The Figure Sculpture of the West Front of Peterborough Cathedral and its Setting

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The thirty sculpted figures on the upper part of the façade of Peterborough cathedral have attracted no serious attention in published literature over the past century, and there is no extensive or reliable publication on them at all. What is left of these figures is in very poor condition; too poor, indeed, for them to be usefully integrated into a stylistic history of medieval sculpture. However, it is possible to identify the figures, and to recognise them collectively as an evocation of the Church's authority over earthly affairs. Certain aspects of the sculpture's iconography may possibly relate to the abbey's foundation history, and there is an extended sense in which the whole ensemble has a bearing on local monastic identity. Historically rooted arguments for the sculpture's meaning rely on reading it in the context of the façade as a whole. Several of these arguments are briefly introduced after the main analysis of the sculpture.

KEYWORDS: Peterborough cathedral, medieval sculpture, Gothic architecture, façade design, monastic history, iconography

THE façade sculptures of Peterborough abbey church (now the cathedral) have never attracted much scholarly notice, because they are remote, small and few in number compared with great church ensembles elsewhere (Fig. 1).[1] Rather than seizing the viewer's attention with a collective display of symbolic power, as those at Wells,

Salisbury and Exeter do, they make a relatively modest contribution to a whole dominated by vast architectural motifs. Moreover, they are now so badly eroded that it is unlikely much attention will be devoted to them in the future, unless with reference to conservation practice. However, the sculptures have a place in the design of the façade, and hence the abbey's history, which it is worthwhile to try to explain.[2] Anyone disposed to typologise great church façades, and think of the sculptures as an answer to a challenge that was posed and met differently elsewhere, will also find them interesting for formal reasons not pursued here. What I have to say about them is largely conditioned by my understanding of monastic ideas rather than object-classification or the history of medieval ornament. Perhaps this is just as well, for the available space could hardly accommodate larger contexts. The following discussion is restricted to a sketch of arrangement and iconography which tries to account for patronal motives. Consideration of the setting is also restricted, centring on the design and date of the galilee that caused and accommodated the sculpture, and some ideas about how the façade as a whole may have been understood in the middle ages. The reason for advancing these ideas is simply to suggest how the sculpture could have functioned to promote its patrons' interests as part of a material context that was properly extraordinary by medieval standards.

THE GALILEE AND WEST FAÇADE

Clearly, Peterborough's west façade was not designed primarily as a screen for displaying figure sculpture. This is not to say that what sculpture there is was an afterthought. That can hardly be the case given the normality of monumental figure sculpture as a component of Gothic façade design, and also the monks' instinct for

conveying messages about themselves. These men would never have ignored such an opportunity. However, the degree to which architectural form, spatial recession and the play of light and shadow mediate experience of the sculpture is unusually pronounced. The façade, and the galilee as a whole, thus deserve some attention here. These parts of the building have proven challenging to interpret from an architectural historian's point of view. The galilee's specific build-dates are unknown, and its genesis, while evidently a complicated process, cannot be fully understood on the basis of standing fabric. In broad terms, the reasons for the successive changes of design it evidently underwent were apparently neither structural nor economic. Rather, they were due to a desire to produce something astonishing and distinctive during a period when patrons' and architects' grasp of the possibilities of the Gothic style were developing.

As completed, the galilee is approximately 48 m wide externally, a little over 5 metres deep, and about 33.5 m high, with a façade of three vast arches flanked by narrow lateral towers and framed by huge piers. The piers look as though intended for a larger job than they actually have (they parallel the buttresses on the transept façades in this regard). For a combination of structural and aesthetic reasons, the lateral arches are wider than the central one, an inversion of the so-called 'harmonic' façade arrangement popular in parts of France and England at the time.[3] Each arch is crowned by a gable that evokes a precious-metal shrine and contrasts strongly with the cavernous opening beneath it. It is on these gables, and the elevated spandrels of the arches, that the figure sculptures are displayed. The dimensions of the gables are approximately uniform, something intended to counteract the asymmetry of the arch-widths and reasonably considered as a contribution to a realised ideal rather than a corrective expedient for downplaying

perceived imperfections. In the teeth of an exacting body of late-19th and 20th-century criticism, accented by Nikolaus Pevsner's rant about the 'nonsense' of the design (perhaps his most flagrant piece of *déformation professionnelle*), it cannot be overstressed that nothing is or ever was obviously wrong with the look of Peterborough's façade as it stands.[4] It is, as Peter Kidson stated, 'original and impressive', characteristics whose positive connotations are hardly affected by its lack of influence on other buildings or the asymmetry caused by the eventual failure to build a tower over the western bay of the north nave aisle.[5]

Naturally, the galilee and façade have their place, or places, in the context of contemporary architecture, but spelling these out only tends to emphasise Peterborough's originality. Thus, they reflect the interest in gigantism found in English great church design between the Norman Conquest and the mid-13th century, but in a distinctive way.[6] They have a whiff but not an identifiable flavour of French High Gothic about them, so that the façade reminded Jean Bony of a nave elevation inverted and reoriented, and Kidson of a magnified portal zone.[7] And there is a clear formal relationship with other eastern English façades, particularly that of Lincoln cathedral. However, this relationship was and still is largely disguised; no façade had arches of such vast size in relation to its height as that at Peterborough. The only obvious parallel in England exists at Tewkesbury abbey, where a single, enormous arch dominates the west façade. Like Peterborough's, which it antedates by about a century, this arch is composed of six sharply receding orders.[8] As such, it cannot not be excluded entirely as a design source. However, there is no point pressing a comparison with no known historical basis: the manifest formal similarity says all that can currently be said for it.[9] Here, it is worth adding that the link

supposed by Mary Dean between the gable zone of Peterborough's façade and the broad decorative trends of later 12th and early 13th-century West Country architecture is hard to establish.[10] Overall, and with the exception of motifs like the spoked occuli in the centres of the gables, seeking built precedents for the galilee and façade is a futile exercise.[11] Of course, this judgement does not work against the possibility that the memories and ideas of the architect and patrons about a potentially wide range of buildings, continental as well as English, affected the design in a diffuse way.

The dating and motive force for this work are hard to get at through existing documents. No early building accounts survive. Peterborough's chroniclers organised their materials conventionally, according to the careers and achievements of their abbots, who enjoyed a large share of the conventual income and were thus in a position to exercise cultural patronage.[12] They specify the building works they found in their sources, the main source probably being a martyrology. The mid-13th-century chronicler, who covered the period from 1175 to 1256, duly attributes the construction of the nave 'continuously to the façade' ('usque ad frontem') to Abbot Benedict (1177-93), but this is his final entry relating to the structure of the church.[13] It effectively and perhaps intentionally attributes the galilee and façade to Benedict. The word *usque* presents no problem here; if anything, it is more reasonable to give it the sense of 'up to and including' rather than the 'up to but not including' normally preferred in modern analysis. Of course, Benedict cannot have been involved with the galilee and façade as they stand – the architecture is stylistically too advanced for the period of his reign – but it is worth noting that any late medieval monk would have thought him responsible for them on the basis of the chronicle and whatever text underpinned it. By contrast, no reader would

have connected ‘that marvellous work by the brewery’ (‘illud mirificum opus juxta bracinum’), whose inception the chronicler ascribed to the same abbot, with the west front of the church.[14] In spite of some modern flirtation with the idea, the reference is simply too oblique, and the work, whatever it was, is anyway catalogued with precinctual buildings other than the church.[15]

