oath of supremacy, were surveyors of the building of the Harbour. Antony Aucher, who was with Sir John Russell, in a letter to Cromwell describes Thomson as 'covetous and knowing nothing of what he was doing; he began this labour without experience, but even as a blind man casts his staff; and so hath builded until this day, thinking he hath done well, and is clean deceived'. Nevertheless, Thomson (who, incidentally, was also Vicar of St James' Church) was appointed Overseer of the King's water works at Dover in January 1541—perhaps in return for having made over to the King for the building of Sandgate Castle 526 pounds of iron from the Maison Dieu, and for having prompted the suggestion that the Maison Dieu, with St Edmund's Chapel, should be taken over as a brew-house, bake-house, and other offices. Apparently, he was not very successful as a surveyor at Dover Harbour. Several times he wrote to Cromwell, when mishap followed mishap, explaining that as he had been poisoned he had not been able to oversee the work properly, or that the weather had been atrocious.

The exact use to which the Chapel was put at this period is not known. In the course of the centuries buildings were built and re-built to its north, south, east and west. At times, these buildings abutted the Chapel itself. It was so hemmed in that it was lost to view and forgotten. Even when it was re-discovered, it was at first thought to be St John the Baptist's Church which, before the Reformation, stood 'by the Maison Dieu'.

The re-discovery of the Chapel is of such interest that I make no apology for quoting in full a paper read by Mr E. P. Loftus Brock, F.S.A., Honorary Secretary of the British Archaeological Association, published in the Association's Journal, Volume, XL (1884, pp. 229-30):

It will be within the memory of many now present, that during the recent Congress at Dover (August 1883) we had an interesting

paper on the old churches of the town by the Rev. Canon Scott-Robertson. At its close a discussion ensued, in the course of which Edward Knocker, Esq., F.S.A., said he had heard of the existence of some ancient masonry behind the houses and shops in Biggin Street, not far from the Maison Dieu, which belonged possibly to one or another of the churches, the sites of which he considered were not ascertained. I learned from Mr Knocker, after the lecture, that the remains were difficult of access, and that he had heard of them from a gentleman resident in Pengecster Street. I made it a part of my duty to this association to survey the spot prior to my leaving the town, and I now report the result.

There is more to be traced than some mere masses of masonry. There is a small building all but perfect. The walls are intact, except that they have been cut into and altered; and the original roof covered with tiles, remains. It is a small chapel built east and west, and measuring 28 feet in length by 14 feet in breadth. The walls are of rubble masonry, 2 feet thick, having quoins and dressings of Caen stone. There is a plain pointed western doorway of two orders, having roll-mouldings. There has been a small lancet window in the gables once, of which the jambs still remain. Two simple, lancet-headed windows, widely splayed, have given light in the north and south aisles alike; and the east end has had, apparently, a couple of similar windows. There are no buttresses and no ornamental portions, if we except a moulded string-course which has existed internally below the sills of the windows. It can be traced at intervals here and there, in mutilated condition.

The roof is of fairly high pitch, and it has had tie-beams, collars and struts; the former having only recently been sawn through and removed when the upper part of the roof was filled up for storage purposes, lining it with match-board and inserting sky-lights. The present use is entirely for trade purposes. A blacksmith has the east end. Doors are broken through the walls, a fireplace erected, a division-wall inserted, new windows, and a floor over the whole. The building is hemmed in by either the backs of the shops in Biggin Street, or by the newly-built shops in Priory Road, from which the blacksmith has a narrow approach to his workshop. The chapel, therefore, as a whole cannot be seen at once, and its exterior can only be made out piecemeal from the various surrounding buildings (p. 230). It is, therefore, not at all remarkable that its existence has not been hitherto generally



Plate 4. The Chapel as a Forge

(Miss Mabel Martin, Dover)

known. The south side is quite hidden, and it is a matter of some difficulty now to realize that this was once a detached building in full view of every passer-by.

The position must have been a conspicuous one, standing at the entry of the town, at its northern or principal approach, and close under, and outside, the boundary-wall of the great Priory of St Martin's, which was on the opposite side of Priory Road. The details of the simple architecture show clearly that the date is of the end of the twelfth century or the beginning of the thirteenth. It has been one of the once numerous wayside-chapels, but whether or not belonging to St Martin's Priory, probably future observations may determine. Although of such moderate dimensions, its existence is worthy of record, not only as a matter of local interest, but as an example of a class of buildings of which we possess few examples.

The Chapel must have passed out of living memory shortly before Mr Loftus Brock visited it, for in the Abstract of Title deeds in 1840 (which are in my possession) it is described as 'Ancient Chapel', but in the Abstract of 1887 as a 'Store'.

It does not seem to have been identified as St Edmund's Chapel until some years later. The Reverend T. S. Frampton, F.S.A., first mentions it by its right dedication in an article, 'St Richard at Dover', in St Mary's (Dover) Parish Magazine, in July 1909, and Mr Arthur Hussey gave it wider circulation in a series of notes on 'Chapels in Kent' (*Archaeologia Cantiana*, Vol. XXIX, 1911, p. 234).

When the Chapel came into my possession in 1965, it was much as Mr Loftus Brock had seen it. The bottom half of the west door had been bricked up and a window had been inserted into the upper half. Two doors had been inserted into the north wall—a single door, where the vestment cupboard now is, and a double door between the two windows. The window at the west end of the north wall had been increased in width and the window at the east end of this wall had been partially bricked in. The semi-circular headed window, high up in the east wall had been match-boarded over, and the larger window below had been bricked in. On the south wall, the window at the west end had not been altered, but the window at the east end had been bricked in. The floor had been raised eighteen inches and concreted over, and in the angle of the north and east walls a fireplace had been inserted, complete with chimney breast.

Against the inside of the west wall a lavatory and kitchen sink had been built, and a staircase leading to the floor above. Upstairs, the walls and roof had been match-boarded over and another fireplace inserted in the angle of the north and east walls. Light was by two sky-lights inserted into the roof. If it was hard to identify as a Chapel from the outside, it was harder to identify as a Chapel from the inside. Yet, incredibly, a large amount of the original material remained—in the walls, in the hardcore that has been used to raise the floor level, and in the ground nearby.

The two shops which stood in Priory Road, and hemmed in the Chapel, were destroyed by shells on 24th August 1943. Their ruins had been levelled and earthed over, and there was a small garden at pavement level.

Only some of the uses to which the Chapel had been put between 1544 and 1965 are known.