An end date for the work is commonly identified in the consecration of the church in 1238.[16] This assumes architectural completeness to be a necessary condition of consecration. Some support for the idea exists in a canon of a legatine council held in London in 1237, in which the legate, Otto da Tonengo, declares that cathedral, conventual and parish churches should be consecrated within two years of the completion of their walls.[17] The monks of Bury St Edmunds were reminded of this in the mid-14th century when they sought advice from a canon lawyer about the consecration of their own church. ‘Nothing is complete while anything remains to be done’, and ‘your church cannot be consecrated without [its chapels], nor divided into parts, since the actual words of the constitutions [of Otto] say that the entire church must be consecrated’: these things are written in the lawyer’s missive to the convent.[18] In fact (and of course), Otto’s canon was a reaction to finding large numbers of English churches unconsecrated, so it is an unreliable *terminus ante* for completion of the galilee. It certainly caused the consecration of Peterborough, by spurring Robert Grosseteste, the bishop of Lincoln, to order compliance.[19] But there is no knowing how long the abbey church might have stood unconsecrated before this. Probably, it was no very long time, and an envelope of 1220-40 is safe enough for the completion of the architecture. (Tree-ring analysis supplies an estimated common felling period of *c*. 1225-30 for the timbers in the roof of the north

gable.)[20] The date of the gables over the arches need not be that of the figure sculpture. However, as there is no stylistic progression in the sculpture from the lowest level upwards, or from one gable to the next, it is reasonable to see the façade's completion as simultaneously the earliest juncture at which figures were carved and the latest at which their iconography was worked out.

THE SCULPTED FIGURES

IN turning to the façade sculpture itself, it should be noted immediately that much is missing due to destruction, incompletion, or both. As things stand, there are thirty full-length figures on the upper zone of the façade, along with six heads projecting out of sexfoils and displaying a variety of facial types: bearded, beardless; mitred, crowned, bare-headed; old, young. These heads, which suggest the social estates in a general way, are part of the façade's ornamental variety, but bear no clear relation to the imagery of the full-length figures (they will not be discussed further here). There are also some corbel-heads and a few large gargoyles, plus four small but distinctive gabled boxes that look like relic-shrines and are set at angles against the turrets flanking the central gable.[21] Within the galilee, and on the faces of its towers, there are numerous corbels apparently designed for standing figures which they never received. Here and there, this intention is explicit: the tower façades have corbels at the height of the springing of the main arches that are integrated with shallow niches (Fig. 1), a feature duplicated on the narrow north and south walls within the galilee.[22] These are clearly display units, and thus more figures were provided for, even if they were never installed.

What has definitely been lost is the tympanum sculpture of the central portal, which stood on a vertical axis with figures of saints Peter and John the Evangelist in the central gable, and must have corresponded semantically with the descent of a damned man on the socle of the trumeau directly below it. Whether this man was meant for Simon Magus or Nero (the lack of a crown or similar makes Simon seem more likely), the obvious corresponding subject for the tympanum would have been St Peter, and it is likely that he was indeed represented.[23] Alternatively, and as Peter was already represented on the same axis, it is possible that a figure of Christ or the Virgin and Child, otherwise conspicuous by their absence, occupied this space, or else an image of the Holy Trinity something like that depicted at the beginning of the Lothian Bible (made *c*. 1220, perhaps at St Albans).[24] The chapel erected in the middle arch of the façade in the 14th century, completely obscuring the tympanum, was dedicated to the Trinity. On the evidence of its empty niches, this chapel had its own complement of about thirty-five sculpted figures which, being reachable with ladders, were easily destroyed. Their form and iconography were presumably tailored to their immediate setting, but they also affected the sculptural balance of the whole façade, most obviously by reproducing the surface richness of the gable zone at a lower level.

The generally poor condition of the surviving figures has already been indicated. Of the thirty full-length sculptures, seven are 20th-century replacements, and an eighth has a Victorian-era head and shoulders. This partially Victorian figure has recently been removed and placed in the stone store in the cathedral's gallery. Currently, it has not been replaced, and its future is unclear: for ease of reference, I will discuss it here as though it were still in situ. It is not alone in the gallery lapidarium. Some of the other original

figures, removed earlier due to their degradation, are also kept there. As elsewhere, much of the damage the sculpture has sustained is relatively recent. Photographs taken *c*. 1900 show all of the medieval statues in situ (Figs 2, 3, 4).[25] Decay had set in by then, of course, to the extent that two on the south gable lacked their heads (the Victorian head and shoulders were already in evidence). However, no figure appears to have been unviable in the way indicated by the detritus now in the gallery. These photographs are thus important to current analysis, although they cannot fully compensate for the loss of detail in the faces, draperies and accessories that would, if preserved, help with identification and dating.[26] Not that the losses are total. The protected sides of several figures are still crisp, and there are even remnants of paint on some of them. The stone conservator Nicholas Durnan, who examined the sculpture in 2001, identified small areas of red lead in drapery folds of four statues, including those of saints Peter and Paul in the upper tier of niches. This must be medieval polychromy (the statues cannot have been repainted after the Reformation), and probably belonged to a ground-layer, although a surface layer may also be represented.[27] (Technical analysis might decide the matter.) Reds of several sorts were used as surface colours on the façades at Exeter, Salisbury and Wells, and extensive later medieval repainting seems to have occurred at Salisbury, at least.[28]

The sculpture is evenly distributed, with ten figures set above each arch at four different levels. Iconographically, the gables are not self-contained: the figures are 'read' in horizontal rows rather than vertically, beginning with those in the isolated niches at the summits of the gables. These three figures are privileged in semantic terms by their elevation and enthronement. All of the other figures are shown standing. The central one

is also the largest of all the sculptures, being 173 cm high excluding its plinth, 83 cm wide at the feet and 54 cm deep at the knee. By contrast, the smallest figures, arranged singly on either side of the spoked roundels, are approximately 110 × 30 × 25 cm. Below these is a row of nine figures, all of which have dish-like haloes. They are larger, being some 170 × 50 × 30 cm, and occupy trefoil-headed niches which alternate with the narrow windows of a gallery. These windows, which are little more than slits, are now glazed, but originally they must have been open. They seem too high, however, to have served the liturgical function identified for lower openings on the west fronts of Salisbury, Wells and various other English churches. To dispense with the point now, it is surely not the case that the sculptures at this level were ever lent the illusion of voice during processions by choristers concealed behind them in the gallery.[29] The voices would not have carried adequately. Finally, the lowest row, located in the spandrels of the arches, has twelve figures without haloes. These figures' heights vary slightly in the range approximately 130 to 145 cm, and their widths, 34 to 47 cm, depending upon the arrangement of their arms. This reflects variations in the form and costume of the figures: as noted below, the patrons and their sculptors introduced typological variety at this level. Again, the sculptures are shallow, being as little as 20 cm deep. While some depth has been lost in each case due to erosion, the figures were always shallow in relation to their other proportions. They are also rather small for their location, a function of the space available to them. This, plus their height, must always have made their finer points, and thus their iconography, challenging to make out in anything but favourable viewing conditions.