At the time I bought it, it was the Headquarters of the Buckland Branch of Toc H. The upstairs room was their meeting place. Downstairs, they chopped and sawed wood for distribution as firewood to old people, and made and repaired toys as Christmas presents for poor children. They had been there for twenty years.

Before that, the Chapel had been used as a workshop by Mr G. Isaacson, who is described in an Abstract of Titles, drawn up in 1933, and in the Dover Directory of 1925, as a blacksmith, but is always described by those who knew him as a whitesmith. At the time when Miss Mabel Martin did her drawing of the Old Forge (Plate 4), Mr Isaacson was very proud of the fact that he was working in one of the oldest chapels in the land while his son was preaching in one of the newest churches.

Before him, a Frederick Turtle, described as whitesmith, plumber and electrician, used the Chapel as his workshop. It was he who gave the Reverend T. S. Frampton permission to inspect it.

And—'a blacksmith has the east end' at the time of Mr Loftus Brock's visit in 1883.

Before that, however, it is uncertain to what use the Chapel had been put.

THE HISTORY OF THE RESTORATION

THE first suggestion that the Chapel should be restored seems to have been made in 1944. Mr Philip V. Marchant, who was the Borough Engineer at the time, incorporated its restoration in his plans for the re-building of Dover after the Second World War:

The Dover post-war re-development advisory committee during 1944 laid much stress upon the desirability of preserving the 12th [sic] century Wayside Chapel of St Edmund, situated between Priory Road and Biggin Street, which was 'discovered' following the destruction of the surrounding property by shell-fire. Provision is made in the scheme, therefore, for the Chapel to be preserved in a strip of lawns and gardens fronting Biggin Street. The suggestion is put forward also that the existing War Memorial shall be transferred from its present position in front of Maison Dieu House to the lawns surrounding the Chapel and that, together, the Monument and the Chapel shall serve as a Memorial to the men and women who gave their lives in the two World Wars.

(*Dover Re-construction Proposals, 1944, printed 1947, p. 11.*)



Plate 5. Exterior of the Chapel being restored

(Ray Warner Ltd, Dover)

His plan was filed and forgotten. When, in 1965, I made the same suggestion (including the re-siting of the War Memorial), I thought I was being original, and so did the local officials to whom I spoke.

The next attempts to save the Chapel were made by Lieutenant-Colonel R. F. H. Drake-Brockman, in 1953. He wrote in a letter to the *Kent Messenger*, 10th April 1963:

In that year steps were taken to try and get the Chapel, which is in private ownership, scheduled as an Ancient Monument, so as to save it from the threat of demolition, which still, to this day, hangs over it. Dover Corporation were informed by the Ministry that it would only be scheduled if they purchased it and maintained it in perpetuity. This they were unwilling to do, and when enquiries were again made recently the Ministry stands by its ruling of ten years ago, and Dover Corporation likewise stand by their decision at that time.

His attempts to save the Chapel seem to have been inspired by a Service that had been held at St Mary's Church to celebrate the seven hundredth anniversary of the consecration of the Chapel. The Mayor, the Bishop of Dover, and the Reverend P. B. (Tubby) Clayton, Founder Padre of Toc H, were present, and the Service was conducted by the Reverend Canon A. Stanley Cooper. The Address was given by the Reverend Canon A. R. Browne-Wilkinson, M.A., Canon Residentiary of Chichester Cathedral. After the Service, there was a Procession. A short stop was made for prayer at the Chapel and the Procession continued to the Maison Dieu for concluding prayers and a blessing by the Bishop of Dover.

Lieutenant-Colonel Drake-Brockman, who is Honorary Secretary of the Kent Archaeological Society's Sub-Committee for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings, did not give up his efforts until he knew that I was safely embarked upon restoring the Chapel.

My efforts to save the Chapel started very soon after my appointment to Dover in November 1958, although at that time I had no idea of undertaking the work myself.

As I got to know the local officials, I introduced the subject into conversations. Some were sympathetic and wished that something could be done. Others had no time for the proposal. However they felt personally, the official decision was always quoted: 'The building is of no historic or architectural value and is scheduled for demolition'.



Plate 6. The Carpenter at work (Ray Warner Ltd, Dover)

As there were no immediate plans for redeveloping the site, there seemed no particular urgency to do anything to preserve the Chapel. At a meeting held in the Biggin Hall, however, on 12th March 1964, to discuss the possibility of building an old people's community centre, I made the suggestion (with my tongue in my cheek) that St Edmund's Chapel could easily be converted as a temporary measure and that a community centre could be built on the adjacent land when the time came to redevelop it. The proposal did not find a seconder. A prominent official said: 'The site on which the Chapel stands is too valuable. The Chapel has no historic or architectural value, and no power on earth can save it from demolition.'

That phrase introduced a note of urgency into the vague plans which were being formed for its future use.

I must record, however, that although the Corporation and some local officials were so unco-operative before I took the decision to restore the Chapel, after I took the decision they all afforded me every possible help.



Plate 7. The Mason at work.

(Ray Warner Ltd, Dover)

Mr Ivor Bulmer-Thomas, who is the Honorary Director of the Friends of Friendless Churches, and is associated with many other Societies and Trusts for the preservation of ancient churches and buildings, gave expert advice. From him I learned that the surest way to preserve a Church was to put it into regular use. It was excellent advice, but it meant that the Chapel had to be bought and restored before it could be used.

The first intention was to restore the Chapel as a Chapel of Unity. My friend, the Rural Dean of Dover (Canon T. Ewart Roberts, R.A.), was as enthusiastic as I was, and by a unanimous vote the clergy of the Dover Rural Deanery, in Chapter on 4th February 1964, decided: 'That we join our fellow Christians of the Roman Catholic Church in finding half the money needed to buy the freehold property known as Saint Edmund's Chapel, Priory Road, Dover'.

In a letter, also of 4th February 1964, in which he told me of the Chapter's decision, the Rural Dean continued: 'In the first instance

we envisage the Chapel restored as a Chapel of Unity, with the possibility of making it in due course an ecumenical centre with a hostel attached; but this, of course, must await further developments, although we must be ready for any possible purchase of adjacent properties'.

Later that year (7th August 1964) he wrote: 'The Archbishop (of Canterbury) is most anxious that the Chapel of Saint Edmund should be preserved . . . Have you any great feeling if the Anglican Church were to raise all the money required to buy the freehold?'

I had no objection, but on 12th March 1965, the Rural Dean informed the Dover Fraternal of Ministers that it looked as though it would be necessary to make an inter-denominational appeal after all, if the Chapel were to be saved.

And on 4th June 1965, the Rural Dean reported to the same Fraternal that: 'Neither the Anglican Churches nor the Free Churches were going to raise the money to purchase the building, and he personally withdrew from any money-raising efforts devoted towards this end. It was agreed to leave the project alone.'

Although the idea of restoring the Chapel as a Chapel of Unity had obviously to be abandoned, it is gratifying to record that almost half the cost of the purchase and restoration of the Chapel has come from Church of England sources outside Dover.

The Roman Catholic community in Dover was many tens of thousands of pounds in debt due to an extensive building programme which I had initiated. It could not accept responsibility for any more debt, especially for a building which would serve no useful parochial purpose.

It was beginning to look as though I would have to undertake the restoration on my own. I hesitated before taking the final plunge. As so often happens, however, the decision was taken out of my hands. I heard that a speculator was making enquiries with a view to buying the Chapel. I mentioned this to Father Leonard Whatmore, who felt so strongly that this unique opportunity must not be missed that he, there and then, made out a cheque for a deposit on the purchase price. This was paid to the agents on 2nd August 1965, and the preservation of the Chapel had begun. I do not want to take much credit for its restoration: other people have provided the expert knowledge; other people have paid for it. I have merely sat at my desk, dictated letters, acknowledged donations, and given authority for the work to proceed.

THE ORIGINAL AND THE RESTORED

MR ANTHONY SWAINE, F.R.I.B.A., was in charge of the restoration of the Chapel, but even he does not know how responsible he was for its restoration. A lay person looking at the Chapel as it was in 1965 could have been permitted the opinion that not enough of the original building remained to merit restoration, but in those early days Mr Swaine accepted the responsibility for its being worthwhile. He is a leading authority on medieval architecture, and his enthusiasm was infectious. 'It is all here. It is remarkably preserved. Seventy-five per cent of this is original. You will never believe how completely it can be restored.' It was in phrases such as these that he made its restoration inevitable.

It was he who explained to me the two schools of thought on restoring old buildings. There are the people who say that a restoration should show, rather like a patch on a little Dutch boy's trousers: that modern materials should be used so that the original and the restored are easily distinguishable. They call it being honest. And there are the people who say that a restoration should not show, rather like an invisible darn: that contemporary materials and ancient methods of craft should be used, so that no one can ever tell where it has been repaired. They call it being faithful. Mr Swaine belongs to the second school of thought, and he has gone to enormous trouble to procure only ancient material to restore this Chapel. Sometimes he has had to use pre-thirteenth-century material, but, as he says, 'the builders could have used it, too'.

He has told me most of what I know of the structure and architecture of the Chapel. The rest I have learned from Mr Brian Philp, A.C.C.S.

The interior measurements of the Chapel are 26 ft 9 in. x 14 ft, or 375 sq. ft. According to the Guinness Book of Records, the smallest Church in regular use in England is at Culborne, Somerset. It measures 420 sq. ft. If this is reliable evidence, St Edmund's Chapel is now the smallest Church in regular use in England. There are two smaller: at Upleatham, Yorkshire (230½ sq. ft), and Lullington, near Alfriston, Sussex (256 sq. ft), but the one is not now used, and the other is used only occasionally.

The walls are original, except that they have been restored where doors were inserted in the nineteenth century. The foundations vary in width from 4 ft to 4 ft 9 in., and are 5 ft deep. When one considers

that the foundations of Chichester Cathedral, for example, are only 2 ft deep, such massive foundations for so small a building need an explanation. The most obvious is the nature of the soil. Excavations revealed that for 1,200 years silt has been washed down on to the site from the hills, and from the flooding of the River Dour. There is 5 ft of soft, rich, black earth beneath the Chapel, with hardly a stone in it. It was easy to dig and the builders must have felt that they should get to the bottom of it before their foundations would be secure.

The foundations of the north and east walls are twelfth century, and are of rammed chalk. The east wall is entirely twelfth century, but the north wall is probably twelfth century, rebuilt in the thirteenth century. The north and west walls are both thirteenth century, and their foundations are squared chalk blocks set in white mortar. The walls are 2 ft thick, except the east wall, which is 2 ft 5 in. thick. Originally, a larger, twelfth-century building stood on this site, and this Chapel was built into a corner of this pre-existing building. It is hoped that when the area is redeveloped more of the foundations of this original building will be uncovered. In view of the depth of the foundations the earlier building could have been substantial. The upper semi-circular headed window in the east wall belongs to the earlier building. About thirty per cent of the plaster on the walls is the original lime plaster, but no frescoes or paintings have been discovered.

The stonework of the west door is ninety-five per cent original, but the door itself has been constructed from ancient timbers in the thirteenth-century manner, and based on existing examples in the county.

There was no glazing, although at least seventy-five per cent of the stonework of the windows is original, and the grooves for the glass and the holes for the saddle bars were prepared.

The first floor was made of the builders' back-fill and levelled with clay. This wore out in places and was patched with rubble, mortar, chalk and soil. This, in turn, also wore and was patched with flints and possibly with tiles immediately in front of the altar. Mr Philp can produce evidence for each of these statements, and Mr Stuart Rigold of the Department of Ancient Monuments, Ministry of Public Building and Works, has dated some of the tiles 1290-1330 A.D., and says that they doubtless came from the tiler at Tyler Hill, Canterbury. The present restoration preserves much



Plate 8. The Chapel before restoration commenced

(Ray Warner Ltd, Dover)

of the original floor. At the east end the floor has been deliberately lowered to expose a little of the different foundations of the walls.

The flagstones came from Faversham Abbey (1152-60). They were discovered in an alley-way at the back of Faversham Town Hall and were brought here when the alley-way was resurfaced. By a happy coincidence, Eustace of Faversham was the first biographer of St Edmund, and a few months before he died, St Edmund appointed him Prior of St Martin's Priory, Dover.

The stones of the altar are the gift of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral. They came from Bell Harry Tower (1475-1507), and were removed during its recent restoration.