At the top of this scheme, the seated figures represent saints Peter, Andrew and Paul, with Peter in the middle and Andrew, his brother, on the south side. Andrew is identifiable by traces of a saltire cross, while Paul holds the remnants of a book. The positon of Paul's right arm suggests that he originally held a sword as well. Peter wears a cope clasped with a morse over an alb, and a low mitre. Andrew and Paul also appear to wear copes over albs, but are bare-headed and originally had bare feet. Unlike Peter, they have large, dish-like haloes of the sort seen on the figures of the third row. Andrew's halo still bears traces of raised circular patterning, indicating that it was originally painted in a way that suggested studding with gemstones (Fig. 5). These two saints also have disproportionately long necks, to compensate for the foreshortening effects of perspective when seen from below. According to the Peterborough manuscript of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Peter, Paul and Andrew are the saints to whom the monastery was dedicated in 656, and this explains their privileged status in the context of a three-gable composition.[30] The same triumvirate is represented on the south side of the abbot's gate, which stands to the south-west of the façade, and also on the reverse of the abbey's early 14th-century common seal (where, however, Paul is in the middle, a concession to the fact that Peter is shown by himself on the obverse).[31] On the gate, Peter occupies a higher position than Andrew and Paul, but on the façade of the church, where the three gables were of equal height, his superior status is emphasised by giving him a wider niche and larger figure. Special efforts also seem to have been made in the handling of this sculpture (Figs 6, 7). Although little of its original quality can now be appreciated, the old photos show the skilful way in which the drapery was made to fall over and between the knees in clinging,

linear folds. The Andrew and the Paul have drapery of the same style but less elaborately treated.[32]

Peter's identifying attributes are also more numerous and interesting than those of his companions. A context for appreciating the emphasis given them is the demonstrable identification by the monks with the particular attributes of their patron saints. Thus, the inscription surrounding the figures on the reverse of the common seal mentions the shining quality of the cross, key and sword that Andrew, Peter and Paul are shown to hold.[33] As well as the mitre and other ornaments signifying his papal status, the sculpture of Peter once held keys in its left hand, the rings overlapping and the keyed ends adorsed.[34] These keys occupied about one third of the total height of the figure, and must have been clearly identifiable from the ground. They are, of course, the keys of heaven, one to bind, the other to loose (Matthew 16:17-20): in the context of a public programme of sculpture devised and paid for by monks, they have defensive overtones as well, relating to the abbey's rights and powers. In English art, keys represented in this way have Anglo-Saxon precedents (e.g. St Cuthbert's coffin; Hyde *Liber Vitae*).[35] They are also found in a psalter made for Robert of Lindsey, abbot of Peterborough from 1214 until 1222, and would no doubt have been shown thus on the painted ceiling of the nave if the lozenge shape of the field occupied by St Peter there did not prevent the keys' ends being adorsed.[36] This is frank, legible imagery, endorsed by artistic tradition and current at Peterborough when the façade sculptures were installed.

Less ordinary, but equally sensible, is the representation of the plinth on which Peter's feet are shown to rest. This has a grid pattern on it, and two now-amorphous lumps of stone arising at either corner. Based on what remains, one might think that these

lumps once joined in the middle to make a single, prostrate figure, for this is what is shown on the obverse of the common seal, where the figure must be intended for Nero.[37] But the grid-pattern points to something else, and makes better sense as a net with men caught up in it, corresponding to Christ's call of Peter, and Andrew, as they fished on the sea of Galilee: 'I will make you into fishers of men' (Matthew 4:18-20). The unusual motif is simultaneously a symbol of Peter's Galilean origins, pastoral mission, and authority as a chosen companion of Christ. This is the same, surpassing authority symbolised by the keys, and if Peter's now-lost right hand held a model church, as contemporary images of the saint often did, then it was triply indicated.[38] It is possible to think that these symbols mitigated a qualm created by giving the façade's box seat (as it were) to Peter rather than his master. Whether or not this was the case, they reflect an emphasis strongly present in the first, 12th-century portion of the abbey's domestic chronicle, where Peter is repeatedly referred to as holder of the keys and keeper of the gate of heaven ('claviger', 'janitor celi'), as well as the rock on which Christ built his church.[39] Peter's status as fisher of men is also reflected on the common seal, where the tabernacles he occupies with Andrew and Paul are set in a boat riding upon waves. 'You left the boat for me, to take up the key': thus the inscription on the seal's obverse side. Perhaps the nature of the fenland out of which the church arose made such references seem especially appropriate. The chronicler began his work with a description of this watery environment, and mentions the way that local men sustained themselves by fishing and fowling.[40]

For the sake of coherence, it makes sense to consider the third row of figures next. The sculptures at this level seem to have represented nine other apostles of Christ, and

thus to have supplied both a rational accompaniment to Peter, Paul and Andrew and a normal element of façade imagery (seen locally, for example, at Crowland and Thorney). Their generic importance is indicated by their haloes and relatively large size. The three figures below Peter on the central gable are clear apostle types. That to the north is James the Great, identified by a staff and scrip, and holding a book in his left hand. This is the only figure of the nine now identifiable by its attributes. However, the central figure has the clean-shaven features of John the Evangelist (Fig. 8), who normally occupies a privileged position in apostle cycles and, as the brother of James the Great, harmonises with the Peter-Andrew pairing above. Here is another brace of Galilean fishermen (Matthew 4:21-22). John's right arm is shown across his torso, with the hand pointing towards the south, while his left clasped the top of a scroll which descends diagonally across his waist and legs, and is still visible. The southern figure of the central gable is a generic apostle type, bearded and holding an open book to which, again, he points. It may have been intended for St Thomas, because this apostle is grouped with James and John in diagrams of the ordering of apostles and prophets in heaven. A diagram of this sort survives in an elaborate 12th-century scientific manuscript from Peterborough (BL, MS Harley 3667, fol. 7v: Fig. 9).[41] Perhaps it indicates how the trines of sculpted apostles were generally identified, since Peter, Andrew and Paul are grouped together at the top (albeit with Paul in the centre, an impossible juxtaposition on a façade which had to give precedence to Peter).

These three central apostles have weathered relatively well, because made of a harder, coarser-grained limestone than the Barnack stone used for all the other sculptures on the façade. None of the other figures in the row is individually identifiable. All three

on the north gable have been replaced, while the central one on the southern gable has the Victorian repairs mentioned previously. The old photographs reveal that the northern figure on the north gable had a long beard, but neither of the other two obviously had a beard. On the south gable, the figures at either end were bearded (although one can hardly tell this from their surviving remains), while the central one had crossed legs, a lively stance not repeated elsewhere on the façade but paralleled in earlier manuscript art as well as monumental sculpture of the same date elsewhere.[42] A few of the figures evidently cradled or otherwise held attributes, probably books but now too damaged to identify. The lack of recognisable features for six of the figures means that the classification of all as apostles rests on contextual appropriateness plus the identification of the central three.

As well as being made of different stone, these central figures are taller and wider than their counterparts, and have a much larger head size in relation to their bodies. Everything about them is franker, better calculated to be legible from below: their drapery is more voluminous and more robustly modelled, their gestures are more obvious, their thick hair and large ears stick out sideways, their arms are short, and their hands and bare feet are disproportionately large. Clearly, they are by a distinct sculptor, and the difference in size and material suggests they were made at a different time. Stylistically, their faces and draperies are not obviously earlier than those of the other apostles. They sit comfortably in the second quarter of the 13th century, and may even be early results of the campaign to populate the façade.[43] It looks distinctly as if larger sculptures were preferred under the larger enthroned figure of Peter because productive of better visual coherence when the gable is viewed as a whole. They certainly have that

effect. On the available evidence, it is anyway impossible to verify the reason for their difference.

The iconography of the other eighteen figures on the façade is basically generic. The intention was evidently to represent members of earthly hierarchies, ecclesiastical and secular. It is also possible that the patrons intended to allude specifically to aspects of the abbey's history, just as the figures in the gables allude to the dedication. However, this history is not an overarching theme, and the suggestions about it made below seem to plumb the topic. The figure sculpture of Peterborough's façade fits in with the general iconographic treatment of great church façades in the middle ages, which tended to emphasise the universal over the particular, only incorporating local themes to the extent that they were compatible with overarching ones. The second-highest row of figures, set beside the spoked roundels, are all kings. This has long been recognised.[44] They are the smallest figures on the façade, their size conditioned by their relatively small niches (Fig. 10). Shown in secular dress (tunics and mantles), they have the remains of crowns which stood high enough above their heads to be visible from below. Their hair ended just below and behind the ears in little rolls of a sort common for secular, male figures in 13th-century sculpture, and also found on some of the kings at Wells.[45] This feature can still be seen in the fourth Peterborough king counting from the north. The kings on the north and central gables, at least, also exhibited the familiar gesture of toying with cords tied around their necks, which – again – occurs on the west front of Wells cathedral at around the same time, and is found slightly earlier in continental sculpture.[46] On the south gable, the northern figure has weathered better than the rest and may have a different date (although the drapery style is consistent), while the southern figure has lost its head.