The mensa, or altar-table, has its own interest. It was found in Mr Finn-Kelcey's farmyard, adjoining the Church of St Clement, Old Romney, Kent, and was identified by Miss Ann Roper, F.S.A. She is both an historian and an archaeologist, and she thinks that it is probably a fifteenth-century mensa. That it did not have

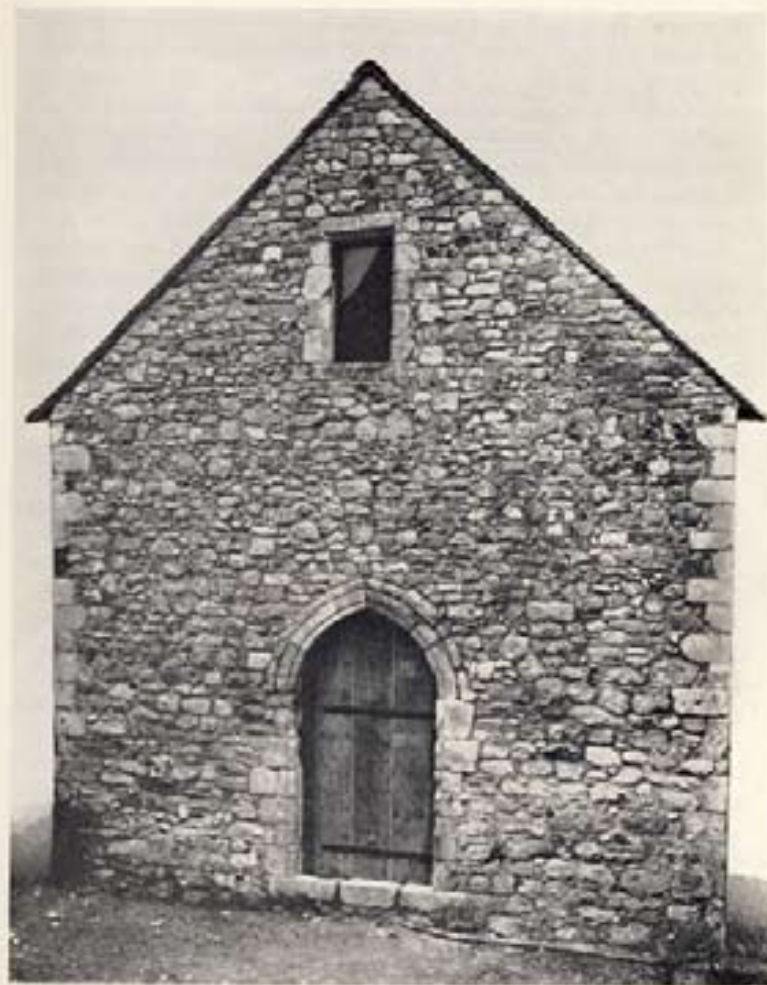


Plate 9. The Exterior of the Chapel nearing completion

(Ray Warner Ltd, Dover)

PLAN OF SAINT EDMUND'S CHAPEL

Measurements Interior 26'9" x 14'
Walls 2' to 2'6"
Foundations 4' to 4'8" x 5'

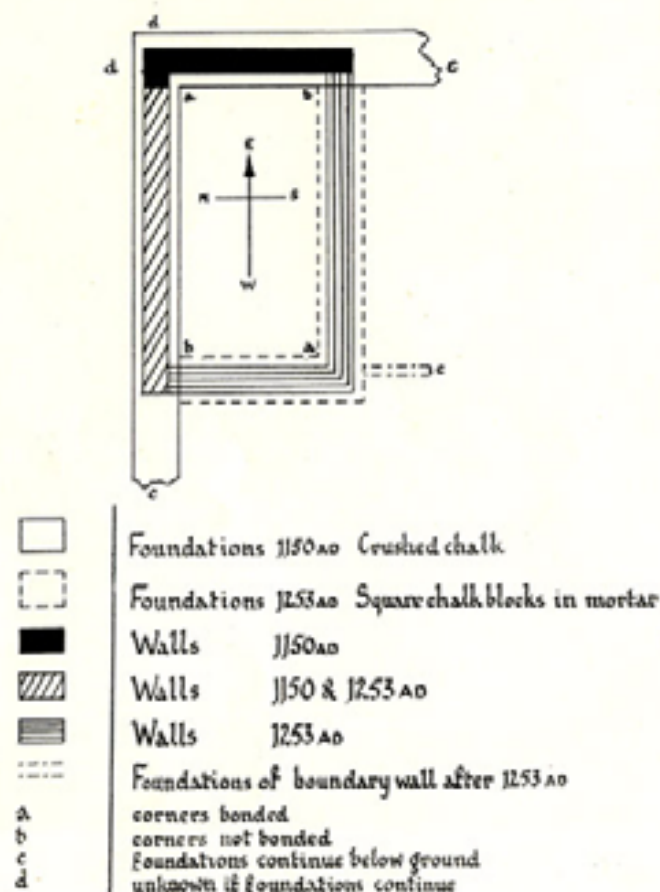


Plate 10. Ground Plan of the Chapel

any consecration crosses is explained by the fact that these had not yet become traditional. At the Reformation it was customary to desecrate altars. For one to have been thrown into a farmyard, to be sullied by the animals, would have been quite possible.

The *chef d'oeuvre*, perhaps, is the roof. It is now one of the best preserved thirteenth-century roofs in the country. Seventy per cent of the rafters, collars, braces, ashlar and wall plates are original, but which are original and which are restored in contemporary timber can be known only by reference to Mr Swaine's plans. Even some of the pegs are original, and the thirteenth-century practice of not cutting off the ends has been preserved. The tie-beams came from Lord Hawarden's barn at Ilden, on the Barham Downs, and the crown-posts are reproductions of the period in oak from a demolished building in Canterbury.

The Chapel seems to have been built 'off the cuff', and it is possible that it was never completed. None of the windows are of quite the same size, and they are not even exactly opposite one another. The original semi-circular headed window in the east wall is off-centre. There should obviously have been a tie-beam over the west door, but there is indisputable evidence that it was never there. (The temptation to insert one was strong, but was resisted!) It is possible that the columns of the lower east window were left unfinished. The columns themselves are original, but there is no indication of how they married up with the tie-beam. Quite possibly the original builders sat back to consider the problem which they had created for themselves in inserting this window into an already existing wall: and having moved on to another building, forgot about it. The present cusp-corbels terminating the jambs beneath the eastern tie-beams are a conjecture by Mr Swaine.

The full story of what was done at this east end will not be known until the buildings in Biggin Street have been demolished. By removing some of the panelling in the upper rooms of the shop belonging to Mr W. M. Dean, at 77a Biggin Street, it has been ascertained that the whole of the semi-circular window in the east wall of the Chapel is in existence, though very weather-worn. Only a very small portion of the wall below this could be seen, but all the evidence was that the wall had never been broken into to provide a window. Having got so far, the builders apparently decided to call the project off. This fits in very well with what has been discovered from the inside of the east wall, but it may have to be

revised when the whole of the outside of the east wall is exposed and subjected to examination.

There is some evidence that the Chapel was slated in blue slate, since so much broken blue slate was found, both in the walls and in the builders' back-fill. This slate came from the south-western peninsula of England, and its use here and at Faversham would be the earliest examples of its known use in the south-east of England. The present roofing tiles are probably a mixture from medieval and seventeenth-century roofs.

In the thirteenth century, the Sacrament would not have been reserved in a Cemetery Chapel. Reservation is the only concession to twentieth-century practice.

Messrs R. J. Barwick and Sons, Ltd, were the contractors for the restoration. The carpenter was Bert Cave and he had as his apprentice Ron Atkins. The mason was Ted Langley, assisted for a short period by Steve Carswell, and their mate was Arthur Goldsack.

THE SEALS OF ST EDMUND AND ST RICHARD

CASTS of the seals of St Edmund and St Richard can be seen in the Museum in the Chapel. The reference numbers are the same as in the British Museum.

SEAL OF ST EDMUND

1202. These casts are a small fragment of St Edmund's seal, taken from what was originally a fair impression. This seal was attached to a Charter of 1236.

When perfect, the seal would have been pointed, and would have measured 2 x 1½ in. (i.e. the same size and shape as 1203).

Obverse. The Archbishop, full length, in vestments, field diapered. There is an indication of the heads in countersunk niches described by Hasted, *Kent*, Vol. IV, p. 708.

Legend destroyed.

Reverse. Small pointed counterseal. The martyrdom of St Thomas à Becket. In base beneath the arch, the Archbishop, half-length, in prayer before the Saint above.

Remains of legend:

..... cca. mors e t

Portions of two other seals of St Edmund give some of the details missing from the above fragments.



Plate 11
The Seal of St Edmund—obverse
(Ray Warner Ltd., Dover)



Plate 12
The Seal of St Edmund—reverse
(Ray Warner Ltd., Dover)

1203. A sulphur cast taken from a very good impression (Det. Seals lv, 82; lvi, 51).

Obverse. Pointed oval: the Archbishop full-length, in vestments, with mitre, lifting right hand in blessing and in left hand a pastoral staff. The field diapered lozenge, with a reticulated pattern. On each side, three small countersunk niches, in each presumably a saint's head. Under an arch below the feet, a design now destroyed.

The legend:

Sigill Eadmundi Dei Gracia Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi
(The seal of Edmund, by the grace of God, Archbishop of Canterbury).

1204. A sulphur cast (Det. Seals, lv, 51).

Reverse. Small pointed oval counterseal, originally 2½ x 1½ in. The martyrdom of St Thomas à Becket. In base beneath an arch, the Archbishop half-length, in prayer before the Saint above.

The legend:

Edmundum doceat mors mea ne timeat
(Let my death teach Edmund not to be afraid).



Plate 13
The Seal of St Richard—obverse
(Ray Warner Ltd., Dover)



Plate 14
The Seal of St Richard—reverse
(Ray Warner Ltd., Dover)

SEAL OF ST RICHARD

An excellent impression attached to a Charter.

Obverse (Egerton 378). The Bishop full-length on a Corbel, lifting his right hand in blessing. In the left hand a pastoral staff. Overhead, a trefoiled Gothic canopy. The field lozenge, the points of intersection being charged with fleur-de-lys, the spaces with stars and crescents.

The legend:

Ricardus Dei g Cicestiensis epc
(Richard, by the grace of God, Bishop of Chichester).

Reverse. A smaller pointed counter-seal. In a niche under, a trefoiled canopy, surmounted by a spire (somewhat resembling that of Chichester Cathedral). Our Saviour, seated, lifting the right hand in benediction. On each side a long candle in a candlestick. In base, under an arch, the Bishop, half-length, in profile to the right, with mitre and pastoral staff, lifting the hands in prayer.

The legend:

Te Ricarde rego trinus et unus ego
(Richard, I, the Three and the One, rule you).

A SHORT LIFE OF ST EDMUND OF CANTERBURY

EDMUND was born at Abingdon, near Oxford, about 1175, and was known during his lifetime as Edmund of Abingdon. His father, Reginald, seems to have been a sufficiently well-to-do tradesman for his fellow townsmen to have given him the surname 'Rich'.¹ His mother, Mabel, gave him an austere upbringing and exerted a strong influence on him. He went to the University at Oxford when he was about 12 years old, and three or four years later, to Paris. On his return from Paris he was Regent of Arts at Oxford for six years. His mother was dead and he had a dream of her, which he interpreted as a message to turn to more serious studies. He went to Paris again to study theology and returned about 1214, as Regent of Theology at Oxford.

He must have been something of a character in the eyes of the students. Long hours at night spent in prayer had the result that he often 'nodded off' during his lectures. Like any of us who find ourselves in that embarrassing position, he would wake with a start and say: 'I was not asleep—just thinking'. He would not take any payment from poor scholars, and when the richer scholars came to pay, he would ask them to leave the money on his window-sill, so as not to embarrass them if it was not quite the right amount. One of his dictums of this period reveals him as the scholar and the saint: 'Study as though you are to live for ever: live as though you are to die tomorrow'. There is a long-established tradition that he utilised his lecture-fees to build the Lady Chapel of St Peter's in the East at Oxford.

Richard Poore appointed him Treasurer of Salisbury Cathedral in 1222, with the annexed prebend of Calne, and he had the responsibility of raising the money to complete the choir of the Cathedral.

After the death in 1231 of Richard le Grand, Archbishop of Canterbury, the Canterbury Chapter proposed as his successor first Ralph Neville, Bishop of Chichester, then their prior, John of Sittingbourne, and then John Blund, canon of Chichester, but for

¹ St Edmund of Abingdon is still mistakenly called St Edmund Rich. For forty years, Doctor A. B. Emden has been trying to dislodge this misnomer. It owes its origin to Anthony Wood, the Oxford antiquary, who wrongly assumed that St Edmund inherited his father's sobriquet, 'le Rich'. He did not. Contemporary references to him before his promotion as archbishop are to Master Edmund of Abingdon.



Plate 15. The Shrine of St Edmund of Canterbury, Pontigny Abbey

(F. Dawson, *Horne Bay*)

one reason or another the Pope refused to confirm any of these appointments.

Since the See had been vacant for four years, Pope Gregory IX personally intervened and 'gave the monks power to elect Master Edmund, Canon of Salisbury'. It was a surprising appointment for, apart from his learning, Edmund was known mainly as an ascetic and a recluse. Indeed, on his first visit to Rome in 1238, Pope Gregory was to chide him: 'You would make a good monk', but it was this same Gregory who had personally chosen him to be archbishop.