It would be pointless to try to identify these kings individually. By the early 13th century, the abbey could produce charters issued, or supposedly issued, by more than six monarchs, and it did not claim any royal burials (although it did claim some royal relics); so the obvious links the modern historian might be tempted to explore are disqualified.[47] If an identity must be given them, over and above that of monarchs (with all the connotations of privilege and protection this carried), then it seems more reasonable to think of them as general representatives of the Mercian line to which the abbey's founders belonged.[48] The justification for suggesting this is found in surviving Peterborough manuscripts. Chiefly, the domestic chronicle makes much of the abbey's first foundation by Mercian kings in the 7th century, and the support given by their successors.[49] This enthusiasm emerges textually and pictorially in a remarkable genealogical roll made for the monks in the early 14th century, containing twenty standing figures of Mercian rulers and many others of the line in the form of busts contained in roundels (London, British Library, Additional MS 47170, dorse).[50] This is surely the fullest surviving example of Mercian royal iconography from the middle ages, and may be contrasted with the restricted and generally sparse evidence for related imagery from other monasteries founded by Mercian kings and princes.[51] However, what the monks must have considered most important was the recognisable inclusion of kings per se in an outward-facing sculptural programme whose visibility from beyond the abbey's gate gave it a defensive as well as hospitable inflection.

The spandrel figures are arranged in pairs within lancet-shaped niches. Four of them are modern replacements, that is, the first and third figures over the north arch, the first over the central arch, and the third over the south arch. Once more, the old

photographs help to clarify what was intended. They show clearly that the figures in each pair contrasted with one another in terms of height and costume. Over the north arch, the pairing was evidently abbots with monks. The outer figures (i.e. the first and fourth) were tonsured, held books and staves, and were dressed in long garments that fell down in front in broad v-shaped folds.[52] These garments were meant for chasubles, with the skirts of the albs emerging below, and in each case there was an amice arranged like a stiff collar around the neck. The second and third figures were also male, but shorter and cowled, with tunics or habits belted at the waist. The cowls in particular would have identified them as monks to medieval viewers. Their poses were more animated, with the heads set at an angle. Over the central arch, the relationship of position to hierarchy was reversed. Here, the second and third figures were the superior ones. They were habited and equipped like the tonsured figures on the north side, but wore mitres (thus corresponding to the image of Peter in the gable above). The other figures, which had swaying poses that caused them to lean sideways towards their mitred partners, were vested in albs and dalmatics, with (again) amices folded into high collars. Their finer details are hard to make out in the old photographs, but can be seen on the surviving figure, the fourth in the row, which is perhaps the best preserved of all the Barnack stone sculptures (Fig. 11). These include a stole worn over the left shoulder in the manner peculiar to deacons, as well as a maniple hanging down from the left arm and a book held in the same arm.[53] The pairing above the central arch was thus bishops with deacons.[54] In both sets of pairs, it is conspicuous that the greater dignity of the prelates is evoked by contrasting stable poses, symmetrical drapery, greater height and ceremonial gestures with shorter and physically more dynamic partners of lower rank. This is another

indication of the careful thinking-out of the formal presentation of the figures on the façade, which evidently mattered despite these figures' small size.

The spandrel figures of the south gable all appear to have represented women. Here, too, the surviving sculpture is more revealing than the old photographs, which do not make the gender attributes clear. Three of the figures survive (the third figure counting from the north has been replaced), and each has long, wavy hair and a veil over the head which descends to the shoulders. All wear gowns which descend to the ankles, and all once held attributes which were supposed to be identifiable from the ground.[55] The second figure from the north has a crown of the high sort worn on the register of kings above (the veil emerges from beneath this). The archival photo (Fig. 4) suggests that the third figure may also have had a crown. However, the fourth, southernmost figure never had one, and the first, northernmost figure is too damaged to be able to tell. It has a cap of modern cement, which rises like a *pileus*; but this may well have been built up on an originally veiled head. Indeed, that would seem likely if the patrons and sculptor intended to present spectators with pairs of contrasting types, as they did in the spandrels of the other gables. The fact that the second figure definitely has a crown and the fourth definitely does not seems to clinch this point. However, it is not very clear what the contrast entails. The crowned figures can be safely identified as queens, but the uncrowned ones are harder to characterise. They are probably not virgin martyrs, because the other spandrel figures evidently do not include saints. Secular figures below royal rank also seem unlikely, because non-royal secular types are rare on facades, and anyway, this status would have been impossible to identify from below. Princesses are a possibility. The fact that the southernmost figure holds a book provides a clue (Fig. 12).

In the hands of a woman, this attribute indicates religious status, and suggests by extension that the uncrowned figures were intended to represent abbesses. The pairings here thus appear to be queens with abbesses, to match the abbot-monk and bishop-deacon pairs of the other spandrels.

If this is the case, then some local resonance may be detectable in the iconography. Among its first founders, Peterborough's chronicle recognises two royal women, sisters of the male founders Peada, Wulfhere and Ethelred. These were the princesses Kyneburga (d. *c*. 680) and Kyneswitha.[56] The pair, respectively the first and second abbesses of Castor, were regarded as saints, and their relics were claimed by the abbey, as the chronicle also mentions.[57] The pairs of sculpted figures may be read as Kyneburga and Kyneswitha in both royal and ecclesiastical guise. Alternatively, the uncrowned figures may stand for the founder-saints, and the crowned ones for generic royal counterparts whose crowns provided the desired typological contrast. Or it may be that a pair of figures with identifiable local significance was duplicated for the sake of symmetry, with Kyneburga, who became a queen, shown with a crown and Kyneswitha, who did not, shown without one. The fact that there are no haloes would not militate against the idea that two or more of these figures represent saints. At Peterborough, haloes were perhaps reserved for apostles, or else only thought desirable where they would not obscure the nature of other headwear. The mitred figure of Peter, after all, has no halo.

A parallel of sorts for these identifications exists in a miniature on the opening page of the abbey's domestic chronicle in a manuscript made *c*. 1330 (BL, Add. MS 39758, fol. 20: Fig. 13). This is composed of three quatrefoils inhabited by seated, regal

figures. The figures do not have identifying labels, but – without going too deeply into the matter – they plainly represent the five Mercian founders singled out in the chronicle text.[58] On the left are Kyneburga and Kyneswitha, in the centre is King Peada with the abbey church, and on the right are his brothers Wulfhere and Ethelred. Conspicuously, the image of Kyneburga and Kyneswitha shows one figure with a crown and the other without, which corresponds to the sculpture (Fig. 14). The reason for showing only one crown between the two is either that, as mentioned, only one of the sisters became a queen, or else because they are meant to share the attributes of royalty and abbess-status (book, pastoral staff) between them in a way that avoids cluttering the small space they occupy. As a product of hypothesis, this line of argument does not warrant further development. Note, however, that even if the spandrel figures above the south arch were meant to refer to figures involved with the abbey's foundation, they were simultaneously consistent with the idea of displaying authoritative social types, and understandable to more viewers in this light. The mixture of ecclesiastical and secular ranks is paralleled at Wells, Exeter and elsewhere.