Edmund was genuinely reluctant to accept office. He hesitated, apparently, for two days, and the argument which finally broke down his resistance was that, if he refused, the Pope might very well appoint a foreign ecclesiastic to the archbishopric. He was consecrated at Canterbury on *Laetare* Sunday, 2nd April 1234.

He had immediate success, but it was virtually his only success. Within months of his consecration, by fearlessly exposing the evils which were threatening the land, he averted civil war and reconciled Henry III and the Barons, and the King was forced to expel the Poitevins. The reason for Edmund's success was undoubtedly the high regard in which the men of his day held physical penances and Edmund had practised these to an extraordinary degree since youth. Men listened to him because of his virtue.

It is of special interest to us in Dover that one of the Barons who was reconciled with the King was Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent. De Burgh had founded the Maison Dieu in 1203, and in 1216 had successfully defended Dover Castle, and defeated the French in a naval engagement in the Channel.

Edmund's success, however, turned the King against him, and the appointment of Cardinal Otto as Papal Legate, at the King's request, has been seen as a move to embarrass Edmund. In fact, Otto was a reasonable man, whose advice was sought both by Edmund and by Grosseteste, who did not meddle in the purely domestic affairs of the English Church, and who could not be bought by the King.

He did, however, introduce foreign clerics to English benefices, which aroused strong opposition among the English Bishops, and was the cause of a deterioration in relations between Edmund and the Pope. The Pope advised him to accept the inevitable gracefully,

and although Edmund counselled his fellow bishops 'to make a virtue of necessity', his own principles were too strong, and it was still a ground of bitter contention between him and the Pope at the time of his death.

Edmund was not intended by nature to be a bishop. He was happiest at Oxford or in his rectory at Calne: among ordinary people, instructing them, teaching them to pray ('five words well said are better than five thousand said without devotion'), reconciling sinners and helping them to die. By our standards, his moral teaching was incredibly severe. He condemned luxury or comfort in any form, and was distrustful of sex. He held that a man could not be good and live at court. He prayed much and treated his body mercilessly. In the thirteenth century he was every man's idea of a saint.

He was not an administrator and had little time for what we would call routine work.

His complaints against the King were many. Not only did Henry delay the appointment of bishops so that he could have possession of the ecclesiastical revenue during the vacancies, but he raised levies on the Church to pay for his own and the Pope's needs. After his marriage to Eleanor of Provence, foreign ecclesiastics from her retinue had been appointed to English benefices, and more recently he was gerrymandering the Winchester Chapter to secure the appointment of a relative as bishop. Yet a further source of friction was Edmund's opposition to the marriage of Simon de Montfort to the King's sister because of her vow of perpetual widowhood.

His seven years as Archbishop were unhappy years. The most serious of his conflicts, however, was with the monastic Chapters of Canterbury and Rochester. Originally, bishops had been monks and members of the monastic communities, but in the thirteenth century, with the rise of secular bishops, there was an inbuilt danger of conflict between them and the monks who formed their cathedral chapters. Each was concerned to prevent any encroachment upon their privileges.

In Edmund's case, tension was heightened by his desire to establish a secular collegiate house at Maidstone to provide for clerics on his administrative staff. It was a reasonable proposal, and Cardinal Otto had held an enquiry and approved his plans, but the monks were suspicious that their position was being undermined.

Although feelings between Edmund and the monks were bad, the

issues between them were relatively small. The latest was over the right to nominate the prior and some petty forgeries were involved. It was the general situation as much as any one incident which led to Edmund's excommunicating the whole Cathedral Chapter.

There was enough to discuss with the Pope when Edmund set out for an *ad limina* visit to Rome in October 1240—his relations with the Pope, his relations with the King, his relations with the Canterbury monks—but when he reached Pontigny he was a dying man. He turned back in the hope of reaching England, but death overtook him in a small Augustinian priory at Soisy on 16th November 1240.

The scenes described on page 11 give an idea of the veneration in which people held him. His cult is certainly as popular in France as in England.

He was canonized by Innocent IV on 16th December 1246, at Lyons. Eustace of Faversham had already written his Life as part of the general presentation of his cause of canonization. This Eustace was a monk of Christ Church, Canterbury, and Edmund's chaplain. Edmund feared that the monks at Canterbury might take vindictive action against Eustace on account of his loyalty to him, and one of his last acts at Soisy, three days before he died, was to write a testimonial letter, indemnifying him in advance against any action the monks might take. It was also, no doubt, for the same reason that he had written the previous March to the sub-prior and monks of St Martin's Priory at Dover, appointing Eustace to be their prior, although there is no evidence that he ever held the appointment.

It might be felt that, because of all the conflicts around him, Edmund had a contentious character. He was an Englishman and a strong nationalist, and was determined to rid England of foreign influences, whether these were foreigners in high political places, or high ecclesiastical places. He was more successful in the first than in the second. He was a Churchman, determined that the Church should be in the hands of men dedicated to God and to the people, and free of political influence to do its work unhampered: determined too, that its revenue should be spent on the needs of worship and on the needs of the poor, and not on luxurious living, the King's favourites or foreign wars. And he was a saint for whom holiness, his own and his countrymen's, took precedence before all else. In any age, such a man will meet opposition, but in the thirteenth

century he was not only opposed, he was admired. Holiness was the one weapon left to a churchman—there were enough diplomats and politicians. They could be deposed, killed, circumvented, but there was no answer to holiness. Death did not help—it only made a martyr. Holiness was recognised as right, but it presented a challenge to be avoided, if at all possible.

Henry III died on Edmund's feast day, 16th November 1272. One can be sure that Edmund assisted him by his prayers.

In recognition of Henry's benefactions to the Maison Dieu the Master was required to arrange for a mass for the repose of his soul to be said annually on 16th November. The last of these masses was said on 16th November 1534.

A SHORT LIFE OF ST RICHARD OF CHICHESTER

LITTLE is known of the childhood of Richard de la Wyck, but the impression is strong that it was very different from the childhood of Edmund of Abingdon.

He was born about 1197 at Droitwich, where his parents had a small estate. Both parents died while he was young, leaving him and his elder brother, Robert, in the care of a guardian.

The guardian, apparently, was fairly negligent, for when Robert came of age, he was 'naked and poor'. Make allowances for the way a thirteenth-century hagiographer wrote, and it means that things were in a pretty poor shape.

As they could not afford farm-workers, Richard ploughed, sowed, reaped and threshed until the farm was in good working order. Robert was so delighted that he made it over to his younger brother. It would imply that Robert had done little of the work himself.