Although the evidence will not support detailed discussion of the style and date of these sculptures, a summary word on these subjects is in order. As noted, the three apostles in the third row on the central gable seem to be by a distinct sculptor, a judgement partially based on their different stone. The northern king on the south gable may also be by a unique hand. For the rest, judgement about hands based on style is precarious. It is tempting to think that in its original state, the figure of Peter was of superior quality, because its drapery was clearly more complex than those of the Andrew and (particularly) Paul, and its face more expressive and individualised. But the quality of

some of the smaller figures, including the surviving deacon, appears to have been similar. The differences may simply be due to more elaborate handling of the larger figure, plus the fact that the figures at the top are easier to see in the photographs on which stylistic judgements about the Peterborough sculpture partially depend. Another matter which makes differences harder to distinguish is the way drapery is treated. The fold-patterns were carefully indexed to the figure types, something that helped the viewer to identify the figures, and also varied the appearance of the ensemble in an agreeable way. Thus, the chasubles of the bishops and abbots fall in sharp v-shaped folds at the front, while the tunics of the kings are mainly composed of vertical folds. Most of the apostles also had garments falling in straight, tubular folds, but with robes worn diagonally over them.

What this means for present purposes is that it is impossible to say how many sculptors were responsible for the finishing of the Barnack stone figures. The variation in the poses of the figures noted above does not help, because, like the drapery, it seems mainly to have been a device for distinguishing types. As such, it is inadmissible as evidence for different formal preferences among a group of sculptors. The crossed legs of the apostle on the south gable is the most strikingly individual aspect of pose on the façade, but is not sufficient to attribute this figure to a distinct hand. One-offs in such contexts are reasonably associated with the need to replace figures, and there is no evidence either for or against the idea that this apostle is a substitute for an earlier figure. With the date of the sculpture in mind, the linear style is compatible with the dates suggested above for completion of the façade's architecture. There is none of the plastic, broad-fold Gothic drapery that began to appear after the mid-13th century. It seems acceptable to date all of the sculpture to the second quarter of the 13th century, reserving

judgement only in the case of the king on the north side of the south gable. However, such conclusions have to remain flexible. In a regional context, the style of the drapery would certainly be possible into the third quarter of the century.[59] The well-preserved angular folds of the gown worn by the fourth female figure on the south gable are, for example, rather similar to those seen on the archangel Gabriel from the chapter house at Westminster Abbey, carved around 1253 in the latest fashion (Fig. 15).[60] In short, a slight delay between the completion of the gables and provision of the sculpture is possible in theory but impossible to verify.

THE SEMANTICS OF THE SCULPTURE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE FAÇADE

BECAUSE the ensemble of sculpture at Peterborough is small, it does not extend so obvious an invitation to those interested in interpreting great church façades as that of Wells or Exeter. Yet the fact that its iconography was identifiable shows that those who commissioned it expected it to be interpreted, and in practice, any reading of it must have involved the sculpture's architectural setting. This gives the historical imagination a point from which to work. However, it is important to realise that there is no dominant meaning (intended or received) at stake here which, if identified, would 'explain' the whole façade. Nor would it be particularly fruitful to distinguish several neatly partitioned meanings, as if the architecture provided a formal template for interpretation. The fact is that the façade was designed and built for patrons affected by a range of temporal and spiritual concerns that were not hermetic but bled into one another. It was also viewed and presumably assessed by people with varying degrees of knowledge about both patronal motives and the world at large. The concepts it generated were thus

contingent and unavoidably interlaced. Rather than imagining one thing when they stared upwards, engaged spectators probably detected various frequencies of meaning, which were catalysed by the same objects but modulated according to personal acquaintance and situations.

These cautions are not supposed to obscure what is manifest about the façade and its sculpture, but only to suggest the difficulty of discussing their meaning in simple, unqualified terms, and also to apologise for running together ideas which some readers may think better kept apart. A sense of what is at stake can be had by considering the façade's relationship to the abbey's view of itself as a privileged branch of the Roman Church. As an ensemble, the sculpture can be reasonably understood to adumbrate the Church's authority over earthly affairs, something which involved cooperation in temporal governance with lay rulers (hence the royal figures). The earthliness is especially pronounced here through the choice of Peter, vested as pope, as the dominant figure, to the exclusion of Christ and the Virgin Mary.[61] By contrast, Christ is placed centrally in both sets of exterior sculpture at the east end of the church (mentioned below). The arrangement of the façade also expresses the special local importance of Peter, who is invoked repeatedly in the domestic chronicle as the foundation-stone of the abbey church and the monks' special protector.[62] This importance would be hard to overstate. In a metaphysical sense, Peter was thought to inhabit and even embody the monastery. A privilege dated 680, attributed to Pope Agatho and reputedly the abbey's second-oldest document, instructed the monks to 'constantly possess the blessed Peter among you in spirit'.[63] It also declares that inhabitants of England and adjacent countries unable to go to Rome can visit St Peter at Peterborough instead, where they will enjoy the

same advantages for doing so. Heaven's gates will be opened to all who come in good faith. However, Peter will wield his sword rather than his keys if anyone seeks to violate the abbey's rights.[64] As the chronicler put it, the church of Peterborough should be considered 'especially Roman' ('specialis romana sit ecclesia') because of its link to the prince of apostles. This was what its royal founders had intended; to establish a 'second Rome', or a 'daughter of Rome in England'.[65] Such an appeal is to be understood as both a matter of intrinsic spiritual merit and, more practically, in relation to the great geographical distance between England and Rome. The tyranny of geographical distance is neatly expressed by a map in the scientific manuscript mentioned above, which shows the British islands clinging like limpets to the outer western fringe of the world.[66]

These local texts were variously copied in the later middle ages, and must have been much more often read, for it was every monk's business to know the rudiments of his institution's history. Some of the copies were designed to encapsulate the nexus of saintly, papal and institutional power presented by the façade. The clearest example is a large, illuminated version of Wulfhere's charter, made in the 14th century for exhibition in some context(s), in which the opening 'W' of the king's name is flanked by Peter's keys, and a gold king's head appears at the top (BL, Cotton MS Augustus II.5).[67] The main driver of these claims was a collective desire to express an assimilation to Rome that would increase Peterborough's spiritual reputation in ways that made it more attractive to friends and more formidable to rivals and potential enemies. Assertion of ecclesiastical supremacy over royal power is only one aspect of this. The figure on the central gable, enthroned above a privileged hierarchy and crowning a vast piece of triumphal architecture, evokes all of the embodiment, authority, power and assimilation

outlined here. It is eloquent by itself, but its effectiveness as a method of communicating these and other ideas relied on the fact that it was viewed in situ.

How widely accessible this symbolism was will have depended on familiarity with the abbey's claims about its history as well as the degree of spectator engagement. It would naturally have been impossible for most people ignorant of these claims to extrapolate from the façade alone a close relationship between Peterborough and the Roman church governed by the pope, although an experienced cleric might have done so. One need not be too pessimistic about this: the odds are that many local people knew about Peterborough's traditions. Whether many of them had any coherent mental image of Rome is doubtful, although monks and other churchmen must have given repeated (if sporadic) thought to the city. Where they did, the arch was probably the signature motif. This assumption does not lead directly to an association of Peterborough's façade with a paradigmatic building like the arch of Constantine or the portico of Old St Peter's. That seems too big a leap to make where (unlike the façade at Lincoln) the arches are of the same height and the central one is narrower than its counterparts. Equally, however, there is no point to being too fastidious about such things in the light of medieval evidence. There are numerous examples of northern churches that by modern standards looked nothing like Old St Peter's being said by chroniclers to imitate or represent it.[68] The point is that the sight of St Peter pontifically vested and wielding his keys above three enormous arches had the potential in the context of local traditions to generate associations between the abbey church and Rome, the latter as either a vaguely realised place of giant arches and papal authority or, more specifically, a unique building in which Peter was buried and the popes had their seat.[69] It is less likely that the abbey church was

considered an imitation of anything Roman than that it was thought to embody a Roman character that complemented the relationship vaunted in the chronicle and other documents. In this sense at least it was *opus Romanum*.

It would be possible to develop the relationship between St Peter, the other apostles and the architecture at Peterborough in alternative directions, albeit ones less well supported by the known history of the abbey. Anyone suspicious of coincidences might see a connection between the local importance of St Peter the Galilean fisherman and the choice of a galilee of peerless size and unusual form for the public face of the church. It will be remembered that Peter's origins as well as his pastoral mission are deliberately evoked in the net with men in it at the feet of his image. The term 'galilee', which has a general medieval pedigree going back to the 11th century, has almost certainly been used of Peterborough's west end since its construction. It is found in 14th-century sources from the abbey, and the court between the main gatehouse and the façade was called galilee court in the middle ages.[70] An association with the Temple in Jerusalem can also be suggested on the grounds that the apostles are said to have met there in Solomon's porch after the ascension of Christ (Acts 5:12). Peter in particular had a connection to the so-called 'Beautiful' gate, as well, by virtue of performing miracles there (Acts 3:1-8). The three arches of the façade need not scupper this proposal, as some medieval English images of the Temple show a similar arrangement.[71] An example in a volume of chronicles made *c*. 1300 for the Benedictines of Rochester in Kent represents one of the gates in the form of a façade with three high arches of equal height and flanking towers (BL, Cotton MS Nero D.II, fol. 23v: Fig. 16). This is, according to the text, the 'highest [*sublimissimam*] gate of the house of God', built by Joathan, king of

Judah (compare IV Kings 15:35). Following Peter Comestor, referred to in a marginal note, the chronicler states that this is indeed the Beautiful gate mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles.[72]

The normal medieval identification of church and heaven had a corollary almost equally well known in the symbolic association of the main doorway into a church with Christ. Durandus, who wrote at the end of the 13th century but was working with older sources, is now the most familiar purveyor of the idea: according to him, 'the apostles are also doorways to the church'.[73] At Peterborough, the idea is underlined in ways that are easy for the modern viewer to appreciate. The sheer size of the arch which frames the central western door is one, the striking absence of a figural image of Christ another. It seems that the obvious lacuna in the sculptural ensemble is supplied by a non-figural form whose status is underwritten by Christ's own identification with it (John 10:7, 9). It is admittedly no simple assumption that the central arch struck medieval beholders as a way of compensating for the lack of an image of Christ, but a monastic patron experienced in such thinking may have intended to suggest the idea to those capable of grasping it. A complementary idea is that the façade's arches deliberately embody Trinitarian symbolism. The dedication to the Holy Trinity of the chapel built in the central arch makes this seem more possible than it might otherwise.[74] (This dedication is attested in the abbey's 14th-century customary.)[75] The specific reason for choosing it is apparently unknown, but its appropriateness in the context of three great arches of equal height is unlikely to have escaped contemporaries. This aspect of architectural symbolism was current at the time. In a theological manuscript of *c*. 1200 from a monastery or cathedral in the west of England, a drawing showing the façade of a grand building

(*domus*) with three arches of equal height is used to illustrate an argument about the indivisibility of the Trinity (Hereford Cathedral Library, MS P.I.13, fol. 122v: Fig. 17).[76]

Whatever is precise character, symbolism of this sort was part of what made grand medieval church architecture compelling for its audience. The sublime building 'roars out, even though it is mute', and the symbolism is part of the voice, along with its architectural forms and the iconography of its sculpture.[77] As suggested, the roar is essentially one of pride and power deriving from special and multiply rooted status. It is directed not simply at the approaching visitor, but also at the Devil and his agents. These, in particular, Peter and his companions constantly see off, thus continuing their miracle-working – as their relics did – in an age reliant on miracles. A nice sense of this function is had by turning to the seven bust-figures set in trefoils around the apse parapet of the church. These busts, even more roundly ignored in the literature than the façade sculpture, deserve their own dedicated discussion. The roundels in which they are set are part and parcel of the 12th-century apse, but the sculptures themselves, along with their trefoil frames, look later (say, *c*. 1200).[78] From north to south, they represent a king, a grotesque mouth-puller, St Paul with sword and book, Christ displaying his wounds, St Peter mitred, blessing and holding his keys, another mouth-puller, and a bare-headed monk holding an open book, probably intended for an abbot (Fig. 18).[79] The choice of the mouth-pullers, and the fact that this imagery is difficult to identify from the ground, makes one suspect that it was primarily designed to ward off malign influence from the most sacred part of the building.[80] The façade sculptures were probably thought to do the same job where the sacred space of the interior was more obviously permeable. As such,

they were one plank in a mystical defence that was constantly mounted in the form of monastic ritual.

CONCLUSION

THESE apse sculptures, and also the group of seated apostles with Christ on the parapet of Robert Kirkton's 'new building', belong to a larger artistic context which deserves more attention than it can possibly receive here. That the literature treats the imagery of the nave ceiling and manuscripts of the abbey much more generously than the sculpture says something about the preferences that have determined the study, and thus the understanding, of English medieval art. Exterior sculpture tends to be given a back seat, probably because its typically weathered condition makes it less susceptible to detailed scrutiny. This is certainly the case with the façade sculpture at Peterborough, which also labours under the disadvantage – hardly unique to it – of being completely undocumented. Of course, as part of its sublime setting, it did not require documentation in any chronicle: it 'roared out' across the town forum and into the countryside beyond in a way that declared the fame of the abbey more effectively than words could. This disadvantage is relative to the modern scholar. The work of this essay has been to mitigate it within the bounds of the evidence, while also giving a sense of the sculpture's contribution to the abbey's later medieval culture. The relationship between the generic and specific that has emerged expresses much about the way monks and canons in general used art and architecture on the thresholds of charismatic space to stress local quality in accessible, compelling terms. Peterborough's façade represents one approach to a task that, while remarkable for the variety of its solutions, was nowhere obviously

better thought out.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe a great debt to Jackie Hall for inviting me to study Peterborough's sculpture when the façade was under scaffold a decade ago, for correspondence and hospitality, and for unfailing cheerfulness. Discussions with Paul Binski, Tim Halliday and Nigel Morgan have sharpened my general understanding of medieval Peterborough. I gratefully acknowledge a grant of £2000 made in February 2007 by the Paul Mellon Centre for British Art to study the façade sculpture. This publication is a fruit of that generosity.

NOTES

[1] Dedicated discussions are G. R. Cockerell, *Iconography of the West Front of Wells Cathedral* (Oxford 1851), 101-04; E. S. Prior and A. Gardner, *An Account of Medieval Figure-Sculpture in England* (Cambridge 1912), 292, 293-5; L. Reilly, *An Architectural History of Peterborough Cathedral* (Oxford 1997), 110.

[2] I will not be entertaining the conjecture that the figures were originally made for some other setting (compare Reilly, *Peterborough* (as n. 1), 110).

[3] For examples, see J. P. McAleer, 'Romanesque England and the Development of the *Façade Harmonique*', *Gesta*, 23 (1984), 87-105. Perhaps the nearest thing to this asymmetry is the (roughly contemporary) west front of St Nicholas's church, Great Yarmouth, the largest parish church in England. Here, the gabled façade of the central vessel is dwarfed by two wider, higher aisle facades, also gabled.

[4] N. Pevsner, *B/E, Northamptonshire* (Harmondsworth 1961), 360-1.

[5] P. Kidson and P. Murray, *A History of English Architecture* (London 1962), 74; see also C. Wilson, *The Gothic Cathedral: The Architecture of the Great Church, 1130-1530*

(London 1991), 175. For a photo showing what things would look like two towers see G. Webb, 'The Sources for the Design of the West Front of Peterborough Cathedral', *Archaeological Journal*, [supplement to vol.] 106 (1952), 113-20 (pl. 25a).

[6] P. Binski, *Gothic Wonder: Art, Artifice and the Decorated Style, 1290-1350* (London 2014), 16-22.