Richard was now an eligible bachelor, and friends and neighbours began to arrange his marriage to a young girl who was both rich and charming. This was rather more than Robert could bear, and there was obviously the beginning of an unpleasant scene which Richard cut short by saying that no woman was worth a row. He gave back the farm to Robert and offered him the girl ('I've never kissed her on the lips') and went to Oxford to study.

The medievals were fond of seeing auguries, especially in a name. Their auguries were often far-fetched, but they were not as far-

fetched as usual when they read Richard's character into the name given him at his christening.

Nominis in primo rides, dulcescis in imo;
Si medium quaeris, carus amicus eris.

In Latin his name was Ricardus and the point of the couplet is Rides, CARus, DULcescis (You'll laugh, be loved of God and kind to your fellow-men); or, in English verse, as dubious as the Latin:

At first your name suggests a smile.
Great charm is noted at its end,
Its middle meaning is made plain:
You'll cherish all as a dear friend.

Richard did nothing by halves. Having given his brother the farm and the girl, he gave him whatever money there was as well. He went to Oxford penniless. He shared a room and a cloak with two other scholars: ate bread and soup with a little wine, except on Sundays and feast days, when he had some meat: met Edmund of Abingdon and Robert Grosseteste: and was launched on to the medieval scene.

There is no contemporary evidence that Richard went to Bologna, and the chronology of his life is certainly against it. Some sort of tradition about it developed, and Capgrave included this later tradition in his Life. I include it as he tells it, but with the warning that it is almost certainly an 'embroidery'.

After Oxford, Richard went to Bologna for seven years to study Canon Law. Towards the end of this time, his professor was taken ill and invited him to give the lectures in his place. He lectured for more than six months and rapidly gained a reputation as a lecturer. His professor was fond of him, and offered him his only daughter in marriage 'with all his land and property'.

Richard made some excuse about having to return home, and left with a half-promise that he would be back. He never returned. He went to Oxford and, by unanimous consent, was offered the Chancellorship.

Now, for the first time, we read of his nights of prayer and bodily penances, and his indecision in respect of marriage has been read as a sign that he was thinking of ordination.

He had been Chancellor of Oxford University for two years when both Edmund of Abingdon, who had become Archbishop of Canterbury, and Robert Grosseteste, who had become Bishop of Lincoln, invited him to be their Chancellor. He accepted Edmund's



Gray Warner Ltd., Derby

Plate 16. Robert Forsyth's carving of St Richard in the Maison Dieu.

invitation, and for the next six years was his constant companion. There is no doubt that he both liked and admired Edmund, and that during these years his prayers and penances multiplied through Edmund's example and encouragement. Bocking was later to write: 'The Archbishop rejoiced that by the discretion of his Chancellor he was shielded from the intrusion of much of his day-to-day work: and the Chancellor was glad to be taught by the holiness and conversation of his master. Each leaned upon the other—the saint upon the saint: the master upon the disciple and the disciple upon the master: the father on the son, and the son on the father.'

Richard accompanied Edmund on his journey to Rome and was with him when he died at Soisy. It was he who broke the Archbishop's seal as a sign that his reign was over. In his Will, Edmund bequeathed his goblet 'to my beloved Chancellor, whom I have long and heartily loved'. It was this goblet that Richard later used to bless a crippled boy. He told the boy to drink from it and as he drank he was made whole.

He now decided on ordination to the priesthood, and went to study theology for two years with the Dominicans at Orleans. He already venerated Edmund as a saint and built a small shrine to him, before which he often prayed.

At his ordination, he was dressed more simply than the others, and as a priest he wanted only a small parish where he could give himself to the cure of souls. He came as priest to Deal, Kent. It must have held memories, for his beloved Edmund had left England at a point between Dover and Sandwich. Boniface of Savoy, Edmund's successor as Archbishop, invited him to be his Chancellor. It is not known why nothing came of the invitation. It could be that Richard refused.

Ralph Nevill, Bishop of Chichester, died in 1244. The Chapter proposed as his successor, Robert Passelew, a prominent King's clerk, but Archbishop Boniface quashed the election on the grounds that Passelew had only moderate learning and undistinguished morals. A meeting of bishops, presided over by Boniface and attended by Grosseteste, unanimously elected Richard.

Richard heard of his election with mixed feelings. He saw that by refusing he could continue to live a peaceful and agreeable life, and that by accepting he was exposing himself to the same frustrations and persecutions as he had seen Edmund endure. In the end, he decided that the interests of the Church, and the fight

for its freedom, must come first. He summed the position up very succinctly: 'The only time you can accept a bishopric is when it is obviously going to make life more difficult'.

The King was furious when he heard of Richard's election. He considered Richard his personal enemy since he had been Edmund's friend. In spite, he refused to approve the election or to surrender the temporalities of the See which, according to custom, had reverted to him during the interregnum.

Richard had no way open to him but appeal to the Pope, who was at Lyons for the Council. The King sent messengers to plead for the validity of Pusselew's election, but the Pope decided in Richard's favour and himself consecrated him bishop.

Other bishops were being consecrated that day, and the story is told that when the Pope was consecrating them the sacred oil flowed from the amphora only drop by drop, but that when he came to Richard it flowed in copious streams! On his way home, Richard visited the tomb of Edmund at Pontigny.

The King's reactions to the Pope's decision were again violent. He still refused to surrender the manors and the revenue of the See of Chichester. He forbade Richard entry to his Cathedral, and issued an edict forbidding any of his subjects to assist Richard in any way, even by giving him food or shelter.

Richard does not seem to have been depressed. He consoled his Chapter with the quotation: 'Your sorrow shall be turned into joy', and went to live with Simon, a priest in a poor benefice at Tarring, outside Worthing. Richard walked the Sussex Downs, visiting his people in their homes and ministering to them, and dug Simon's fig orchard. A comment by his medieval biographer deserves to be recorded, if only because we could so easily make it ourselves: 'Here he was, 50 years old, and not able to stretch his legs under his own table'.

It could not have been an uncongenial life for Richard, but for the good of the Church of Chichester he could not allow it to continue. For one thing, as he said, the King was wasting on his favourites money which should be given to the poor.

The impasse dragged on for two years and was resolved only when the Pope threatened to place the whole of England under an interdict. Henry yielded, and Richard took possession of his See. It remained a source of contention between them that Henry never made restitution of the revenue he had unlawfully withheld.