[7] J. Bony, *The English Decorated Style: Gothic Architecture Transformed 1250-1350* (Oxford 1979), 33; Kidson and Murray, *Architecture* (as n. 5), 74.

[8] There is a difference in height of about 6 m, Tewkesbury's arch being *c*. 20 m high, those of Peterborough *c*. 26 m.

[9] Nothing may be said for Carolyn Malone's claim that Peterborough's façade is based on a 9th-century building in Iraq: *Façade as Spectacle: Ritual and Ideology at Wells Cathedral* (Leiden 2004), 92, 94, 234. She got the idea from 'an unpublished paper' by Jean Bony (ibid., 92 n. 21), who probably left it unpublished for a reason.

[10] M. Dean, 'Architecture at Peterborough in the Thirteenth Century', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 137 (1984), 114-29 (at 115-16).

[11] D. Kahn, 'Le décor de l'*oculus* dans la façade romane anglaise', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale Xe-XIIe siècles*, 34 (1991), 341-7.

[12] The abbot's portion in 1437 was *c*. £700 of a total *c*. £1500: *Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln*, ed. A. H. Thompson, 3 vols, Canterbury and York Society 17, 24, 33 (Oxford 1915-27), III, 273.

[13] *Historiae coenobii Burgensis*, ed. J. Sparke (London 1723), 99.

[14] Ibid., 101.

[15] Peers had other grounds for dismissing this 'opus' as a reference to the galilee and façade: *VCH Northampton, vol. 2*, ed. R. M. Serjeantson, and W. R. D. Adkins (London 1906), 433. Compare Reilly, *Peterborough* (as n. 1), 92-3, and *Conservation and Discovery: Peterborough Cathedral Nave Ceiling and Related Structures*, ed. J. Hall and S. M. Wright (London 2015), 22, both of which entertain the idea. Probably, *opus* refers here to something ingenious and complicated (e.g. part of a plumbing system) that the author of the chronicler's source, who had to study economy, found it hard to encapsulate.

[16] E.g. Pevsner, *Northamptonshire* (as n. 4), 352; Reilly, *Peterborough* (as n. 1), 101.

[17] *Councils and Synods, with Other Documents Relating to the English Church: II, A.D. 1205-1313*, ed. F. M. Powicke and C. R. Cheney, 2 vols (Oxford 1964), I, 246.

[18] A. Gransden, 'The Question of the Consecration of St Edmund's Church', in *Church and Chronicle in the Middle Ages: Essays Presented to John Taylor*, ed. I. Wood and G. A. Loud (London 1991), 59-86 (quotations at 81).

[19] Ibid., 69-70.

[20] I. Tyers, 'Tree-Ring Analysis of Oak Timbers from Peterborough Cathedral, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire: Structural Timbers from the Nave Roof and North-west Portico' (Ancient Monuments Laboratory, unpublished report no. 9/99) (Sheffield 2006), 11 [available at: services.english-heritage.org.uk/ResearchReportsPdfs/009-1999.pdf : accessed 1 July 2016].

[21] In design terms, these shrine-shaped boxes ease a visual transition between square and polygonal forms. There are bolder parallels for them at Auxerre cathedral: see D. Sandron, 'The Cathedral Façade: Monumental Sculpture in Context from the Twelfth to

the Sixteenth Centuries', in *Gothic Art and Thought in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. C. Hourihane (Princeton 2011), 35-54 (at 39, 434, 51-2).

[22] Within the galilee, these niches have been supplied with modern figures.

[23] For the socle figure, see G. Henderson, 'The Damnation of Nero and Related Themes', in *The Vanishing Past: Studies of Medieval Art, Liturgy and Metrology presented to Christopher Hohler*, ed. A. Borg and A. Martindale, BAR International Series 111 (Oxford 1981), 39-51.

[24] N. J. Morgan, *Early Gothic Manuscripts [I], 1190-1250*, A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles 4.1 (London 1982), 79-81 and ill. 108.

[25] Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, nos 51018-51021. Other early images are kept in the Conway Library at the Courtauld Institute of Art and the Historic England archive.

[26] J. Britton, *The History and Antiquities of Peterborough Cathedral* (London 1828), pls 3, 12, shows some of the figures in detail, but the general inaccuracy of the book's engravings discourages their use.

[27] Personal communication from Jackie Hall, 27 July 2007. I owe to Dr Hall a copy of Durnan's unpublished report, entitled 'Peterborough Cathedral West Front: Report on the Condition of the Statues with Recommendations for their Repair and Conservation'. In it, he stressed the urgency of a conservation programme using 'the lime based conservation techniques developed for in-situ statue conservation on the West Fronts of Wells, Exeter and Salisbury', and stated that no more figures should be removed (p. 7).

[28] E. Sinclair, 'The Polychromy', in *Salisbury Cathedral: The West Front*, ed. T. Ayers (Chichester 2000), 110-30; eadem, 'The West Front: II, The West Front Polychromy', in in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Exeter Cathedral*, ed. F. Kelly, BAACT XI (Leeds

1991), 116-33; J. Sampson, *Wells Cathedral West Front: Construction, Sculpture and Conservation* (Stroud 1998), 113-32.

[29] Here I am respectfully at odds with Reilly, *Peterborough* (as n. 1), 108, who, in arguing for singers at Peterborough, mistakenly states that the abbey adopted the Sarum use in the 13th century. On 'liturgical' façades generally, see P. Z. Blum, 'Liturgical Influences on the Design of the West Front at Wells and Salisbury', *Gesta*, 25 (1986), 145-50; J. Tripps, 'From Singing Saints to Descending Angels: Medieval Ceremonies and Cathedral Façades as Representations of the Heavenly Jerusalem', *Arte Christiana*, 93 (2005), 1-13. For England broadly, see the summary in P. Tudor-Craig, 'Wells Cathedral West Front and the City of God', in *Prophecy, Apocalypse and the Day of Doom*, ed. N. J. Morgan, Harlaxton Medieval Studies 12 (Donington 2004), 356-76 (at 372-6: citing other studies).

[30] *The Peterborough Chronicle (The Bodleian Manuscript Laud Misc. 636)*, ed. D. Whitelock, Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile 4 (Copenhagen 1954), pl. 29 (fol. 15). The entry was written *c*. 1121 (ibid., 14).

[31] W. de G. Birch, *Catalogue of Seals in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum. Volume 1, part 2: Monastic Seals* (London 1887), 700-1 (no. 3830); R. H. Ellis, *Catalogue of Seals in the Public Record Office. Monastic Seals: Volume I* (London 1986), 71 (no. M671).

[32] In part, this was no doubt because there was less scope for such treatment on these smaller figures

[33] SIGILLUM PETROBURGENSE [/] CRUCE, CLAVE, FULGENS ET ENSE.

[34] The keys broke off in 1923: J. Higham, *Peterborough Cathedral* (Andover 2001), 19.

[35] J. Higgitt, 'The Iconography of St Peter in Anglo-Saxon England, and St Cuthbert's Coffin', in *St Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to AD 1200*, ed. G. Bonner, D. Rollason and C. Stancliffe (Woodbridge 1989), 267-85.

[36] Morgan, *Manuscripts* (as n. 24), 94 and ill. 157; P. Binski, 'The Painted Nave Ceiling at Peterborough Abbey', in *The Medieval English Cathedral: Paper in Honour of Pamela Tudor-Craig*, ed. J. Backhouse, Harlaxton Medieval Studies 10 (Donington 2003), 41-62 (at ill. 17).

[37] Compare Henderson, 'Damnation' (as n. 23), 39-40, for earlier common seals from St Augustine's at Canterbury and Westminster Abbey with the same imagery. The Canterbury seal labels the defeated figure as 'NER[O]', and this was surely the usual assumption where an inscription was lacking. A Westminster inventory of 1266/7 mentions a precious metal figure of Peter 'trampling on Nero': P. Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power 1200-1400* (London 1995), 69.