Even in his Will Richard wrote, 'I will also that, for the fulfilment of the foregoing, there be demanded by my executors from my lord the King the profits arising from the Bishopric of Chichester, which he for two years unjustly took, and which of right belong to me, for concerning them, I will require the payment before the Most High, unless he shall have satisfied my executors according to their wish'. Even so, King Henry did nothing, but Edward I, in a deed dated at Chichester, at the time of the translation of St Richard in 1276, recites, 'that the debt of two hundred pounds which had been lent to King Henry by the Bishop (as he delicately describes the transaction), had been, after dispute, now fully paid to the executors, William de Selsey and Robert de Purle, for the unburthening of the soul of my said father, as was right to do'.

Richard led a life of austere penance, but he was kind and generous, especially to the poor. He was the despair of Willard, his cook, and of Hugh, who looked after his clothes. Food, clothes, horses, silverware, were given endlessly to the poor. His own food would be a piece of bread, dipped in wine. He had a great love of animals, especially little animals. Stories of little birds abound in the early accounts of his life. One feels that he was not just teasing Willard on the occasion when he served a brace of birds at table: 'Poor little innocents, what have you done to deserve death. If you could speak, you would accuse us of gluttony.'

This is not the place to tell all the anecdotes and legends about Richard, neither is it the place to tell of his miracles. He continued to visit his diocese on foot, and share their lot with the peasants and the fishermen. He is the nearest the English Church has come to producing a Francis of Assisi. Typical of him would be his remark to the birds the day he slept in: 'Today you have been up before this lazybones, to sing your praises to our Creator'.

Mention has already been made of his death in Dover.

His body was taken back to Chichester. It was a triumphal journey. Through all the villages and towns on the way, church bells rang 'both in sorrow and in joy', and the peasants and the poor thronged the route.

At Chichester, he was buried, as he had requested, in the nave of the Cathedral 'in a humble grave near the altar of St Edmund, hard over by the column'.

After he was canonized in January 1262, his grave was considered too simple, and plans were made to transfer his body to a more

worthy shrine. The plans were not put into immediate effect on account of the Barons' War, but on 16th June 1276 the translation took place. His shrine was behind the High Altar. Chichester became one of the most famous shrines in England, so that in 1478 special regulations had to be introduced to speed the flow of pilgrims.

Thomas Cromwell signed, in the name of King Henry VIII, the Commission for the destruction of the shrine on 14th November 1538. All the silver, gold, jewels, ornaments and plate were to be taken to the Tower of London for safe keeping, and the shrine itself was 'to be razed and defaced to the very ground'.

Cromwell's men did the razing and defacing on 20th November. They worked by night for fear of being attacked by the people. What became of St Richard's body is not recorded, but that last act was to no one's honour.

A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

<i>Public Events</i>	<i>Events in the life of St Edmund</i>	<i>Events in the life of St Richard</i>
1175	Born at Abingdon	
1187	Studied Grammar at Oxford	
1189 Henry II died Richard I succeeds		
1190	Studied Arts in Paris	
1195	Regent of Arts at Oxford	
1197		Born at Droithwich
1199 Richard I died John succeeds		
1201	Studied Theology in Paris	
1208 Interdict begins		
1213 Interdict ends		
1214	Regent of Theology at Oxford	
1215 Sealing of Magna Carta		
1216 John died Henry III succeeds		
1217		Studied at Oxford
1221		Studied in Paris

<i>Public Events</i>	<i>Events in the life of St Edmund</i>	<i>Events in the life of St Richard</i>
1222	Treasurer of Salisbury Cathedral and Rector of Calne	
1224		Regent of Arts at Oxford
1225		(Studied Canon Law in Bologna?)
1227	Preached Crusade	
1232		Chancellor of the University of Oxford
1233	Archbishop of Canterbury	
1234		Chancellor of Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury
1236 Henry III marries Eleanor of Provence		
1237	Met Papal Legate Otto at Dover	
1238	Ad limina visit to Rome	
1240	Died at Soisy	
1241		Studied Theology at Orleans
1243		Parish Priest at Deal, Kent
1245 Council of Lyons opened by Innocent IV		Consecrated Bishop of Chichester by Innocent IV
1246	Canonized at Lyons by Innocent IV	
1253		Died at Dover, Kent
1258 The Mad Parliament		
1262		Canonized at Viterbo by Urban IV

SOME BENEFACTORS OF THE APPEAL FOR THE RESTORATION OF ST EDMUND'S CHAPEL

I wish to record my gratitude to The Right Honourable Mr Harold Macmillan, who kindly agreed to be Patron of my appeal for the restoration of St Edmund's Chapel. At the time he was Prime Minister. He is also Chancellor of the University of Oxford.

As about 1,300 people have subscribed to the restoration it would be quite impossible to include here a list of all their names.

Doctor A. B. Emden, however, deserves special mention. The Chapel was three-quarters restored when money ran out and hopes of completing the restoration were very low. At this critical juncture he gave virtually all the money that was required to complete the restoration.

I would also like to mention members of the Catholic Hierarchy of the South of England. His Grace Cardinal Heenan (Archbishop of Westminster), His Grace Cyril C. Cowderoy (Archbishop of Southwark), the Right Reverend Bernard C. Wall (Bishop of Brentwood), the Right Reverend David Cashman (Bishop of Arundel and Brighton), the Right Reverend Derek Worlock (Bishop of Portsmouth), and the Right Reverend Christopher Butler, O.S.B. (Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster), all made very generous donations towards the restoration.

I have mentioned in the text that about half of the money required for the purchase and restoration of the Chapel has come from Church of England sources. Among these I would mention in particular the Right Reverend A. C. W. Rose (late Bishop of Dover), the Dean and Chapter of Salisbury Cathedral, the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral, the Venerable C. A. Plaxton (Archdeacon of Wilts), the Reverend W. M. Martin, C.F. (St Mary's-in-the-Castle, Dover). The Friends of Friendless Churches and the Friends of Kent Churches both made very generous donations, and in each case it was the first time that the Society had given to a catholic church. The Friends of Friendless Churches also organized an appeal for the Chapel among its members, and grants were received from the Kent County Council, Dover Corporation and the Claude and Marcella Digby Trust.

I also would like to record my appreciation for the publicity which *The Universe* gave to my appeal.

The work of restoration commenced on 16th November 1966.

The Chapel was re-consecrated by His Grace Cyril C. Cowderoy, Archbishop of Southwark, on 27th May 1968.

The total cost of restoring the Chapel was approximately £11,000. In this total is included not only the actual restoration of the Chapel, but its purchase and the purchase of the sites of the two bombed shops, the laying out of the forecourt, and professional fees.

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