[38] Alternatively, it may have blessed, as Peter does in the roundel at the east end (see below). The Westminster figure mentioned in the previous note held keys and a church (Binski, *Westminster* (as n. 37), 210 n. 99).

[39] *The Chronicle of Hugh Candidus, a Monk of Peterborough*, ed. W. T. Mellows (Oxford 1949), 8, 9, 38 (rock); 13 (*janitor*); 19, 30 (twice) (*claviger*).

[40] Ibid., 4-5.

[41] The manuscript is now dismembered: see N. R. Ker, 'Membra Disiecta', *British Museum Quarterly*, 12 (1938), 130-5 (at 132).

[42] E.g. P. Williamson, *Gothic Sculpture, 1140-1300* (New Haven and London 1995), fig. 140.

[43] Prior and Gardner, *Account* (as n. 1), 293, thought them the earliest of the sculptures.

[44] Cockerell, *Iconography* (as n. 1), 102; Prior and Gardner, *Account* (as n. 1), 293.

[45] W. H. St J. Hope and W. R. Lethaby, 'The Imagery and Sculptures on the West Front of Wells Cathedral Church', *Archaeologia*, 59 (1904), 143-206 (at pl. 31: figure of St Oswald).

[46] Ibid., pls 29, 30, 45, 47, 48; W. Sauerländer, *Gothic Sculpture in France 1140-1270* (New York 1972), pls 92, 159, 178; Williamson, *Sculpture* (as n. 42), 124.

[47] For the early royal charters, see S. E. Kelly, *Charters of Peterborough Abbey*, Anglo-Saxon Charters 14 (Oxford 2009), 121-3 and passim.

[48] In the absence of a figure of Christ, there is no point identifying these kings or other figures on the façade as Christ's ancestors (compare Prior and Gardner, *Account* (as n. 1), 293).

[49] *Hugh Candidus* (as n. 39), 7-22; see also 151-61.

[50] The recto side of the roll has an English royal genealogy.

[51] J. Luxford, 'Intelligent by Design: The Manuscripts of Walter of Whittlesey, Monk of Peterborough', *Electronic British Library Journal* (2015), article 13, 1-33 (at 22-32) [http://www.bl.uk/eblj/2015articles/article13.html : accessed 1 July 2016].

[52] The abbots of Peterborough were not granted the mitre until 1402: *VCH Northampton* (as n. 15), 90.

[53] *William Durand: On the Clergy and their Vestments*, trans. T. M. Thibodeau (Chicago 2010), 105-6 (deacons' manner of wearing the stole). Compare the deacon-figures on the

Wells façade illustrated in Prior and Gardner, *Account* (as n. 1), 315; L. Stone, *Sculpture in Britain: The Middle Ages*, 2nd edn (Harmondsworth 1972), 110 and pl. 83.

[54] I doubt the mitred figures were intended for popes. St Peter represented the papacy on the church façade.

[55] The same combination of long garment, wavy hair and veil occurs on iconographically similar figures at Wells: see e.g. Hope and Lethaby, 'Wells Cathedral' (as n. 45), pl 47.

[56] *Hugh Candidus* (as n. 39), 7-9, 151-60.

[57] Ibid., 50-1.

[58] For a more detailed discussion of these miniatures, see Luxford, 'Design' (as n. 51), 15-17.

[59] And indeed later, if one posits older sculptors set in their ways.

[60] Illustrated in Williamson, *Sculpture* (as n. 42), 204.

[61] Peter was also represented at the summit of Exeter cathedral's façade, but the ensemble seems to have included Christ: A. Henry, 'The West Front: III, The Iconography of the West Front', in *Exeter* (as n. 28), 134-46 (at 136-7, 143-4 n. 57).

[62] E.g. *Hugh Candidus* (as n. 39), 8, 9, 11, 13, 17, 20.

[63] Ibid., 17; Kelly, *Charters* (as n. 47), 162. Like Wulfhere's charter, this privilege is a fabrication (Kelly, *Charters* (as n. 47), 165). In the 14th century, the monk Walter of Whittlesey gave a splendid book (i.e. BL, Add. MS 39758) 'to St Peter', as the dedicatory inscription puts it (Luxford, 'Design' (as n. 51), 7, 8).

[64] *Hugh Candidus* (as n. 39), 18-19; Kelly, *Charters* (as n. 47), 163, 167; see also 155, 157.

[65] *Hugh Candidus* (as n. 39), 6, 11

[66] BL, MS Harley 3667, fol. 8v.

[67] 80.5 × 61 cm. See Kelly, *Charters* (as n. 47), 151.

[68] See e.g. the book-review article by W. Haftmann in *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 8 (1939), 285-90 (at 289-90). Binski, *Gothic* (as n. 6), 18-20, cites another example.

[69] Old St Peter's is the building specifically implied in the Peterborough documents that liken the abbey to Rome.

[70] London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 198A, fol. 133r-v (part of a Peterborough customary: I owe this reference, and knowledge of the designation 'galilee court', to Tim Halliday); J. T. Irvine, 'Peterborough Cathedral: An Attempt to Recover the First Design of the West Front of the Abbey Church', *JBAA*, 49 (1893), 138-50 (at 150, note: reference of 1347). See also J. Maddison, 'The Gothic Cathedral: New Building in a Historic Context', in *A History of Ely Cathedral*, ed. P. Meadows and N. Ramsay (Woodbridge 2003), 113-41 (at 117-19).

[71] The usual way of representing the Temple was with a single arched portal: C. H. Krinsky, 'Representations of the Temple of Jerusalem before 1500', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 33 (1970), 1-19.

[72] The specific reference is to chapter 24 of Comestor's commentary on IV Kings, part of the larger *Historia Ecclesiastica* (owned at Peterborough): see *Patrologia cursus completus, series latina*, ed. by J.-P. Migne, 221 vols (Paris 1844-64), CXCVIII, col. 1405A.

[73] *The Rationale divinorum officiorum of William Durand of Mende: A New Translation of the Prologue and Book One*, trans. T. M. Thibodeau (New York 2007), 19.

[74] As also in the case of the three lancets that illuminate the Trinity chapel at Salisbury cathedral, an observation for which I thank Tim Tatton-Brown.

[75] Lambeth Palace Library, MS 198A, fol. 133v.

[76] R. A. B. Mynors, and R. M. Thomson, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Hereford Cathedral Library* (Cambridge 1993), 72. Godfrey of Crowland, abbot from 1299-1321, identified Peterborough with the Trinity to the extent of having the Trinity represented on the head of his crosier (*Historiae* (as n. 13), 174).

[77] The quotation is from an inscription on the west façade of the 9th-century church of the Virgin at Skripou in central Greece: A. Papalexandrou, 'Text in Context: Eloquent Monuments and the Byzantine Beholder', *Word and Image*, 17 (2001), 259-83 (at 279; see also 264, 265).

[78] They do not appear in all of the old engravings (see Britton, *History* (as n. 26), pl. 10), but are undoubtedly medieval.

[79] The first figure looks like Moses, because the crown is broken so as to suggests horns, and Moses appears opposite Peter below the crucifixion in a psalter of Robert of Lindsey (London, Society of Antiquaries, MS 59, fol. 35v: see Morgan, *Manuscripts* (as n. 24), ill. 157). However, a king fits the context better, and would better balance the monk on the south side.

[80] On the meaning of mouth-puller images see A. Woodcock, *Liminal Images: Aspects of Medieval Architectural Sculpture in the South of England from the Eleventh to the Sixteenth Centuries*, BAR British Series 386 (Oxford 2005), 71-3 (not noticing these examples). There is another mouth-puller at Peterborough on the corbel of an image-niche on the south side of the passage under the Trinity chapel.